

MOTORSPORT IRELAND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



Policy overview and purpose

Social media is changing the way we communicate.

This policy has been developed to inform our community about using social media so that people feel enabled to participate while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations. In particular, this policy provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of social media, while minimising potential risks and protecting those involved.

This policy assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all online activities related to Motorsport Activities.

This policy contains Motorsport Ireland specific guidelines for the Motorsport community to engage in social media use. It also includes details of breaches of the policy.

In circumstances where guidance about social media issues has not been given in this policy, we suggest you use common sense or seek out advice from those who have approved this policy.

Underlying Principles

This policy compliments Motorsport Ireland's core values:

- Respect:** This is important as it harnesses trust. No one person, irrespective of their official position, is better than another. We all need to exhibit behaviours that treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves and create a positive circle of mutual respect.
- Teamwork:** We will only achieve our goal if we work as a team. Every role is important and is valued. Officials, clubs, and competitors must work together to enable the sport to progress.
- Transparency:** Competitors need to be able to see how and why a decision or rule was arrived at, and rules and regulations need to be adhered to. Fairness and equality matter in our sport.
- Enjoyment:** The essence of a sport is to have fun. We want to make the sport appealing and fun, for all types of participant.
- Fairness:** All sport must be fair. This is not only in the interpretation of the rules but also consistency of application. We want a fair sport supported by fair rules for everyone.

The CEO or President is responsible for all matters related to this policy.

Coverage

This policy applies to all persons who are involved with the activities of Motorsport Ireland, its affiliated clubs and respective commissions/council whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity and including but not limited to:

- Members of the Motor Sport Council or any Motorsport Ireland Commissions or Sub-Commissions.
- Employees of Motorsport Ireland.
- Members, including life members, of the Affiliated Clubs.
- Competition or Official Licence holders in any capacity.
- Motorsport Ireland accredited media

Scope

Social media refers to any online tools or functions that allow people to communicate and/or share content via the internet.

This social media policy applies to all platforms including, but not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, etc) to include posts, likes, comments, shares, retweets.
- Video and photo sharing websites or apps (e.g. YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Tik Tok, Instagram, Flickr, etc).
- Blogs and micro-blogging platforms (e.g. Tumblr, WordPress, Blogger, etc).
- Review sites (e.g. Yelp, Urban Spoon, etc)
- Live broadcasting apps (e.g. Periscope, Meerkat, Facebook Mentions, etc).
- Podcasting (e.g. iTunes, Spotify, Sound cloud, etc).
- Geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare, etc).
- Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia, etc).
- Instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc).
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second life, Xbox Live, etc)
- Online voting or polls.
- Public and private online forums and discussion boards.
- Any other online technologies that allow individual users to upload and share content.

This policy is applicable when using social media as:

1. An officially designated individual representing Motorsport Ireland or its affiliated clubs on social media;
2. Motorsport Ireland Accredited Media and;
3. Any individual who is involved in posting content on social media in relation to Motorsport Events that might affect Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs business, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.
4. A Competitor or Entrant posting information attached to a Motorsport Ireland Event or its rules and organisation.

NOTE: This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media where it is not related to or there is no reference to Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs or its business, competitions, teams, participants, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation. However, any misuse of social media in a manner that does not directly refer to Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs may still be regulated by other policies, rules or regulations of Motorsport Ireland.

Using social media in an official capacity

You must be authorised by Motorsport Ireland or one of its Affiliated Clubs before engaging in social media as a representative of Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs.

As a member of Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs/community you are an extension of the Motorsport Ireland brand.

As such, the boundaries between when you are representing yourself and when you are representing Motorsport Ireland, or its Affiliated Clubs can often be blurred. This becomes even more of an issue as you increase your profile or position within Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs. Therefore, it is important that you represent both yourself and the sport appropriately online at all times.

To become authorised to represent Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs in an official capacity, you must have explicit written permission from either the Club or Motorsport Ireland.

This authorisation is separate from the Motorsport Accreditation normally granted to members of the Press.

Guidelines

You must adhere to the following guidelines when using social media related to Motorsport or its business, products, competitions, teams, participants, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

Use common sense

Whenever you are unsure as to whether the content you wish to share is appropriate, seek advice from others before doing so and refrain from sharing the content to be on the safe side.

When using social media, the lines between public and private, personal and professional, may be blurred. Remember, as a sporting community we are all ambassadors for the sport, Motorsport Ireland and its Affiliated Clubs.

Protecting your privacy

Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy.

When posting content online there is potential for that content to become publicly available through a variety of means, even if it was intended to be shared privately. Therefore, you should refrain from posting any content online that you would not be happy for anyone to see, even if you feel confident that a particular individual would never see it. The sporting community is asked to respect other individuals by not causing harm or malice.

Where possible, privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to limit access. You should also be cautious about disclosing your own personal details.

Honesty

Your honesty, or dishonesty, may be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. If you are unsure, check the source and the facts before uploading or posting anything. Motorsport Ireland recommends erring on the side of caution – if in doubt, do not post or upload.

