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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
Consultation – summary of response

Motor Racing Regulations

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This document is also available in Welsh.

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Introduction

The consultation exercise sought views on our preferred option to make Regulations in Wales specifying The Motor Sports Association (“MSA”) and The Auto Cycle Union (“ACU”) as bodies authorised to issue permits under section 12B of the RTA for the purpose of motor racing on public highways in Wales.

The consultation exercise was held in July and August 2017 and a total of 76 responses were received from the general public, local authorities, businesses and motor sports organisations.

An overwhelming majority of respondents were supportive of the preferred approach outlined in the consultation document.

Background to the Consultation

Local authorities and the Welsh Ministers already have the power to authorise a road closure for sporting events, social events or entertainment on the highway, but do not have the power to close a road for a motor race or to suspend the operation of the Road Traffic Acts, meaning that speed limits, traffic signals and the requirement for a vehicle to be roadworthy are still in force.

Legislative competence for road safety and road traffic offences is reserved to the UK Government but the Welsh Ministers exercise some executive functions, including the making of regulations listing motor sport governing bodies that are authorised to issue permits for motor racing on the highway.

In April 2017 Regulations came into force which enable motor racing events to take place on the public highway in England subject to the making of a local authority order. The Regulations in England paved the way for road motor racing and trials of speed for the first time and named The Motor Sports Association (“MSA”) and The Auto Cycle Union (“ACU”) as the bodies that will have the authority to issue permits for on road motor race events in England under section 12B of the Road Traffic Act 1988 (“the RTA”).

The powers to make the above Regulations in Wales are vested in the Welsh Ministers. The MSA and the ACU are the bodies that currently have the authority to issue permits for motorsports events in Wales. A motorsports event is defined in legislation as a competition or trial (other than a race or trial of speed).

The consultation was about proposals to bring into force Regulations that would specify those motor sport governing bodies which are authorised to issue permits under section 12B of the Road Traffic Act 1988 (“the RTA”) for the purpose of motor racing on public highways in Wales. Section 12B(6) of the RTA requires the Welsh Ministers to list the motor sports governing bodies authorised to issue permits for the purposes of section 12B.

Once issued with a permit, permit holders would be able to apply to the relevant highway authority for the necessary motor race order under section 12C of the RTA. This would authorise motor racing on the lengths of highway in question. The highway authority would determine whether or not to make a motor race order in accordance with section 12D of the RTA, by considering the likely impact of the event on the local community, the potential local economic and other benefits, and any other considerations that the highway authority thinks is relevant.

The consultation exercise sought views on our preferred option to make Regulations in Wales specifying The Motor Sports Association (“MSA”) and The Auto Cycle Union (“ACU”) as bodies authorised to issue permits under section 12B of the RTA for the purpose of motor racing on public highways in Wales.

Summary of Consultation Process and Welsh Government’s Response

Consultation Process

The consultation exercise was held from 18 July 2017 to 29 August 2017. Letters were sent out to all local authorities and the consultation material was available in both Welsh and English.

Responses Received

There were 76 responses received from a variety of individuals and organisations from across Wales. Responses were received from the following:

Public bodies:

Local Authorities & National Park Authorities	5
Others	4

Private sector:

Business	4
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Professional Bodies:

Motor Racing Organisations	24
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Individuals:	39
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A full list of all the responses is contained in Annex A.

Responses to Questions and Welsh Government Response

Question 1: Do you support the proposed changes to the Regulations?

All 76 respondents answered this question, with 75 in favour therefore giving an almost unanimous view in favour, with only one respondent commenting negatively.

