

## **DRIVING STANDARDS GUIDELINES**

The objectives of the Drivers Commission are:

- **Safe racing**
- **Hard and competitive racing**
- **Fair racing**
- **Sporting justice**
- **Consistency across all categories**
- **Standardization of driving standards and race direction operation across all categories.**

**The Drivers Commission recommends:**

- This driving standards document should be implemented across all categories of circuit racing.
- All previous incidents and cases where penalties may or may not have been applied will no longer be regarded as precedent. From 2024, these guidelines form the basis for decisions made by the Stewards, noting that they are “guidelines”, and that each incident has its own characteristics.
- The relevant parts of this document shall be included within Appendix L of the International Sporting Code from January 1, 2025. The relevant parts are those sections following the heading “Driving Standards” including sections A to H. The recommendations will be separately circulated to Stewards, Race Directors, and Clerks of Course.

### **Preamble**

- Overtaking should be incentivized and defending a position unfairly or dangerously is not acceptable.
- It is very important that junior drivers race with the same guidelines as F1. However, less tolerance should be applied because the risk of an accident is higher due to their limited experience. Being stricter in applying the rules in lower formulas is essential for junior driver development.
- It is imperative to reiterate at any team and drivers briefing that the guidelines will be applied during the entirety of the event. The Race Director and Stewards will be available to clarify any questions that drivers and teams may have with regards to the guidelines.
- The Stewards and Driver Advisor (if appointed) will, if possible, always attend the drivers briefing.
- Application of the guidelines should be enforced throughout the event, with particular attention to respect of yellow flags and track limits.
- Regarding track limits, the Stewards will always satisfy themselves that the infractions are clear. Drivers will be given the benefit of the doubt when the infraction is not clear.
- A Driver Steward or Driver Advisor should be appointed for each category or series.

## **DRIVING STANDARDS**

**Racing is a dynamic process.** Although these guidelines indicate specific relative positions of the cars at various points, the Stewards and Driver Advisor (if appointed) will always look at how each incident evolved for example:

- I. How did the cars get to the incident? (e.g. late braking, diving in, moving under braking, change of track condition, wheel lock-up.)
- II. Was the manoeuvre late or “overly optimistic”?
- III. What could the Drivers reasonably see, know, or anticipate?
- IV. Could the manoeuvre have been completed on the track?
- V. Was understeer / oversteer / brake locking exhibited by either car?
- VI. Did a driver position / manoeuvre their car in a way that contributed to the incident?
- VII. Did the type of corner contribute to the incident? (e.g. camber, kerbs, curve, apexes)
- VIII. Consideration of the relative grip that the drivers have, the condition of the tyres and circuit conditions, whilst acknowledging that the drivers must drive to the level of grip they have available and cannot use it as an excuse for an incident.

### **A. Overtaking on the INSIDE of a corner:**

To be entitled to be given room when overtaking on the INSIDE, the overtaking car must:

1. Have its front axle **AT LEAST ALONGSIDE** the mirror/middle# of the other car at the apex of the corner.
2. Be driven in a controlled manner throughout the manoeuvre (entry, apex, and exit).
3. Not force the other car off the track at the exit. This includes leaving a fair and acceptable width for the car being overtaken (on the outside) from the apex to the exit of the corner. \*,
4. Be able to make the corner within the track limits.

\* If the overtaking car on the inside has its front axle at least alongside the middle of the car on the outside that is being overtaken, the car on the inside must not then force the other car wide such that the car on the outside is required to exceed track limits to avoid contact.

# As these guidelines apply to a range of different circuit race vehicles, it is left to the Stewards in each particular discipline to determine whether to apply the “mirror” to this guideline or the “middle of the other car”.

