



# 2011 FLAGGING, COMMUNICATIONS AND SAFETY/INTERVENTION GUIDELINES

>AMERICAN LE MANS SERIES >GT3 CUP CHALLENGE >PROTOTYPE LIGHTS CHAMPIONSHIP  
02.21.11

## FLAGGING GUIDELINES

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### **YELLOW FLAG**

- > Used to signal obvious danger or forewarn of a more serious danger ahead. Displayed to drivers in three ways with the following meanings:
- > **1. MOTIONLESS YELLOW** for a car **off course** or in a runoff area. No overtaking.
- > **2. WAVED YELLOW** for 1) a car or safety truck stopped **on course**; 2) **large debris** that cannot be driven over; 3) a car in a runoff **being attended by safety team or marshal**. No overtaking.
- > **3. DOUBLE MOTIONLESS YELLOW FLAGS** indicate a **full-course yellow during a race**, and will be called for by Race Control. **Any flag posts with incidents shall continue to flag the incident**. Withdraw the two yellow flags when instructed by Race Control or when the last car pits during a practice or qualifying session.
- > **NO FLAG** is required for cars that drive directly into a runoff area without stopping and proceed behind the barriers to the back of the runoff. Display a waved yellow as the car returns to the track.
- > **A motionless yellow is displayed at the flag post immediately preceding a post with a waved yellow flag.**
- > **Overtaking is not permitted between the first yellow flag and the green flag displayed after the incident.**
- > Selected posts may be equipped with a flashing yellow light which is a **supplement** to flag signals. The lights will be activated and then turned off by Race Control during a full-course yellow sequence.

### **SURFACE FLAG**

- > Display a **MOTIONLESS SURFACE FLAG** to inform drivers that there is deterioration of adhesion due to oil, water or excessive dirt on the track. Display for two laps or until the surface returns to normal.
- > **NO FLAG** is required for fluid or debris off line that is not in danger of being hit.

### **WHITE FLAG**

- > A signal indicating a much slower vehicle ahead, displayed to drivers in two ways with the following meanings:
- > **1. MOTIONLESS WHITE** for a slow race car, moving at more than 1/3 normal speed
- > **2. WAVED WHITE** for a very slow race car moving at less than 1/3 normal speed, OR for a safety vehicle.

### **GREEN FLAG**

- > Displayed waving to indicate the track is clear ahead.
- > A **WAVED GREEN** is displayed at the next flag post downstream from an incident that requires a yellow flag.
- > All posts will display a **WAVED GREEN** for the first lap of any session or race, and all restarts thereof.

### **RED FLAG**

- > A **WAVED RED** is displayed *when notified by Race Control* to interrupt a practice or qualifying session, or stop a race. All drivers will proceed at reduced speed to the pit lane. Any overtaking should be reported.

# BLUE FLAG CONSISTENCY GUIDELINES

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## ***REQUIREMENTS:***

Marshals assigned the task of blue flagging are expected to be familiar with the relative speeds of the cars and classes during practice and qualifying sessions. Reports of the fastest cars in any session are given at regular intervals. The communicator should record and relay this information to the blue flagger. If there is a second headset for listening to the comm network on the post, it should be used by the blue flagger.

During the course of the event, the post Captain should evaluate the performance of the persons assigned to blue flagging to ensure that the most qualified marshals are assigned to blue flag during races.

## ***SIGNALING:***

Drivers recommend that blue flags be displayed with a degree of urgency. The following are accepted standards for communicating these degrees:

- > **MOTIONLESS or (rocked) BLUE FLAG:** Another competitor is following closely and is preparing to overtake.
- > **WAVED BLUE FLAG:** You are being rapidly overtaken. Blue Flaggers are asked to give extra emphasis if they feel that the driver of the car being overtaken is unaware of the following car, or is clearly obstructing another car.
- > Using these methods, a driver should see several motionless blue flags followed by one or two waved blue flags before being passed. Flaggers are also urged to add movement to the blue flag whenever their flagging position is a long distance from the racing surface, where movement would increase the visibility of the flag.
- > A motionless (or rocked) blue flag should be displayed to a driver leaving the pits if traffic is approaching.

## ***DURING PRACTICE:***

- > When the same two cars are running in close quarters for a number of laps, do not display the blue flag for more than two laps.
- > The most common complaint of our drivers is a lack of blue flags. Allow the slower traffic plenty of advance warning (several posts prior) before the overtaking is anticipated.

## ***DURING THE RACE:***

- > **It is important to note that blue flags displayed from corner posts are always **ADVICE**, they are never commands.**
- > **NEVER** display the blue flag to cars racing for position, only to lapped traffic.
- > It is an important responsibility of blue flaggers to familiarize themselves with the starting grid. The Communicator will be given periodic reports regarding the positions of the leading cars and is expected to update the Blue Flagger accordingly.
- > During the course of the race, the Race Director may request extra or less blue flags for particular cars in certain situations via the comm network. Blue Flaggers and Communicators are expected to work together on these requests as much as possible.

# COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

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## ***OVERVIEW:***

Race Control does not need a play by play of incidents as they happen. There are other sources of data available: video, replays and electronic time lines. But data can be misinterpreted, and video only shows a two-dimensional picture from one angle. Marshals and communicators see events as they unfold, in three dimensions, witnessing objects and events that video and data cannot. Always be prepared to elaborate on what you have seen when asked by Race Control, or if you feel Race Control is unaware of important details.

## ***INCIDENT CALLS:***

When an incident occurs that may require the session to be stopped (a car spun, in a runoff, stopped or contact with the wall), very little is required on the first calls to Race Control. Calling in with your post number and flag condition alerts Race Control as to the degree of your incident, even before you begin describing it. **The Race Director needs to determine right away if we need to interrupt the session to retrieve the car.** After Race Control answers your first call, all that is needed on your next call is where the car is located and if it is running.

### **> FIRST CALL:**

**POST NUMBER & FLAG CONDITION: GREEN, YELLOW, WAVING YELLOW or SURFACE?**

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### **> SECOND CALL:**

**CAR NUMBER & LOCATION: DRIVER'S LEFT, CENTER, DRIVER'S RIGHT or RUNOFF?**

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**ENGINE STATUS: RUNNING or NOT RUNNING?**

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***All series drivers are instructed to lift their visor when their engine has stalled and they need help. Please look for this signal and notify Race Control immediately.***

### ***REMEMBER:***

- > At the beginning, where the car sits is more important than how it got there.
- > If the track is blocked, try to give control a percentage of how much is blocked.
- > If a car spins quickly and is about to continue, do your best to call in as the car continues.
- > The Safety Communicator looks to us to relay car location to Safety Team so they can get there safely.
- > If the number cannot be seen, report the color and the sponsor if visible - some team cars look alike!
- > If the car is close to a safe area, the Race Director may decide to save time by not dispatching the Safety Team.
- > On any subsequent calls, you may report other details or progress of the incident.

## **DEBRIS CALLS:**

Debris or surface calls require good judgement and detailed communication, as “debris on course” could mean anything from a harmless item to something that could cause a stoppage of the session. To avoid a time-consuming exchange of questions and answers with Race Control, do your best to report the following when dealing with debris:

<b>LOCATION?:</b>	<b>OFF LINE RIGHT</b>	<b>ON LINE</b>	<b>OFF LINE LEFT</b>
<b>DEBRIS IS?:</b>	<b>APPROX SIZE ?x?</b>	<b>FLAT or DIMENSIONAL</b>	<b>SOFT HARD FLUID</b>
<b>CARS ARE?:</b>	<b>DRIVING OVER IT</b>	<b>LOSING TRACTION</b>	<b>DRIVING AROUND</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATION?:</b>	<b>WILL WATCH IT</b>	<b>FLAG FOR TWO LAPS</b>	<b>STOP THE SESSION</b>

### **REMEMBER:**

- > Make every attempt to determine what the debris is, even if it takes a while or several opinions. Give your best estimate on size.
- > Don't be afraid to recommend stopping the session, if you have a dangerous object in the line that could cause an accident, or a line of fluid causing loss of traction.
- > **IF THE SESSION IS STOPPED, ESTIMATE HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE FOR A MARSHAL TO RETRIEVE THE DEBRIS ONCE THE LAST CAR GOES BY. THEN PLEASE WAIT FOR PERMISSION FROM RACE CONTROL BEFORE RETRIEVING!!**

## **OTHER CALLS:**

- > **SHORTCUTS:** Let Race Control know immediately when a cornering car places ALL FOUR WHEELS off the racing surface on the inside apex of a corner, at racing speed. Ask for clarification whether the curb is part of the racing surface. Circumstances can vary from track to track.
- > Call control if a car goes **FOUR WHEELS OFF COURSE**, but not for just two.
- > Notify control on any **CAR-TO-CAR CONTACT** and provide car numbers or colors.
- > Call **SLOW CARS** only if there is a change in flag condition, or if you suspect a mechanical problem. **When back up to speed, another post should advise Race Control.**
- > Call in any **HOT, MOTOR OIL OR GEAR OIL ODORS**, or if a leaking car is affecting the condition of the course.
- > The post closest to the **PIT ENTRANCE** should notify control whenever any car being observed or black flagged pits.