Do not post anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. Be transparent and honest. Use your real name, be clear about who you are and identify any affiliations you have.

If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. If you make an endorsement or recommendation about something you are affiliated with, or have a close relationship with, you must disclose that affiliation.

The web is not anonymous. You should assume that all information posted online can be traced back to you. You are accountable for your actions both on and offline, including the information you post via your personal social media accounts.

Use of disclaimers

Wherever practical, include a prominent disclaimer stating your role within the sport, who you work for or if you are affiliated with Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs. A statement should be made that anything you publish is your personal opinion and that you are not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble, it may not have legal effect.

Reasonable use

As a member of the sporting community, whether you are an employee of Motorsport Ireland or a member of its Affiliated Clubs, you must ensure that your personal use of social media does not interfere with your work commitments or productivity. Take care not to be drawn into arguments online which can so often get out of hand and distressing.

Respect confidentiality and sensitivity

When using social media, you must maintain and respect the privacy and confidential information of your colleagues within the sport including members of Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs. This includes information that is not publicly accessible, widely known, or not expected to be shared outside the community attached to the sport, staff of Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs.

Remember, if you are online, you are on the record—much of the content posted online is public and searchable.

Within the scope of your authorisation by Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs, it is perfectly acceptable to talk about Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs and have a dialogue with the community, but it is not okay to publish confidential information of Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs. Confidential information includes things such as details about litigation, unreleased product information and unpublished details about the future plans, strategy or finances within the club and MI organisation structure.

When using social media, you should be considerate to others and should not post information when you have been asked not to, or where consent has not been sought and given. You must also remove information about another person or club if that person or club requests you to do so.

Permission should always be sought if the use or publication of information is not incidental, but directly related to an individual. This is particularly relevant to publishing any information regarding minors. In such circumstances, parental or guardian consent is mandatory.

Gaining permission when publishing a person's identifiable image

Express permission must be obtained from an individual to use a direct, clearly identifiable image of that person. In the case of a minor, permission should be sought from parent or guardian. Identifiable images include photographs or video material.

You should also refrain from posting any information or photos of a sensitive nature. This includes but is not limited to information from the scene of an accident, incidents or controversial behaviour.

In every instance, you need to have consent of the owner of copyright in the image.

Complying with applicable laws

Do not post or link to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including defamatory, vilifying or misleading and deceptive content.

Abiding by copyright laws

It is critical that you comply with the laws governing copyright in relation to material owned by others including material owned by Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs own copyrights and brands.

You should never quote or use more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and you should always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

Discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying

The public in general, and Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs employees and members, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view.

You must not post any material that is offensive, harassing, discriminatory, embarrassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate.

When using social media, you may also be bound by Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs values and Anti-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy.

Avoiding controversial issues

Within the scope of your authorisation by Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs, if you see misrepresentations made about Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs in the media, you may point that out to the relevant authority in your Club. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is based on fact and does not discredit or belittle that party.

Dealing with mistakes

If you make an error while posting on social media, be up front about the mistake and address it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you or your club of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), address it promptly and appropriately and if necessary, seek legal advice.

Conscientious behaviour and awareness of the consequences

Keep in mind that what you write is your responsibility, and failure to abide by these guidelines could put you/your club at risk.

You should always follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites in which you participate.

Branding and intellectual property of Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs

You must not use any of Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs intellectual property or imagery on your personal social media without prior approval from Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs.

Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs intellectual property includes but is not limited to:

- Trademarks
- Logos
- Slogans
- Imagery which has been posted on Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs official social media sites or website.

You must not create either an official or unofficial Motorsport presence using the organisation's trademarks or name without prior approval from Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs.

You must not imply that you are authorised to speak on behalf of Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs unless you have been given official authorisation to do so by Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs.

Where permission has been granted to create or administer an official social media presence for Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs you must adhere to the Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs guidelines.

Policy breaches

The Motorsport Ireland (MI) code of Conduct for Social Media is set out in Appendix 126 of the Yearbook. The comments below should be read in conjunction with that Appendix.

Any content submitted online on the Internet by those participating or officiating at MI sanctioned events should not contain material that could be deemed to be threatening, harassing, bullying, illegal, obscene, defamatory, slanderous or hostile towards any individual, team or entity participating or officiating at MI events.

Breaches of this policy include but are not limited to:

- Using Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs name, motto, crest and/or logo in a way that would result in a negative impact for the organisation, clubs and/or its members.
- Posting or sharing any content that is abusive, harassing, threatening, demeaning, defamatory or libellous.
- Posting or sharing any content that includes insulting, obscene, offensive, provocative or hateful language.
- Posting or sharing any content, which is said in person during an event would result in a breach of the rules of the event.
- Posting or sharing any content in breach of Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs anti-discrimination, racial discrimination, sexual harassment or other similar policy.

