

Rocky Mountain DIVISION, SCCA

2013 Radio Protocols and Procedures

KEEPING THE CHIEF STEWARD INFORMED:

Concise radio communications from the corner network and the administration network are essential to the flow of a safe race weekend. Information on the corner net (Channel 1) keeps the Operators constantly updated to activity on course in regards to driver and official safety. Information on the administration net (Channel 2) keeps the back-up Stewards, Grid, Tech and Timing posted of all changes coming from Registration. Emergency Services also uses Channel 2 and has proprietary use of the channel during hot track time. Race administration uses Channel 2 so it is key that all personnel utilize the "Listen first" mantra.

In case of a protest, complaint, or question, all communication from Channel 1 is written into a permanent record by the Logger (who sits next to Control in the tower).

RADIO PROCEDURES:

One of the most important things when communicating any situation or incident is BE CALM. Relax, take a couple of deep breaths, and talk slowly, clearly, and give the report in as few words as necessary. Remember, the radio net is the eyes of the Stewards, so be clear!

Listen first! Radios do not allow more than one conversation at a time.

Headset users: Hold the mike against your lips when talking and speak in a normal tone of voice.

Please, no unnecessary chit-chat during on track sessions.

Try to remember that the Control operators sometimes have four or five people in the tower talking to them while you are talking to them, so be patient; we're "running as fast as we can".

CALL PROCEDURES CHANNEL 1:

Listen first!

**Press and hold button for 2-3 seconds before speaking. (Let the delay engage).*

Channel 1: "Control...Control; this is corner #_____, (flag condition)".

Wait for Control to respond.

Channel 1: Control will answer, "Go ahead corner#_____".

Channel 1: Give control car #, color, WHAT happened (car spun and continued, drove off, etc...), WHERE did it happen (drivers left, right, entrance of turn, exit of turn etc...), WHEN did it happen (current lap call or 1 lap prior, 2 laps prior, etc...). Did car re-enter safely? If car is disabled, relay assistance required (flat tow, wrecker, drive it in at end of session) as soon as known for everyone's safety. If the wrecker/tow is needed NOW (a car that can't be moved in a target/dangerous position) this decision should be from the Captain. If unsure ask for help from the Tower.

Example 1: "Control...Control, this is corner 4, waving yellow". Control: "Go ahead corner 4".

Corner #___: "Car #5-6(56) blue has spun center course awaiting re-entry, we are waving yellow".

Control will repeat call: "Car 5-6 blue has spun center, awaiting re-entry Corner 4; waving yellow. Keep me posted".

Corner 4: "Control, Control this is Corner 4 no flag. Car 5-6 blue has re-entered safely. We are back to green from waving yellow.

Control will respond: Copy 4. Car 5-6 blue has re-entered, Corner 4 is back to green.

The communication varies with the incident or advisories, but that is the gist of the protocol. A request for a back-up flag from the upstream station or calling in a change of flag condition at a station is handled with briefer calls to Control. Individual black flags, mechanical flags, and open individual black flags are called by Control through the Operating Steward. A full course yellow, full course black or red flag is done ONLY upon request of Control.

CALL PROCEDURES CHANNEL 2:

Listen first! Be familiar with the proposed timeline of the schedule so as not to interrupt the Grid clock.

Channel 2: "Control...Control this is Registration with an update".

Wait for Control to respond.

Channel 2: Control will answer, "Go ahead Registration".

Example 2: "I have a late entry for group 2; Jimmy Adams, car # 1, SM, blue, transponder #___, member #___, region of record___, and license grade, racing both days".

(Channel 2) communicates a change in car# or driver, driver not on entry list, etc. Confirmation from T&S, Grid, and Tech let Control know that the update(s) have been received by all specialties necessary.

Control will help through first few communications at the beginning of each event. Relax and enjoy!

EMERGENCY RADIO PROCEDURES:

The best procedures come during a serious incident which needs immediate attention.

Again, BE CALM. Seconds may count in this situation. Vital information about the incident and the need for help must be communicated clearly and accurately. The "Alert-Alert" call is only for the most serious incidents when the emergency vehicles need to be alerted/stood up and the radio cleared of all other traffic.

CHANNEL 1 ALERT PROCEDURE:

"Alert...Alert at corner #___". (Wait for Control to respond, (s)he might not have heard you. All other corners should stay off the air). Control may quickly remind all other stations to maintain radio silence unless they too have an alert.

Control will answer, "Go ahead corner #___".

TAKE A DEEP BREATH

Tell what happened (flip, fire, roll, heavy impact, etc...). Let Control know if you need, in order, AMBULANCE, FIRE, WRECKER. Be sure to include in your initial report if you have track blockage (25%-50% etc.) and if your blockage is driver's right, left or center. This is crucial information for the Stewards to decide if rescue can be handled on a hot track or if the track needs to be shut down.

First concern is for your driver(s). Remember you are not doctors. When in doubt, even a shadow, call for the ambulance. Fire rescue will automatically come as escort. NO medical conditions are given over the air; you never know who is listening in. If your driver(s) were able to exit their cars unassisted advise Control of such and keep a sharp eye on them. It is amazing how adrenaline can work on a human body (your own included). Your driver(s) may not need medical help immediately; that can change in an instant. ANY hard impact should be a call for the Ambulance.

As emergency vehicles arrive at the corner, report this to Control. It is not necessary to keep up a running commentary of what is happening but frequent updates are necessary to allow Control and the Operators to manage the incident for everyone's safety. The biggest update is letting Control know if your "Alert" can be downgraded so communication with all other stations can be re-established, especially if the track remained hot. Remember what seems like a few seconds to you can seem like an eternity to those in the Tower. You have the visual, Control does not.

If you stay calm and focus on what needs to be done for a safe resolution to the incident, you will do fine.

REMEMBER: YOUR SAFETY COMES FIRST AND FOREMOST!!!!!!

The last thing Control wants is to hear is "Worker Down" (worker hurt).

You are NOT required NOR expected to risk your life.

Thank you very much for your participation in the sport we love.