



Bulletin 2025-7

Rally Competition Rule Changes for 2025

1/13/2025

The following changes to the ARA Rally Competition Rules are effective immediately and in place in the published 2025 Rally Competition Rulebook.

Mileage intervals for service and refuel

1.5 Service Stops

The maximum special stage distance between service stops is 45 miles and service stops must be at least 20 minutes long.

~~Service stops and must be located not more 45 miles of special stage apart than 90 miles apart. Within the 90 miles, no more than 45 miles may be special stage.~~

1.6 Refuel Intervals

Refueling opportunities must not be located more than 110 miles apart. If the distance is more than 90 miles, no more than 30 miles may be special stage.

Rationale: The purpose of this change is to give event organizers a bit more flexibility in choosing a route without necessitating competitors to change current fuel tank sizes. The expectation is this change will still give similar total fuel usages for each section.

Control Sign Updates

4.2 Control Signs

The following signs are used to identify the control areas:



Time Control



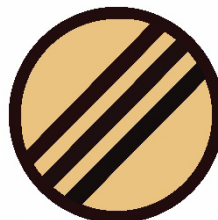
Stage Start



Flying Finish



Stop Control



End of Control



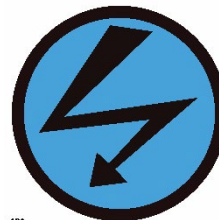
Passage Control



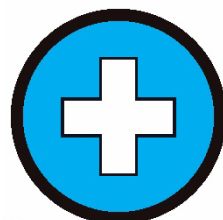
Refuelling Zone



End of Refuelling Zone



Radio Point



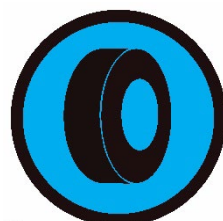
Medical Point



Start of Virtual
Chicane



End of Virtual Chicane



Tire Zone



End of Tire Zone

Rationale: Several signs in use were not included in the rules such as medical and chicane signs. We have also added tire zones (see tire fitting zone changes in this bulletin) and need to include signs.

MTC Wording Update

4.3.1 MTC At Start of Leg

Crews shall present in order based on the final starting order for that leg and check out of these controls on their assigned ~~correct~~ minute.

Rationale: This has been the procedure for several years and the regulations are being updated to reflect it.

Observation Control Update

1.2.1 Stage Reconnaissance

e) The maximum speed for reconnaissance will be lower of:

- 1) The posted legal speed limit.
- 2) The speed specified by the organizer in the event's Supplementary Regulations or Route Book. Such organizer-specified speed may apply to all or part of a road.

Speeds 1-5 mph over the applicable maximum speed will result in a warning and not be considered an infraction under RCR 1.2.1.h ~~4.2.1.g~~ below.

f) Observation controls may be utilized during reconnaissance to ensure compliance with the regulations. Crews must stop at these controls if they come upon one.

4.7 Observation Control

The purpose of an Observation Control is verify compliance with some aspect of these RCRs and/or the event's Supplementary Regulations.

The control area starts with a yellow Passage or Time Control sign, which is followed by a red Passage or Time Control sign, where check-in takes place, and ends with a beige End of Control sign.

4.7.1 Location

f) Anywhere within the area (stages or transit roads) during reconnaissance with the purpose of monitoring crew activity for compliance with the regulations.

Rationale: It has been unclear in the regulations on if observation controls can be present on reconnaissance. The changes are to clarify that they can be used by organizers during reconnaissance activities.

Regroup Control Wording Update

4.8 Regrouping Control

The purpose of a Regrouping Control is to reduce gaps in the running starting order. The assigned time of the first crew's exit from the Regrouping Control ~~The starting time into the Regrouping Control~~ and not its duration must be taken into account. ~~The Steward(s) may reseed individual crews for safety reasons.~~

5.9 Regrouping Controls

5.9.1 Procedure

On their arrival at these regrouping controls, the crews will hand the appropriate marshal their time card. The crews will receive instructions on their starting time. They must then drive their competition vehicle immediately and directly to the holding area. Crews shall exit in the order they arrived and follow marshal instructions. They must present at the exit control as soon as the vehicle ahead in the order is released from the control. The organizers may give them a new set of time cards either at the entrance or at the exit of the holding area.

5.9.2 Starting Order After a Regrouping Control

After regrouping, vehicles should start in the order in which they arrived at the Regrouping In Control. Otherwise, the starting order should follow the general classification drawn up according to RCR 9.2. The Steward(s) may reseed individual crews for safety reasons in all cases.