- Posting or sharing any content that is a breach of any State law.
- Posting or sharing any material to any social media channels that infringes the intellectual property rights of others.
- Posting or sharing material that brings, or risks bringing Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs, its sport, its officials, members or sponsors into disrepute. In this context, bringing a person or organisation into disrepute is to lower the reputation of that person or organisation in the eyes of the ordinary members of the public.

Reporting a breach

If you notice inappropriate or unlawful content online relating to Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs or any of its members, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, you should report the circumstances immediately.

All reports of cyberbullying and other technology misuses will be investigated fully by Motorsport Ireland or its Affiliated Clubs and may result in notification to the Garda where obliged to do so. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, suspension, or banning from membership of Motorsport Ireland and/or its affiliated clubs, fines or penalty points.

Members must be aware that in certain circumstances where a crime has been committed, they may be subject to a criminal investigation by the Garda over which Motorsport Ireland and its affiliated clubs will have no control.

Adjudication Process for Breach of the Motorsport Ireland Social Media Policy

See Appendix 126 of MI Yearbook for details of these procedures.

1. Once a complaint is received by Motorsport Ireland, the details of the complaint are forwarded to the Panel for review immediately. The Panel is appointed from time to time by Motorsport Ireland.

Due to the time sensitive nature of such matters the panel members must be aware that they will need to convene at the earliest possible opportunity. The Panel however will only meet Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm or only in absolute exceptional circumstances outside of these times.
2. A complaint can also be received directly from Motorsport Ireland.
3. Motorsport Ireland will write to the complainant and suspected offender immediately by email and post notifying them that the procedure is underway. Motorsport Ireland will request that the offending post will be temporarily removed pending the decision of the Panel.
4. The Panel members will then meet (electronically – either by Skype or other format as applicable) and assess the merits of the complaint. Again this meeting is to occur as soon as possible after notification of the possible breach.
5. In assessing the merits of the complaint the Panel may contact the complainant, the suspected offender and Motorsport Ireland and may interview any parties or parties as the Panel deem necessary. Whilst the Panel will make its judgment on the matter using the usual rules of natural justice, in order to make a decision as swiftly as possible and to prevent further possible damage to all parties occurring, neither the complainant nor the offender has a right to appear in person before the Panel and will only do so upon the invitation of the Panel if deemed necessary.
6. The Panel can liaise with Motorsport Ireland for any advice of a practical nature to explain surrounding circumstances of the complaint. Motorsport Ireland agrees to deal with any such request immediately upon request.

7. The Panel will then make a decision and notify Motorsport Ireland of their decision. Motorsport Ireland will then notify the complainant and the suspected offender of the Panels decision Motorsport Ireland will also notify the offender of the appeals process. If the complaint is upheld but is under appeal the offending article / post will remain removed pending appeal.
8. The Panel will then request Motorsport Ireland to implement the disciplinary procedures and advise the offender of the appeals process and provide the necessary forms for application to appeal under Chapter 16 of the GCRs.

Disciplinary and Appeals

If any participant or official is deemed by the Panel to have breached the Motorsport Ireland Social Media Policy the following provisions will apply:

Request for Removal and Apology

Firstly the offender will be requested by Motorsport Ireland, upon determination by the Panel, to immediately permanently remove the offending content from the relevant site and must do so within 3 hours of so being requested. If the offending content relates to a person or to an organisation or the Governing Body the offender must apologise in writing to the damaged party within 72 hours.

Initial Fine

The fine payable for a first offence must be paid within 5 working days of notification.

Refusal and Repeat Offence

If the offender refuses to remove the content and/or apologise and/or pay the relevant fine on the first offence or repeats an offence under the Social Media Policy the offender will be subject to additional fines and penalties as outlined below.

For the avoidance of doubt the initial fine will still stand and be added to the subsequent fine if not paid.

The fine payable for a repeat offence must be paid within 5 working days of notification. All fines are payable directly to Motorsport Ireland.

Parents

If the offending party is a parent of the offender and does not hold a competition licence the monetary fines as outlined below apply. If the offender is an official / steward other sanctions as set out in the GCRs apply.

Penalties For Licence Holders

- Initial Breach of the Policy – Removal, Written Apology and €100.00 fine.
- Subsequent Breach of the Policy or refusal to remove and apologise on initial breach– 2 penalty points on competition licence and €300.00 fine.
- Subsequent Breach of the Policy (third occasion or more) – 5 penalty points on competition licence and €500.00 fine.
- Fines may be varied from time to time as published in Motorsport Ireland Yearbook.

Appeal Mechanism

The offender may appeal the above sanctions to the Governing Body in writing within seven days of the Notice of the Imposition of the penalty under Chapter 16 of the GCR's.

The complainant does not have a right to appeal.

The costs of the appeal will be borne by the Governing Body if the offender is successful on appeal or by the offender if the penalty is upheld.

Such costs are set out in the GCR's.

Note: In the case of an offender who is under 18, his or her guardian or parent will be jointly and severally liable for the fine and costs of the appeal tribunal.