Some of the key comments raised by a number of respondents included the following:

The economic benefits of rallying to Wales and the positive effects that the changes would bring, for example; *‘I am also well aware of how much revenue a rally brings to the area when you consider that each car brings a team of at least four (often more) two cars (often more). These crews need accommodation, food and fuel so it involves a large outlay for each team. The potential for Wales as a whole and the local communities could be immense.’*

A number of respondents also pointed out that currently they have to travel abroad to see or participate in similar events so these changes would bring more people to Wales instead, for example; *‘currently I have to travel to Ireland or Belgium to compete on closed road rallying, money I feel would benefit the local economy far more.’*

Many respondents were also clear that the MSA and ACU were the appropriate bodies to oversee the new regulations and had the necessary skills and experience. Some went further highlighting that it was unlikely any other bodies could perform the role, for example; *‘the MSA and ACU are recognised as the governing bodies for motorsport in the UK and*

have the resources and knowledge base to enable them to fulfil the role of authorising bodies for the purposes of the legislation.'

The negative response was also focussed on the MSA and ACU and expressed strong concerns over their abilities to manage and monitor events, for example; *'I do not therefore consider either the MSA or ACU to be fit bodies to be given even more power.'*

Welsh Government Response

Notwithstanding the objection mentioned above which focussed on a local issue of concern it is very clear that the vast majority of respondents support the proposed changes to the Regulations and this endorses the preferred approach. The experience of the MSA and ACU in managing motor sports events was recognised and therefore we consider the proposed approach to be robust.

2.3.2 Question 2: What impact would this have on you or your organisation?

Overall, 67 responded to this question with the vast majority positive on the impact and just one against as above. Nine respondents did not provide any commentary. Some of the key comments raised by a number of respondents included the following:

The economic benefits to both local the Welsh economy were raised by many respondents. In particular motor sports teams and organisations highlighted the costs of visiting other countries, for example; *I would make many more visits to Wales with my team and probably spend in the region of £1,000 per visit. Currently I visit Ireland and Belgium to compete in closed road motor sport and spend a similar amount there.*

Some respondents also felt that events on closed roads would help reduce the overall risk of hosting events, for example; *'as far as reducing the risks from these events to as low as reasonably practicable, the MSA as a competent authority and governing body should be allowed to close the roads to reduce the risk to the public as far as possible.'*

Some organisations and local authorities highlighted the benefits from additional visitors, particularly in rural areas of Wales, for example; *'the impact to our organisation would be to increase the number of visitors to the Cambrian Mountains and stimulating economic activity in an area which is remote and relatively unpopulated and could be considered suitable for motor racing. It may also give us the opportunity to work with user groups we would not normally come into contact with – thus broadening our stakeholder base.'*

The one negative response focussed on the risk and dangers of allowing closed road events in rural areas, for example; *'if, as is the intention, our mountain roads are turned into race circuits boy racers will be drawn to area like moths to a flame.'*

Welsh Government Response

The vast majority of respondents were clear on the potential impact of these new Regulations and highlighted a number of positive benefits, particularly the economic benefits for rural areas of Wales, therefore we are content that the preferred approach is appropriate.

Question 3: We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposed changes to the Regulations would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. Policy Context and Transport Planning Framework

Question 4: Please also explain how you believe the proposed changes to the Regulations could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Overall, the response to these two questions was positive. The questions are mandatory for new Welsh Government consultations and are intended to focus on the impact of the proposed new Regulations on the Welsh Language. Issues raised and positive examples provided included the following:

Respondents highlighted that motor sports in Wales already has a strong Welsh language presence and that by bringing more people to Wales this could only raise the profile of the Welsh Language. Examples include; *'motorsport in Wales is notable for its high-profile Welsh speakers, the current MSA British Rally Champion and FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) competitor, Elfyn Evans, is a first language Welsh speaker. So too is Osian Pryce, a frontrunner in the MSA British Rally Championship and a rising star in WRC2. Additionally, S4C broadcasts the popular Ralio programme.'*

It was also noted that there would be a positive benefit and greater interest in the Welsh Language from visitors and competitors travelling around Wales, for example; *'the importance of reading and pronouncing Welsh correctly shall become very important for navigation that will include residents outside of Wales.'*

Some respondents also stated that many local events are already bi-lingual, producing event information and undertaking race commentary in both languages thereby setting a good example that would be followed by additional events and visitors, for example; *'commentary could be done in English and Welsh and would be good and show the welsh language of in front of a new audience.'*

