Radio Communications - Observers

v2026r1

Procedures for Flag Marshals and Communicators using the trackside “Comms Loop” or flag radio.

Set Up

- On arrival at your Post check all equipment is there, set up comms, check your line of sight to Posts either side of you. Contact Race Control for missing equipment, personnel or line of sight issues.
- Comms must be attended to at all times and from as soon as you arrive at your Post.
- Rotate Comms operators after track clearances, not during clearances or during sessions. Sessions over 30mins try to pick a quiet time to rotate and make sure you have passed on all messages up to that point.
- Use the Minute-by-Minute schedule so you are all prepared for each session and comms checks/inspections.
- Communication with Race Control and your team is vital. Ensure information is shared with ALL marshals and response vehicles in your area.
- Listen to all transmissions, pass on information so your team is aware of what is happening around the track. This helps them prepare for Safety Car or Red Flag calls.
- Ensure all marshals know the hand signals. These are used to relay the information between each other so you can then inform Race Control, e.g. tow requirements, medical assistance needed etc.
- Be aware of where your transmitting button is, avoid leaning on it.
- Protect the Comms Radio from rain, keep it under your wet weather gear.

Radio Protocol

- Always start your first message with Race Control, your post number and your flag status. Await acknowledgement from Race Control before proceeding with your message. Start all proceeding messages with “Race Control this is Post X” so that you do not cut off your post number.
- Radio silence is required, unless you have a race stopping incident (eg. requiring Medical or Fire) or major track safety issues, during;

  Practice or qualifying - from cars entering the circuit to end of lap 1 and for the last 1 min of session.

  Races - start of all races from cars released to the track (or from the 3 min call for championship starts) until the end of the first lap and again when the lead car starts the last lap.
- Where possible keep housekeeping calls (e.g. running out of reports, toilet issues, broken equipment etc) to between sessions unless asked specifically by Race Control.
- There should be no social chatter or the use of driver or personnel names.

Communication during incidents

- Look, listen, stop, think and then report. Incidents and accidents always take priority over other radio matters.
- Ensure the information you transmit provides relevant information, accurate, brief and clear. Use your normal speaking voice. Raising your voice distorts your message. Think accurate, brief and clear.
- Only call incidents and accidents that are in your area. However, where needed assist Posts before or after you with car numbers.
- If you have an intervention/response vehicle attend your area, please advise it is there and when it leaves. E.G. medical on scene, medical leaving with driver, recovery on scene, recovery leaving with vehicle etc.

Information is Key

To make quick and correct decisions, Race Control require the following information:

- Position of stopped vehicles- On track, Off track. On racing line, Off racing line. Drivers Left or Drivers Right
- How many metres before or after your Post. Use the decimal system or barrier gate numbers (if applicable).
- Whether the vehicle is in a safe or dangerous position
- For stopped vehicles advise driver condition, i.e. Driver appears OK, can’t see Driver, Driver in / out of vehicle.
- For stopped vehicles, confirm if the engine is running or not. Advise recovery tow requirements.
- Advise whether medical, fire or rescue units are required.
- Contact with barriers or other cars - advise if it is a heavy or light impact. Report wall condition if known.
- Report any movement or damage of barriers, concrete walls, or tyre bundles ASAP along with details of the change of condition i.e., pushed back (how far) cracked etc. Provide exact location details.
- Report changes to the track surface, ripple strips, tyre bundles etc. If unsure, discuss with your Sector Marshal.

Example Phrases

- Car x ran wide, Drivers Right/ Drivers Left, continued/stopped and its final location.
- Front to Rear / Side to side contact between car x & car xx, both cars continued. No advantage gained.
- Contact between car x & car xx. Car x continued, Car xx stopped Drivers Left/Right, on track/off track, safe/ dangerous, 20 metres past post 5.3.
- Car xx contacted tyre bundle, Tyre Bundle moved x metre/s, now on race line/off-track surface, drivers left/right.
- Car x in run off area, approximately xx metres in/end of run off, car attempting to resume.

Sample Communication Procedure:

Scenario 1 - Car 7 stopped off track to drivers right past the Post. After a small period of time, the car resumes.

Post 6.2	Race control this is Post 6.2 (six point two) waving yellow flag, *(wait for reply).*
Race Control	Race control to Post 6.2, go ahead.
Post 6.2	Race Control, Car 7, seven alone stopped Drivers Right, Off track, Safe position, 30 metres past post 6.2. Unsure if engine is running. Driver appears OK. Will advise recovery.
Race Control	Thank you Post 6.2 *(Use hand signals etc to obtain correct recovery information from Marshals on scene.)*
Post 6.2	Race control this is Post 6.2 update *(wait for reply).*
Race Control	Post 6.2 go ahead.
Post 6.2	Car 7 is attempting to restart.
Race Control	Thank you Post 6.2, keep us updated
Post 6.2	Race control this is post 6.2 update
Race Control	Go ahead post 6.2
Post 6.2	Car 7 has restarted and left the scene, we are clear
Race Control	Thank you

Scenario 2 - Cars 4 and 12 contact at entry to Turn 5. Car 4 spins to drivers right and stops; Car 12 leaves track to drivers left and hits the barrier. Flames can be seen.

Post 5:	Race Control, this is Post 5, waving yellow.
Race Control:	Go ahead Post 5
Post 5:	We have 2 cars stopped dangerous position. One has hit the barrier drivers left and is on fire. Request fire assistance, appears driver is not moving, medical required. Other car has spun and stopped to drivers right. Driver appears ok.
Race Control:	Post 5 medical and fire on their way.
Race Control:	Safety Car Board and Flags, Safety Car Board and Flags, Safety Car Board and Flags
Post 5:	Race Control this is post 5 update
Race Control**:**	Go ahead post 5
Post 5:	Confirming the car on drivers right is car 4, driver is out of vehicle and over the wall. The car on drivers left is 12, driver is attempting to get out of vehicle. Both cars are 10 metres past post.
Race Control:	Thank you post 5, keep us updated.
Post 5:	Race Control post 5 update. Medical and fire on scene. Fire has been extinguished by fire crew. Car 4 requires a flat tow. Car 12 a lift tow. The driver of car 12 is with medical.
Race Control:	Thank you post 5, Can you provide incident details?
Post 5:	At the entry to turn 5, Cars 4 and 12 made side to side contact, Car 4 spun and stopped to drivers right, driver out of car and behind barrier. Car 12 made heavy contact with the wall on drivers left, car was on fire. Driver is now out of car and behind barrier. Sector has advised wall condition is ok. Fire crew used their extinguishers.
Race Control:	Thank you Post 5
Post 5:	Race Control, this is Post 5 update.
Race Control:	Go ahead Post 5.
Post 5:	Recovery has arrived. Medical has left with the driver of car 12. Fire have left.
Race Control:	Thank you Post 5
Post 5:	Race Control, this is Post 5 update.
Race Control:	Go ahead Post 5.
Post 5:	Recovery has left the scene, with car 4 and car 12, track is clear.
Race Control:	Thank you, Post 5. let me know when you're ready for report details.
Post 5:	Race Control this is Post 5, send details.
Race Control:	Post 5, The report will be report number 7 at a time of 12.53.
Post 5:	Confirming report 7 at time 12.53