

## Chairman's Report to SACC Meeting – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017

The calendar on my computer tells me the summer is coming to an end and the season moves into autumn. I need to look at the calendar because I seem to have been looking at rain out of the window for all of the last few months. But that has not put any dampener on the ongoing extensive schedule of motor sport events across Scotland. These continue to take place every weekend.

It never fails to surprise me when I look on the MSA website to see what events are coming up. Over the weekend running up to the September SACC meeting there are 11 permitted events listed in Scotland and another 9 the following weekend. I can only put a degree of trust in all of the SACC clubs that they are considering if demand really exists for all of them. I know the effort required to organise any event and the disappointment when a club is forced to cancel for any reason as was the case with Stonehaven DMC recently when their Rally Time Trial at Drumtochty did not get enough entries.

The number of events puts demands on club resources in many ways. Berwick & district were forced to cancel an Autocross recently because they were unable to secure the services of the necessary medical safety cover. The MSA continues to highlight the value of volunteers to motor sport. This is the time of year for everyone to think about this and to consider making nominations for both the MSA Club of the year and MSA Volunteer of the year. The process is set out on the MSA website and I encourage all clubs to think seriously about putting nominations forward.

Another worrying incident came to my attention recently from Buchan Off Road Club who were advised by the owner of one of their regular venues that vehicles had been seen on the land at a time when there was no authorised event. I would urge all SACC clubs to stress to all their members that access to venues for all forms of motor sport, rallies, trials, autotests, autocross etc is a sensitive issue. It is essential that we all respect the land owners by not abusing the privileged access we may have.

I closed my report to the last SACC meeting by mentioning the work being put in to preparing for the Fatal Accident Inquiry which started in the middle of July. As I write this report, the proceedings are almost completed and by the time we meet, the evidence hearing stage should have ended. We will then need to wait for the publication of any findings and recommendations although these are not expected until early 2018. This inquiry has involved a large number of individuals and I know the stress and strain it has put on them.

My only involvement has been to sit in court on a few days listening to witnesses give evidence. My reason for doing this is simply to get a feel for the process and through this to have a better understanding of what conclusions might be reached. Clearly, I am not an unbiased observer but what has come across in what I have seen and heard is that motor sport is an activity which has a strong governance structure, a good understanding of risk management and a very competent event delivery process through a cohort of experienced and capable volunteers. I hope that my view is shared by the Sherriff in his findings but, as I said last time, whether we like it or not, the outcome of the Inquiry has the potential to impact on all motor sport disciplines across all of the UK.

Something already having an impact on all our lives, again whether we like it or not, is social media. I know that not everyone embraces the murky world of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat etc but most of those that do will have realised that it can be a force for both good and bad. These channels of communication are used to great effect by many SACC clubs and indeed by the Association itself but we need to take care. I was involved in an incident myself recently when it was pointed out that a comment I intended to be humorous could be read another way. I acknowledged this and altered it immediately. I don't want to get into more specifics; simply to urge all the SACC clubs to bring to the attention of their members the [Best Practice Guidelines on the use of Social Media by MSA Members](#).

**Pete Weall**

Chairman, Scottish Association of Car Clubs