RACE COMMUNICATIONS

PURPOSE AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Clerk of Course is responsible for the proper conduct of the race meeting, and to enable him to carry out his function he must be kept aware of what is going on around the circuit, and must be able to communicate with all posts and key officials at all times.

Experience has shown that the best method of providing these facilities for the Clerk of Course is that Race Control be the communication centre for the circuit, and to use several communications systems at all times during a race meeting.

The following combination of systems is recommended as the ideal overall network for race circuits:

- **Trackside Observation Systems:**

  This is the major source of information from around the track. It should be by land-line connecting all marshal control posts with Race Control. An open-line loop is preferred with all posts able to speak to each other in an emergency, and able to hear all other communication with Race Control. Each post should use a handset equipped with microphone boom (which blocks out the background noise), and a push-to-talk button.

- **Race Control Radio:**

  This system gives Race Control direct communication with key officials and emergency vehicles not always working from a fixed point. It is normally used to issue directions to officials or drivers of vehicles, to clarify information to and from Race Control, and to communicate with track emergency services during emergencies. Licensed, dedicated channel VHF or UHF radio is the most suitable for this purpose. Officials issued with radios should have handsets equipped with microphone booms if they are working where background noise could be a problem.

  Except at the smallest circuits, two channels should be used: one for key officials, and one for the emergency channel. The emergency channel can be further divided into

  - **First Emergency:** FIV, ambulance, doctors, fire units; and
  - **Second Emergency:** tow trucks, shuttle buses, equipment teams etc.

- **Inter-Office Telephone System:**

  This system facilitates the smooth running of a meeting by allowing a direct dial internal system connecting all the track service centres such as the Race Secretary's office, paddock office, scrutiny bay, medical centre, and Race Control. External telephone lines should be available to Race Control, the Race Secretary, and the medical centre.

- **Location and Staffing of Communication Points:**

  The communications centre should be a part of (or close enough to) Race Control to allow direct communication with the Clerk of the Course, and ideally in a position where the communications officials can see most of the course. It should be located in a structure which filters out most background noise, as the important calls tend to come when the noise is loudest.

  The communications centre should have sufficient staff to allow each system to be individually monitored at all times, with reserve staff available on stand-by.

  Each trackside communications post should be located so that the complete circuit is under observation. Each communications post should be located so that the observers are back from the track itself, but close enough to communicate verbally with the Flag Marshals at each post.

  Each post should be manned by **two trained observers:** one to remain in communication with Race Control at all times, the other able to attend an incident, to consult other officials to obtain further information, or to assist otherwise if needed.

GENERAL NOTES

1. Open phone lines and radio channels must be used with proper communications protocol at all times or the channel will become crowded and proper communication impossible. With protocol being observed, it should be possible for up to 40 radios to be used on one channel. With this level of usage, it helps if a spare channel is available for conversations and longer, non-urgent transmissions.
2. Good quality headsets are important; the officials must wear them for hours at a time.
3. A log of all messages received on the trackside observers' system should be kept, so that the Clerk of Course can refer to it at any time. Recording of the other communications system is also desirable, if possible.

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