

Dear Club Secretary

As you are probably aware on Wednesday 16th February last on the occasion of his visit to Ireland, the President of the FIA Mr. Jean Todt launched a road safety initiative. This initiative will see Motorsport Ireland and the Road Safety Association (RSA) working together to promote road safety through motorsport, (Press Release attached).

The initiative, while launched, is still very much in its infancy. Prior to the visit of the FIA President there had been some communication between MI and the RSA re working together in relation to road safety, but the detail was at an early stage of development. The visit of the President of the FIA however was seen by both parties as the perfect opportunity to launch the initiative; hence it took place somewhat earlier than anticipated. The result of this is that currently the various promotional items are as yet unavailable. Presently the RSA graphic designers are working on designing a 'brand' for the initiative which can be used nationally, in for example advertisements in event programs, road signage, on event documentation, websites, TV motorsport programs etc. When this becomes available in the near future it will be circulated to all Motor Clubs.

A significant part of the initiative which is in place is the agreement of Craig Breen and Toni Kelly to act as ambassadors for MI and the RSA in promoting road safety. They will be in attendance at various activities which hopefully will take place throughout the year and MI and the RSA are grateful to have two such role models working with them in this regard. Another asset to the initiative is the fact that Aaron MacHale, a member of the Board of the RSA and a former National Rally Champion, has agreed to assist in any way possible to promote this road safety through motorsport initiative.

Once the 'branding' is in place, the final piece of the jigsaw is the motor clubs. This initiative is an opportunity to promote motorsport in a positive light. It is an opportunity for motorsport to contribute positively to society. Because of its appeal to young males, i.e. those most at risk on the roads, motorsport can offer an opportunity to deliver both a road safety message and an environment where driving competitively can be enjoyed in a controlled and disciplined manner. Motorsport Ireland is requesting that Motor Clubs throughout the country embrace this opportunity for motorsport firstly by appointing a Road Safety Officer, and secondly by organising in their areas, events which can be used to promote this road safety through motorsport initiative. These events may be stand alone or in conjunction / associated with a motorsport event, and may be in conjunction with other appropriate bodies eg. Gardai, RSA, County Councils, Fire Services etc., and may be large or small.

My role in the initiative is to encourage, support and assist clubs to become active in promoting the road safety message through motorsport. If I can be of any assistance in this regard please do not hesitate to contact me. As and when the 'brand' design work is completed, I will forward same to you for use in adverts, signage etc. In the meantime can I encourage you to actively participate in this opportunity to promote both road safety and motorsport.

Your in Motorsport



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Motorsport Ireland Press Release by email:

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Attention: Photo editors, News Editors, Sports desks, Motoring correspondents,
Transport correspondents

Press Release

16 February 2011

FIA PRESIDENT JEAN TODT LAUNCHES ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVE

The President of the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), Jean Todt, today launched Motorsport Ireland's new road safety initiative which is supported by the Road Safety Authority (RSA) and aimed at young drivers, particularly those aged between 17 and 24 who are most at risk on Irish roads. The initiative is part of Motorsport Ireland's activity for the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety which will be launched on 11 May and aims to save five million lives on the world's roads over the next ten years.

From today (16 February 2011), all participants in Irish four-wheeled motorsport will display the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety Tag which has been designed to encourage support for road safety. The tag, which has the message WEAR. BELIEVE. ACT., will reach an Irish audience of hundreds of thousands of motorsport fans with the clear message, 'Motorsport supports safe driving'.

Speaking at the launch today, Mr Jean Todt said:

"Our sport wants to do everything that it can to help spread the message about safe driving. Irish efforts to improve road safety have been most impressive, winning admiration around the globe. But we still believe that we can do more and that motorsport can help. Motorsport internationally has invested millions in safety. Indeed many key modern safety features like ABS brakes, tyre technology and crumple zones were developed in the crucible of motorsport before becoming standard on cars and saving many, many lives."

"This initiative is about declaring our support for safer roads and safer drivers, and encouraging our drivers, teams and thousands of fans to do the same."

Mr Alex Sinclair, Chief Executive of Motorsport Ireland said:

"We know that in Ireland young people, and especially young males, are much more likely to be killed on the roads. We also know that motorsport is hugely popular, with fans turning out in their tens of thousands to support our national and international events. Motorsport Ireland is committed to promoting road safety in motorsports and this initiative will contribute to both the national and global campaigns to save lives on our roads."

Commenting on the initiative, Mr Noel Brett, Chief Executive of the RSA said:

“Tragically, young men are over represented in road deaths in Ireland. In fact, young men aged between 17 to 24 years of age are five times more likely to die on the road compared to the rest of the driver population. We also know that Ireland probably has one of the highest numbers of rallying fans per head of population in Europe so it is vital that we engage with this group at their level and in their space to effect changes in attitudes and behaviour. We are delighted to support Motorsport Ireland’s initiative which will take the safe driving message straight to the most important audience. It will show that if you love driving and you love motorsport, then you should respect the roads and drive safely.”

Motorsport Ireland’s message was supported by its two young Ambassadors for Road Safety, rally drivers Craig Breen (21) from Waterford, and Toni Kelly (22) from Donegal. Their messages to young drivers are simple:

- Taking risks on public roads isn’t cool.
- If a young driver wants to practise their skill behind the wheel of a car, they can do so in a controlled environment through organised Motorsport events.

All participants in Motorsport will now be encouraged to “Wear the TAG”, the metal badge that declares their support for the Decade of Action for Road Safety. The tag and further information on the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety is available at www.decadeofaction.org

ENDS

Note to Editors:

Motorsport Ireland’s Activity for the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety:

- Signage based on 8 x 4 sheets mounted between stages in Rallies
- Recruitment of part time MI Road Safety Officer (RSO), Robert Lyttle
- Recruitment of MI Ambassadors, Rally drivers Craig Breen and (Ms.)Toni Kelly
- Displays to coincide with motorsport events throughout the country involving Road versus Rally cars to demonstrate differences
- Standard media pack to accompany demonstrations
- Working with local authorities & RSOs
- Each local motor club to appoint volunteer RSO
- Club programme will be co-ordinated by RL & MI office.