



INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL – HISTORICS

Final Report to CAMS Board – 26 November 2009

Executive Summary

The Independent Review Panel – Historics (“IRP”) was convened by the CAMS Board under a broad ranging Terms of Reference (refer Appendix I) to examine a range of issues relating to the manner in which new groups are introduced into the 5th Category under the auspices of the Australian Historic Motor Sport Commission (“AHMSC”).

Catalyst for this review is the status of Formula Ford cars pre-1990, the extended period of consideration of the next era of Formula Ford and the seemingly increasing complexity of the issues themselves. This process has consumed an enormous amount of the AHMSC’s time and resource of CAMS Administration, neither of which is conducive to good management.

Time and resources are increasingly precious commodities, particularly in a sport that is heavily dependent upon discretionary spending by competitors in their chosen leisure activity. Outcomes that the IRP has focused on relate heavily to the structure and framework to sustain defined groups of cars within the motorsport environment. In deriving a proposed structure and framework, existing policies will be challenged as part of ensuring their ongoing relevance in the current and future motorsport regulatory environment.

Within the AHMSC policy statement the structure for Formula Ford, with the current Groups Fa and Fb, pre-empts the future establishment of Groups Fc, Fd and so on; of note is that the AHMSC policy statement is a fluid document that requires regular updating to ensure its currency within the historic motorsport environment. The IRP notes that very specific interpretations of the AHMSC policy statement have been relied upon in varying ways during the debate on Formula Ford to the detriment of its intent or evolution. To address the issue of natural evolution, the IRP see this as an opportunity to integrate the AHMSC and Australian Motor Racing Commission (“AMRC”) by establishing Groups Fc (1984-1989), Fd¹ (balance of Formula Ford 1600 era) and Fe (Formula Ford Fiesta) now. The IRP further recommends that Group Fc commence a transition period in 2010 between the Commissions with a view to integration into the 5th Category from 1 January 2011.

The IRP is acutely conscious of the views of current stakeholders in Groups Fa, Fb and Historic Motor Race Promoters generally. In recommending the transition of Group Fc to the 5th Category the IRP concludes that this does not mandate that Groups Fa, Fb and Fc must race together. This will be determined by motor race promoters and representatives of each

¹ Whilst the IRP makes this recommendation, the AMRC & AHMSC shall address finer detail to determine whether the balance of the Formula Ford 1600 era is a single group or potentially 2 groups.

group, however the IRP also notes that this will differ between states and events, with the larger events less able to accommodate Group Fc whereas promoters of smaller historic race meetings are likely to welcome the opportunity to increase their field of entries. It is the IRP's view that CAMS provides the structure to support the sport and the Promoters and competitor representative groups will determine the market without CAMS introducing punitive measures to direct what they will do.

IRP Process

Whilst the IRP process has been provided a decisive outcome, conclusions and recommendations, this should not be considered as a normal process for issues to be resolved. The IRP has proposed a structure and recommendations that the AHMSC and AMRC can apply for the foreseeable future and the success of these processes will take time to take effect.

It should also be noted that nothing in this report, beyond the recommendations in relation to Group Fc, imply any automatic right for inclusion in the 5th category.

Consultation Process

With the considerable volumes of material submitted to CAMS over the establishment of Group Fc, the IRP was conscious of not recreating the entire process. Following review of all relevant material, whether specifically referenced in AHMSC minutes or not, the IRP sought written submissions only. The scope of these submissions was targeted at key issues to challenge the claims made to CAMS and therefore test decisions with respect to defining Group Fc and its appropriate competition arena.

In accordance with the Terms of Reference for the IRP, a draft report was released to the AMRC, AHMSC and CAMS Board. This draft report was then released for final stakeholder feedback. The draft report received overwhelmingly positive feedback from individuals with more critical comment from key groups; some of which was opportunistic but much of which was used by the IRP to refine details and recommendations for the final report.

Existing Groups Fa and Fb

With 2009 marking the 40th anniversary of Formula Ford in Australia the IRP is conscious that competitors in these groups have made considerable investment in their own time and resources to celebrate this milestone at Historic race meetings across the eastern states. There exists the potential for competitor numbers in Groups Fa and Fb to reduce in 2010 on the basis that many car owners made such a priority of celebrating the 2009 milestone. A reduction in Group Fa and Fb competitors in 2010 is considered likely based on similar experiences with other historic groups celebrating such milestones (Formula Junior being an example where strong competitor numbers in the anniversary year were not sustained in the subsequent year).

