

# Guidelines for Event Marshals

**Northern  
Phoenix  
Trials Car  
Club Ltd**



## Introduction

Marshals make a vital contribution to our sport and Northern Phoenix is committed to supporting their role by:

- ensuring that their authority in controlling sections and as the 'judges of fact' at events is reinforced by not tolerating dissent, abuse or aggressive behaviour from competitors or spectators;
- providing training and mentoring to enable new marshals to develop confidence and competence and to similarly assist more experienced marshals as required to carry out their functions effectively;
- providing marshals' guidance notes as an aide memoire to key MSA rules, regulations and practical matters to help them undertake their roles safely, fairly and efficiently.

## Roles of the Marshal

Marshals have a number of important roles at sporting trials events, chief among them being:

- to direct spectators and competitors and conduct themselves as required to ensure the safe progress of the trials event on the section of the course which they are appointed to control;
- to ensure their section is free of spectators, other competitors, and animals and is otherwise unobstructed and safe to attempt before allowing any competitor to proceed onto it;
- to check that all competitors display a valid scrutineer's "Passed OK" sticker on their car's competition number on the first section of the event;
- to ensure that competitors comply with the rules and regulations that apply to undertaking a sporting trials section and to report breaches of drivers' etiquette to the clerk of the course;
- to act as the sole 'judges of fact' in respect of competitors' performances on their section;
- to fairly and accurately determine and record on the competitor's score card and marshal's score sheet, the penalty points incurred by each competitor in undertaking their section.

## Safety

The Club takes safety very seriously and marshals have a major role to play in helping to maintain our excellent safety record by:

- ensuring that they position themselves in safe locations when on section, with a firm and stable foothold, outside of the competitors' general line and direction of travel and in positions where there is a choice of escape route should a vehicle depart from its intended course;
- ensuring other competitors and spectators are positioned outside the delineated route of the section and in otherwise safe locations before permitting a driver to commence the section;
- preventing anyone from encroaching on the section while any vehicle is attempting the section;
- ordering the driver of any vehicle on section to stop in order prevent a potential accident or injury in the event of the course becoming obstructed;
- reporting to the clerk of the course any competitor or spectator who ignores any safety directions they have been given or who have otherwise acted in a dangerous or reckless manner;
- being aware of the identity and location of the nominated first-aider and how to summon him or her in the event of an accident or incident occurring that results in an injury or suspected injury;
- advising the clerk of the course immediately should the section at any time appear to be or have become potentially dangerous and not to permit any more competitors to attempt the section until the clerk of the course has inspected the section and ruled on its condition.

## Technical Guidance

**Start Position** - Before attempting an observed section (a section), vehicles must be brought to rest with a leading front wheel hub vertically over the Start line and the driver must not proceed until instructed to do so. (T6.3) It is permissible to start the car when only one hub is on the line and the car is askew, providing the other hub has not crossed the line (T6.3.1). **As an added safety check, all cars must display a valid NPTCC Scrutineer's "Passed OK" sticker on the car number – Marshals to check this on the event start hills when marking score cards. Any car not displaying a sticker to be reported to the Clerk of the Course.** Competitors arriving at a section more than 20 minutes after the preceding competitor may be refused permission to attempt that observed section (T6.2.2).

**Passengers Position in Vehicle** - On all sections the seat alongside the driver must be occupied (T4.1) and the passenger's hips must be located within the cockpit and on or in front of the rear axle line (T4.1.1). Passengers are not permitted to sit or lie outside the cockpit or on top of the seat back. Such occurrences if observed should be warned at the start of a section and penalised on section.

**Attempting a Section** - Competitors must attempt to negotiate sections non-stop, unless the supplementary regulations (SRs) specify otherwise (T6.3.2) – see more below. Failure of a car to maintain unassisted forward motion in the direction of the course will be regarded as failure to comply with this (T6.3.3). The point of failure will be at a vertical line from the centre of the hub of the front wheel which is the furthest from the start of the section (T6.3.4) – see Drawing No.6 below reproduced from MSA Blue Book.

**What Constitutes a 'Stop'** (T6.4) - A competitor will also be considered to have failed to negotiate an observed section non-stop if:

- any part of their vehicle or its occupants touch a marker (T6.4.1). **All markers of a section are 'live'** (T6.4.5).
- all four wheels are positioned outside the boundary of the course at the same time ('four wheels out') The boundary is represented by a straight line drawn from course marker to course marker along the direction of the course (T6.4.2).

The point of failure will be considered to be that at which any marker is first struck, or the point at which the boundary of the course is first crossed by all wheels of the competing vehicle (T6.4.3).

Failure to proceed, for whatever reason, from the starting position into a section when instructed to do so will be regarded as failure in that section (T6.3.9).

**Four Wheels Out – It is the driver's responsibility not to go four wheels out on a section.** However, the Club's guideline is to avoid having to apply the four wheels out rule unless absolutely necessary. In setting out hills, the clerk of the course will as far as possible avoid four wheels out situations by placing the poles in such a way as to give drivers acceptable width to negotiate the hill or by the use of intermediate poles. Some situations may remain where four wheels out needs to be applied and the marshals should inform drivers at the start of the hill so they are aware where on the hill the rule is to be applied. Drivers will be upset if they think they have been "trapped" into a four wheels out situation. Driver's should consult the marshal if in any doubt.

**The 'Three Second Rule'** – Only if the SRs so specify, there is a three second allowance for a competitor's car to regain forward motion, with no rearward motion - marshal to count "and 1 and 2 and 3". **If a car ceases forward motion and neither rear wheel is rotating the driver is deemed to have stopped deliberately to gain an advantage and the three second rule shall not apply.** The three second rule **does not apply** either should a competitor stall the engine, **except** if a competitor stalls the engine on a downhill section and the car continues forward motion, a restart is permitted without a penalty.

**Re-Runs** - The only circumstance in which a competitor maybe considered for a re-run of a section is where another vehicle, animal or person is judged to have impeded progress through the section and where to have continued would have been potentially dangerous in the marshal's opinion.

**Scoring/Penalties** – Competitors incur penalty points for failing to complete a section non-stop in accordance with Section T6 of the MSA Blue Book and the event's SRs, as outlined above. The maximum penalty for failing to complete a sporting trials section, which is divided into 12 sub-sections, is 12 points. The penalty for failure decreases in proportion to the number of sub-sections negotiated non-stop ie. the penalty reduces by one point, from 12 to 0, for every sub-section successfully completed – refer to drawing no. 6 above.

In addition, 12 penalty points are incurred for the following infringements: passenger not properly seated; not attempting, or being ready to attempt, a section when instructed to do so; not complying with a reasonable instruction by an official, for which a penalty is not otherwise stipulated provided warning of the penalty is given.