The questions did also generate some negative responses with some respondents questioning their relevance to the issue of motor sports and that it was the location that mattered not the language, for example; *'strange question, Welsh Language, we go for the motorsport it has nothing to do with what language is used, Welsh, Indian, French... it doesn't matter!'* Also; *'although the ability to close roads for sporting events would have no negative impact on the Welsh Language or its use, I believe the question has no actual relevance to the consultation. I am a proud first language Welsh speaker.'*

Some respondents also noted that whilst many local events were bi-lingual the MSA and ACU could do more to ensure all their material is also bi-lingual, for example; *'motorsport in the UK is governed by the Motor Sport Association (MSA) from London. Motorsport regulations are entirely in the English Language. However, perhaps it could be a policy that Welsh Motorsport Events could publish their Supplementary Regulations and Entry forms in both Welsh and English.'*

Finally, many respondents were positive on the benefits to rural areas where the Welsh language was strongest. These are the locations where most events are held and this would lead to greater exposure for the language, for example; *Welsh language is strongest in rural Wales, money spent by competitors is spent in local economies thus benefiting the Welsh language, and Welsh economy in the poorest part of Wales.*

Overall, there were 55 positive responses to question 3 and 46 to question 4, with only 4 and 6 negative ones to each question respectively. The remaining respondents provided no answer.

Welsh Government Response

Whilst there were a few respondents who were sceptical to the value of these two Welsh Language questions the majority of respondents were positive. These included respondents based outside of Wales as well those from within Wales and we are content this provides a strong endorsement for the inclusion of these questions.

Question 5: Any other related issues which has not been specifically addressed

Overall, there was a good response, with 46 respondents providing further commentary on any other related issues, and 30 who did not.

As with earlier questions the main issue raised was the potential economic benefits to both local economies and the national Welsh economy, for example; *'the proposed regulation for Wales can only have the positive effect of bringing income to often deprived communities. If an event receives 100 entries there will be on average of four people coming to Wales with each of these entries They will on average stay two nights and spend £120 per head. The total spend in the area of the rally will be in the region of £120,000.'* Also; *'there are usually between four and six of us attending a rally. We would stay in local accommodation, eat in local restaurants and buy fuel during our stay. Multiply this by in excess of 100 teams and you can see how this would benefit the local economy.'*

In addition there were many comments that the proposed Regulations would further raise the profile and positive image of motor sports in Wales; for example; *'as well as an advantage to the economy and Welsh language the proposed changes would have a massive positive effect on motorsport in Wales.'*

Some respondents also highlighted the long and proud history of motor sports in Wales and that the new regulations would allow that to be expanded and built on, for example; *'Wales has long enjoyed a healthy relationship with motor sport whether it be rallying, motor racing or other related activities. With this in mind, accepting these proposal changes can only serve to benefit this already large and growing sport for the people of Wales.'*

Finally, some respondents reiterated their concern on the focus on the Welsh Language rather than on other key issues, in particular the economic benefits, for example; *'I am disappointed, and aggravated that the consultation regarding Closed Roads Motor Racing Competition is more concerned with the use of the Welsh Language, rather than the financial and social benefits the ability to close roads would bring to some communities where this would be of more benefit to local business.'*

Welsh Government Response

The responses to question 5 were mostly positive and we are content they further endorse the preferred approach to providing the new Regulations.

Conclusions

Overall, it is clear the consultation exercise held in July and August 2017 on the new Regulations for motor racing in Wales was well received. A total of 76 responses were received from the general public, local authorities, businesses and motor sports organisations.

The consultation exercise sought views on our preferred option to make Regulations in Wales specifying The Motor Sports Association (“MSA”) and The Auto Cycle Union (“ACU”) as bodies authorised to issue permits under section 12B of the RTA for the purpose of motor racing on public highways in Wales.

A good range of comments and issues were raised and an overwhelming majority of respondents were supportive of the preferred approach outlined in the consultation document.