### **B. Overtaking on the OUTSIDE of a corner:**

**Overtaking on the outside will always be viewed as a more difficult manoeuvre to accomplish.**

Therefore, to be entitled to be given “room” \*, including at the exit, when overtaking on the OUTSIDE, the overtaking car must:

1. Have the front axle **AT LEAST alongside WITH** the front axle of the other car, at the apex of the corner and to the exit,
2. Be driven in a controlled manner throughout the manoeuvre (entry, apex, and exit),
3. Be able to make the corner within the track limits.

\* If the overtaking car on the outside has its front axle at least alongside the front axle of the car on the inside that is being overtaken, the car on the inside must not then force the other car wide such that the car on the outside is required to exceed track limits to avoid contact.

### **C. Chicanes and S-Bends:**

1. The above guidelines for INSIDE and OUTSIDE may be applied independently for each element of the combination at the discretion of the Stewards taking into account the entire sequence.
2. For clarity, priority will be given to the first corner element.

### **D. STRAIGHT:**

1. In accordance with Appendix L, more than one change of direction to defend a position is not permitted.
2. Any driver moving back towards the racing line, having earlier defended their position off-line, must leave at least one car width between their car and the track edge line on the approach to the corner.
3. If there is any part of the car alongside the other, racing room must be given. A driver trying to overtake must not have to “back off” because they are forced off the track by the defending driver.
4. When defending, a driver must not make a late change of direction, with the intention of blocking, as a reaction to an attacking move from the car behind even if that is its first move.
5. Moves intended to break a slipstream of a following car when the following car is a safe distance behind, considering relative speeds and position on the track, may be acceptable.

### **E. BRAKING:**

When defending, there must be no change in direction by the defending car, after the deceleration phase has commenced, except to follow the racing line.

### **F. RE-ENTRY ON TRACK:**

1. Track re-entry must be done with caution. Maintaining racing speeds in the runoff area is not permitted.
2. Cars re-entering the circuit must give way to any car on track. Cars on track must not be forced to change speed or line to avoid a re-entering car.

### **G. TRACK LIMITS:**

1. Respecting track limits is very important for both, racing fairness and safety.
2. Driving at the limit and being able to stay on track at all times, is considered an important skill that must be rewarded.
3. In the case of an infringement in Qualifying, the lap time will be deleted, and also the time of the subsequent lap if it is deemed that there could be a benefit.
4. In Free Practice, invalid lap times will always be deleted as under certain circumstances FP times may be needed to set the grid. Repeated offences will be judged under Appendix L.
5. Whilst defending a position, if a car leaves the track (or cuts an apex of a chicane) and re-joins in the same position, it will generally be considered by the Stewards as having gained a lasting advantage and

therefore, generally, the position should be given back at the first opportunity. It will be the sole discretion of the Stewards to determine if the driver of a car is “defending a position”.

6. Drivers must note that if the order of following cars changes after the infraction, they must fall behind the car that was behind them at the time of the infraction in order for the Stewards to consider that the advantage has been given back. This may mean giving up more than one position.

#### H. SAFETY CAR:

In order to avoid the likelihood of accidents before the Safety Car returns to the pits, from the point at which the lights on the car are turned out drivers must proceed at a pace which involves no erratic acceleration or braking nor any manoeuvre which is likely to endanger other drivers or impede the restart.

It is clear that the actions of the lead driver in particular can have a significant impact on the safety of the restart procedure. Although the leading driver has both the right to dictate pace as well as to choose the point at which to accelerate, this does not relieve them of their responsibility to avoid creating a potentially dangerous situation as defined in the Code Appendix L Ch IV 2(e).

In assessing what driving conduct would be considered potentially dangerous at a restart after a safety car period, amongst other factors, the Stewards will look at:

- the speed chosen by the leader for the restart (e.g. abnormally slow)
- any variation in speed
- the amount, duration and breadth of weaving (e.g. more than 1 cars width)
- whether the weaving continued after SC line 1
- whether the acceleration was in a straight line or at an abnormal angle to the circuit’s natural direction
- the track surface conditions at the time of the restart

If in the Stewards opinion any driver has driven in a manner that is determined to be dangerous then it is likely that a significant penalty will be applied.