Rationale: Since 2023, ARA events have been following this process. Regulations are being updated to be consistent with those operations.

Tire Fitting Zone Addition

4.10 Tire Fitting Zone

The purpose of a Tire Fitting Zone is a controlled area in which specific tire replacement activities may be performed. No other work on the vehicle is permitted. The locations will be specified in the itinerary and all crews must pass through the Tire Fitting Zone, even if tires are not changed.

The Tire Fitting Zone must have time controls at its entrance and exit with a defined zone between the controls. The target time within the zone shall be 15 minutes and may meet the eligibility of a service stop in section 1.5, but will require a sanction exemption.

5.11 Tire Fitting Zones

Any work within the Tire Fitting Zone may be performed by the crew (driver/co-driver) plus one service crew member per crew.

The only equipment allowed to be used must be onboard the competition vehicle with the addition of the following: 1 jack, up to 4 axle stands, 1 impact gun, socket for wheel nuts/bolts, and a torque wrench.

Teams are allowed to bring and install up to six (6) tires. Spare tires in the competition vehicle maybe changed or removed.

Rationale: Over the past several years, tire fitting zones have been used successfully at several events to give organizers more flexibility to build the stage itinerary.

Complete Stage Blockage Clarification

5.13.3 Road Blockage

Competitors coming upon a completely impassable ~~total~~ road blockage shall make all efforts to ensure the safety of the area and follow the SOS procedures. After securing the scene, competitors are to make all efforts to clear the road blockage and send one competitor ~~continue~~ to the next radio point ~~end of the stage~~. The first competitor to pass through shall notify event officials of the situation via the next radio point or control. Competitors stopped due to a breach of stage security or a road blockage shall be scored as per RCR 5.13.

5.15.2 Display of SOS

In the event of an emergency, crews are expected to display the SOS symbol (inside back cover of the route book) and following crews are required to stop and render aid. An emergency includes, but is not limited to, injuries requiring immediate medical attention, uncontrolled fire, breach of stage security, or ~~total~~ and completely impassable road blockage.

Rationale: As safety procedures have evolved, this has been the process followed by competitors. It must be clear, this is only if a road is completely impassable and is rarely due to a car in the road.

Improper Procedure Infractions Change

6.4 Improper Procedure Infractions

Improper Procedure Infractions must be reported in writing to the Clerk of the Course by marshals, judges of fact, or competitors. Upon confirmation of the infraction or when an infraction is recorded by a judge of fact; it will be referred to the Steward(s) for investigation. Steward(s) may impose any penalty specified in GCR section 7. ~~a penalty of 10 minutes will be applied for the first infraction and may result in a recommendation by the Clerk of the Course to the Steward(s) for a sentence of exclusion for a second violation during the event. Use of in-car video footage may be used by event or ARA officials to verify compliance with the regulations for use of safety warning devices (see RCR 5.14). For RCR 6.4.4 below, in addition to the 10 minute penalty applied to the crew, a \$500 fine will be assessed to the entrant by the Steward(s).~~

Rationale: Following protests and appeals from the past few years, it has become clear that improper procedure penalties need the flexibility to be more or less severe, depending on the situation. This shifts the burden to the Stewards to investigate the situations and determine an appropriate penalty.

Outside Assistance Clarification

6.7 Finishing Qualifications

6.7.2 Exceptions

- a) By a ferry, the use of which is required by the route of the event.
- b) By outside means for the minimum distance necessary to extricate it from difficulty, or to clear the route for other competitors.
- c) By gravity.
- d) By the unaided efforts of its crew (including pushing out of a Parc Fermé).
- e) By official permission or instruction.
- f) For the purpose of facilitating re-start
- g) Being towed by another competitor.
- h) Being towed on a Transit, other than by another competitor (Subject to penalty under RCR 6.2)

In the case of (b), (c) or (d) above, any crew found to have delayed another crew by their action shall be excluded from the event.

Rationale: This is to clarify that one can be considered a finisher if they were towed by outside assistance, though it results in penalty. The rules stated this previously, but it was unclear.

Determining Start Order

9.1.2 Determining Starting Order

c) The Competition Director may adjust a competitors' speed factor downward to reflect a move to a significantly lower performing vehicle class.

c) The Competition Director may adjust a competitors' speed factor based on a change of class or relevant information ~~downward to reflect a move to a significantly lower performing vehicle class.~~

Rationale: The Competition Director has been doing the majority of the start order research the past few years, but was unable to move competitors up in the start order. This allows moves to be made for the provisional start order while still giving the Clerk of the Course and Stewards the power to set the final start order.



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