The IRP accepts the concerns of Group Fa and Fb competitors and that of some Historic Race Promoters at being overwhelmed by Group Fc. In states such as Victoria and New South Wales the strength of competitor numbers is likely to enable Groups Fa and Fb to be

sustainable in their own right, however in states such as South Australia and Queensland Promoters are likely to welcome the opportunity to bolster their historic Formula Ford grids. In the latter circumstances the IRP would strongly encourage competitor groups and promoters to work together to provide competition activity that encourages and sustains each group, an example being handicap starts to separate Groups Fa/Fb from Fc.²

The above analysis is also cognisant of experience with Groups Na, Nb and Nc where the introduction of Nc had a dramatic impact on competitor numbers in groups Na and Nb. A key differentiating factor with Formula Ford, however, is that Groups Fa and Fb are preserving the heritage of the sport, rather than replicating an era. Ultimately the number of cars available in the era of the proposed Group Fc will have a marked impact, hence the importance of structuring competition activities to sustain each group.

Group Fc

The AHMSC policy statement makes it natural to assume that Group Fc will, at some time, become the next group for Formula Ford after Groups Fa and Fb. Contrasting with this is the later policy statement that *“New vehicle types considered for inclusion within the 5th Category should have no reasonable place in contemporary motor sport, and it would be expected that 10/15 years should have passed from the time of their competitive contemporary career”*. In the context of the debate over the introduction of Group Fc this policy statement appears to have the effect of encouraging competitors not to compete in regular competition as the measures of “competitiveness” are very fine indeed. The time lapse between a competitive contemporary career and historic classification could arguably discourage preservation of the sport’s heritage as car owners seek to adapt their investment for some other form of competition.

In analysing earlier submissions the IRP sought further submissions with a view to validating the range of views in relation to the period that Group Fc should cover. Without going through the fine detail it became clear that Group Fc should cover the period from the end of Group Fb through to cars with a competition history prior to 31 December 1989 and also to include the Swift DB1 that was specifically excluded from Group Fb.

Categorisation of Formula Ford

The conundrum between contemporary and historic categorisation, preservation of the heritage whilst recognising the car owner’s investment lead the IRP to develop a model for consideration by both Commissions. The IRP recognise that one of the more difficult aspects of determining historic categorisation of Formula Ford is its strength through longevity and continual refinement of technical regulation without the need for wholesale change. In developing this model the intention is to build on these strengths and address the weaknesses that have resulted in the lengthy impasse in relation to the creation of Group Fc. The model is as follows:

² Handicap starts is not a recommendation by the IRP; it’s use in this context is to encourage competitor groups and race meeting promoters to consider as diverse a range of options as possible to structure competition activity to suit local requirements.

Proposed Model for Formula Ford Management & Evolution under CAMS Sanction

	Designation	Comments	Technical	Sporting
Australian Motor Racing Commission	Group Fe* Formula Ford Fiesta 01 January 2001 on	Existing Group; Proposed change in nomenclature	Ongoing technical details approved by AMRC in consultation with AFFM (Fiesta) & FFA (Kent). New cars to have recognition documents	Australian Championship for Group Fe only. Evolution of Group Fe into State competition essential for sustainability of Formula Ford. State competition structured to support/sustain Group Fd & Fe
	Group Fd* Formula Ford 1600 01 January 1990 on	Covers balance of Formula Ford (Kent) era. Bridges Formula Ford (Kent) era between current Group Fb and suggested Group Fd. No appreciable performance differential across the era		
AMRC/AHMSC Transition	Group Fc 01 January 1984 to 31 December 1989 (Incl. Swift DB1)	No further technical development. Existing cars can apply for recognition documents	Sustainable within State competition structure. Not 5 th Category until 01 Jan 2011.	
Australian Historic Motor Sport Commission	Group Fb 01 January 1978 to 31 December 1983 (Excl. Swift DB1)	Existing Groups	Historic CoD required	Sustainable within Historic Motor Sport
	Group Fa Pre 1978			

* Fd & Fc a recommendation for AMRC & AHMSC to refine detail prior to implementation

Designation

- This model has the aim of providing a sustainable, long term, transparent model for Formula Ford that integrates the roles of the respective Commissions enabling them to work together.
- Application of the Group Fa through to Fe nomenclature provides a clear lineage and consistency between Commissions.
- The transitional period is intended to define a period where the Commissions agree on the future need.

Technical

- Use of the discreet groups allows the later groups to continue the evolutionary process without imposing such developments on every car in the contemporary arena.
- From the draft report the AHMSC and some individuals identified the issue of model 'run on' which is a normal process for the Commission to administer. The proposed structure recognises this as a normal process administered by the AHMSC.
- The transitional phase is intended to discourage modification and commence the process of preserving the sport's heritage.
- Enables car owners to continue using their equipment in lieu of a period of dormancy that devalues an investment or encourages adaptation for other uses.
- Introduction of recognition documents is encouraged at all levels to further encourage stability and ease the transitional process.