### **OVERTAKING UNDER YELLOW:**

- > Overtaking is not allowed between the *first yellow flag* displayed and the *waved green flag past the incident*.
- > On restarts, overtaking is not permitted until “GREEN FLAG” is called over the comm network.
- > Report all passes, even if they appear to be corrections. The most likely time for an illegal pass is in the first few moments after a yellow is displayed, or a full course yellow is called.
- > Reports must be made within one lap of the pass so they might be corrected if possible.
- > Wave-bys are not permitted unless a driver pulls out of line to allow all cars by.

### **WRITTEN REPORTS:**

- > A written report for an incident is required only when called for by Race Control.

# PRE-RACE INSTRUCTIONS

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- > **ALL RACE COMMUNICATORS SHOULD REVIEW THESE INSTRUCTIONS AT LEAST 20 MINUTES PRIOR TO ENGINE START BEFORE EACH RACE. PLEASE ASK RACE CONTROL IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR NEED CLARIFICATION!**

## ***pre-start:***

- > Control will announce the race distance and number of parade or pace laps.

## ***pace laps:***

- > NO FLAGS ARE TO BE DISPLAYED FOR ANY PACE LAPS EXCEPT FOR ANY INCIDENTS.
- > Any car late to the grid may be released by Race Control but may not regain its original starting position.
- > Prior to the start or a restart, the first post to see the Safety Car lights go out will notify Race Control.
- > Race Control will request which posts call the leader around prior to restarts.

## ***start:***

- > If there is a waved off start, all posts will display a single motionless yellow until asked to be withdrawn by Race Control.
- > The post at the 1st turn will call the leader at the start unless there is an incident.

## ***race:***

- > The post nearest pit in will call the leader into the pits, especially if it is before the start!
- > Race Control will keep you posted on running order and lapped cars - please share this info with your blue flagger!

## ***full course yellows:***

- > As soon as the incident call requiring the full course yellow is completed, all posts should call the leader through until captured by the pace car.
- > Call any and all passes and repasses under the yellow. Remember that passes usually happen just after the yellows are displayed.
- > Prior to restarts, withdraw the double yellows when the Safety Car lights go out.
- > No overtaking on the restart until the starter or race control calls "GREEN."

# SAFETY/INTERVENTION GUIDELINES

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***DO NOT GO ON COURSE, INTO A RUNOFF OR OUT FROM BEHIND A BARRIER WITHOUT CLEARANCE FROM RACE CONTROL. WHEN IN DOUBT, OR IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE, PLEASE REQUEST A SAFETY TRUCK! THIS INCLUDES GOING OUT TO A WRECKED OR DISABLED CAR AFTER THE COURSE IS FULL COURSE YELLOW.***

## ***INTERVENTION:***

- > If cleared by Race Control to move a car into a safer location, **CONSULT WITH THE DRIVER** before doing anything. Make sure the driver knows your intentions, and that you are acting on the order of Race Control.
- > When moving a car, use two Marshals. If the car cannot be moved safely with just two Marshals, request a Safety Truck. Ask the driver to get out and help if needed and if the car is retiring.
- > If a driver fails to cooperate in allowing a car to be moved at the request of Race Control, leave the car and notify Race Control.
- > Only the driver may work on a disabled car during a race. No crew member or any other person is permitted to assist. No fuel can be added. No outside tools or parts can be supplied.
- > A driver may go no further than 10 meters/33 feet from a disabled car or he is disqualified.
- > During any intervention, please take direction from the IMSA Safety Team if they arrive on the scene.

## ***FIRE SAFETY:***

- > The various IMSA sanctioned series use a variety of fuels and fuel mixtures. The preferred extinguishing agent is the 6% mixture of AFFF (aqueous film forming foam) with water. ABC dry-chem extinguishers are also acceptable but care should be used to avoid directing the powder stream directly at a driver's head to avoid possible inhalation and the resulting breathing difficulties.
- > **Only fight a fire when there is no one else around to do it.** Recognize that they are difficult to put out, and that you do not have protective equipment covering your entire body. Concern yourself with your safety first, then the driver, not the car.

## ***BEFORE & BETWEEN SESSIONS:***

- > After the last car is in the pits, Marshals are encouraged to make routine track inspections on course. When on courses with blind corners, be sure to place a Marshal and flag on course upstream of the corner so that any circulating safety vehicles are alerted to the presence of Marshals on course around the corner. This "point" Marshal should also warn their fellow Marshals around the corner of oncoming vehicles!
- > At street circuits, please check the landline cables every morning and move them back so a potential barrier contact will not pinch or crush the cable behind the barrier!

## ***PREFERRED CLOTHING:***

The preferred color of clothing for IMSA Flag/Corner Marshals should be white. Recognizing the unique qualities, individuality and the international nature of our Marshals, IMSA supports identifying articles of Marshal's attire indicating professional, personal or international allegiances, provided white remains the predominant color. Caps, hats, gloves and other accessories are up to the individual. Yellow or red raingear should be avoided.