Sporting

- Introduction of Formula Ford Fiesta (proposed Group Fe) to State level is considered essential for the ongoing sustainability of Formula Ford at all levels. Whilst the IRP received comment seeking changes to representation for Formula Ford Fiesta, this was considered opportunistic and not appropriate for the panel to make any recommendation.
- Transitional arrangements for Group Fc are intended to encourage their participation in state level competition without the threat of having a negative impact on 5th Category status for 2011.
- The structure is not intended (and should not be interpreted) to force Promoters to run events for Groups Fa, Fb and Fc at Historic race meetings. The structure would allow this to occur but it would be the Promoter and Competitor groups to determine.
- Formalisation of Group Fc and its transition to the 5th Category should not be interpreted as forcing historic race meeting Promoters to accommodate Group Fc or prevent contemporary race meeting Promoters from including Group Fc as part of a state based competition. This concept may result in some traditions and regulations being challenged and will require further consideration by the Commissions.

“Competitiveness”

A recurrent theme in submissions to the AHMSC and the IRP related to “competitiveness” amongst the various eras of Formula Ford. The manner in which this line of argument was used in various submissions was troublesome for the IRP given the ethos of Historic motor racing is not about competitiveness and actually about preserving the history of our sport. Little effort was made in submissions to address the evolution of primary or secondary safety provisions through the design and construction of Formula Ford. This is a core reason for the Historic movement to discourage competitiveness and focus on the cars, not the driver's ambitions.

Ultimately the IRP was of the view that such arguments were more to do with perceptions of car values, both for the current Groups Fa/Fb and the expected increase for Group Fc cars once a Certificate of Description is approved. The IRP noted the longer term aim of the AMRC to encourage use of recognition documents for all cars which would have the effect of providing car owners with better records from the contemporary era and reduce the burden in any eventual transition to the 5th Category.

Conclusions

Much of the angst and strongly held positions in the varying submissions has been due to processes that inadvertently encourage car owners to put their cars into garages and not participate. In order to address this anomalous situation the IRP has identified an alternate approach to setting a regulatory framework that sustains Formula Ford generally, encourages the Commissions to work more closely and allows race meeting Promoters and competitors the flexibility to conduct their sport in the manner of their choosing.

Recommendations

- That the Australian Historic Motor Sport Commission and Australian Motor Racing Commission consider and endorse the model presented for sustaining Formula Ford.
- That Group Fc be formalised by 1 January 2010 as a transition from contemporary to historic recognition.
- That applications for Certificates of Description for Group Fc be accepted from 1 January 2010.
- That Group Fc be transitioned into the 5th Category from 1 January 2011.
- That creation of Group Fc also includes the principles of model 'run on' as regularly applied by the AHMSC.
- That the Australian Motor Racing Commission and Australian Historic Motor Sport Commission jointly consider the timeframes applicable to post Group Fc Formula Ford 1600 to determine whether this group is likely to come under a single designation (Group Fd) or require further refinement.
- That the Commissions endorse the principle and concepts outlined in this report to encourage participation and sustainability of Formula Ford in all competitions.

IRP Approval

Signed by IRP Chairman on behalf of IRP members Bill Cutler, Kevin Bartlett, Lyn Punshon, Bob Piper.



Appendix I

INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL – HISTORICS TERMS OF REFERENCE

Context

More recently CAMS has been confronted with a growing need to consider the manner by which vehicle types/categories will transition into the historic discipline. Whilst the recent catalyst for this issue involved Formula Ford vehicles, clearly this issue will continue to present itself in years to come.

This matter is extremely complex and obviously has a significant range of stakeholders and strongly held positions. To alleviate any perceived bias and recognising the importance of maintaining transparency, independence, equitable and robust stakeholder consultation in determining the final outcome, the Board has established an independent review panel to make recommendation to it after conducting an independent analysis of the matter and determination of a position based on merit.

Panel

Graeme Emerton	Chair
Lyn Punshon.....	Member
Kevin Bartlett	Member
Bill Cutler	Member
Bob Piper.....	Observer (Portfolio Holder)

Secretariat

Shawn Graetz.....	Motor Sport Co-ordinator
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Terms of Reference

1. In consultation with key stakeholders, including the Historic Commission, review the set of principles and process outlined in the *Historic Commission Policy Statement* which are aimed to identifying the process by which vehicle types/categories will transition into the historic discipline;
2. Liaise with the Australian Motor Racing Commission (AMRC) to ensure its category framework and the proposed transition arrangements into the historic discipline are consistent and provide a clear pathway between the two discrete areas;
3. Review and determine the appropriate transition arrangements for Formula Ford vehicles;
4. Identify and confirm with the Historic Commission any other category and/or vehicle type that may require transition within the next (2) years and make recommendations on how these should be managed;
5. Consider any other related issue raised during the stakeholder consultation and/or review and make appropriate recommendations to the Board.

Timing

1. Panel convened.....	March 2009
2. Consultation process.....	April – July 2009
3. Draft report presented to Board.....	September 2009
4. Draft report released for stakeholder feedback.....	October 2009
5. Final report presented to Board.....	November 2009
6. Board decision/s.....	December 2009
7. Outcomes take effect.....	January 2010