

# BACKGROUND GUIDES



WESMUN  
2026

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# Letter from the DIAS

Dear delegates, We, the Chairs of the Formula 1 Committee, Adham, Omar, and Rayyan, are excited to welcome you to the Formula 1 committee. We are very honoured to be your chairs this year and hope that you are just as thrilled as us. We are keen to support and encourage you to strengthen your debating skills and build up your confidence while ensuring a positive impact on your knowledge and allowing you to discuss real-life issues. We hope to foster an atmosphere that delivers effective ideas and a space for growth, collaboration, and impactful diplomacy.

During the conference, delegates will take part in engaging debates, deliver powerful speeches together to craft practical and well-reasoned resolutions, and develop their diplomatic, negotiation, and public-speaking skills. Throughout the sessions, they will be encouraged to think critically and respond to the fast-moving discussions in committee. By the end of the event, we hope you leave with a stronger understanding of how Formula 1 operates, not only as a sport but also as a political landscape, and gain a clearer sense of why multilateral cooperation is essential when tackling complex global issues.

This background guide is key for delegates to have a deep insight into the agendas and be able to use it as a tool to help them prepare for the committee sessions. However, the delegate is still expected to conduct their own research to participate in debates, grasp an understanding of the multitude of topics, and understand their delegation's stance on the topic. Proposed solutions should be realistic, implementable within the existing governance structure, and demonstrate an understanding of the political, commercial, and sporting constraints faced by Formula 1. Delegates are encouraged to engage respectfully, utilise motions strategically, and collaborate across differing viewpoints in order to produce comprehensive and balanced resolutions. The Formula 1 chairs wish you luck with your research. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

Best regards,

Adham Hamdy, Omar Moamen and Rayyan Chams Chairs of Formula 1  
WESMUN 2026

# Introduction to committee

Formula 1 is often described as the pinnacle of motorsport; that is for a good reason. It represents what the absolute peak of human engineering, strategic brilliance, and driving skill can accomplish under extreme pressure. Every component of a Formula 1 car is the product of thousands of hours of research, testing, and innovation, from aerodynamics sculpted in wind tunnels to power units that extract unimaginable performance from tiny, ultra-efficient engines. Teams invest hundreds of millions each season not just to go faster, but to rethink what fast even means. Beyond the machinery, the sport pushes human limits. Drivers endure forces comparable to fighter pilots, make split-second decisions at over 300 km/h, and maintain precise control while balancing tyre wear, fuel targets, battery deployment, and race strategy, all while fighting wheel-to-wheel. Engineers must interpret real-time data, weather, and race dynamics to make calls that can gain or lose everything within a single lap. Then there's the global stage: iconic circuits, evolving regulations, fierce rivalries, political drama, and a worldwide fanbase that watches every nuance. Formula 1 is a sport where history, technology, talent, and spectacle collide.

The purpose of this committee is to engage in an in-depth examination of two significant, contemporary issues currently shaping the landscape of Formula 1: first, the evolving role and long-term value of sprint races within the race-weekend format, and second, the ongoing challenge of establishing a consistent, transparent, and fair framework for driver penalties to preserve competitive integrity across the sport. The committee includes 30 delegates: 20 drivers and 10 team principals. Drivers are expected to consider both their individual competitive interests and the broader objectives of their teams; however, they should primarily advocate from the perspective of their personal experiences and on-track priorities. Team principals, while also mindful of individual driver concerns, are expected to focus predominantly on representing their teams' strategic, financial, and operational interests, advancing positions that align with overall organisational goals. The committee will operate under the standard rules of procedure outlined in the delegate's guide, with one key exception: the use of personal pronouns will be permitted throughout the sessions, as delegates are representing individual figures within the sport rather than entire nations.



# Introduction to committee

To avoid confusion, the research freeze date is set for the eighth of December 2025; any changes that go into effect after that date will not be considered. Changes that have been announced but are not yet in effect, for example, the new technical regulations, will not be considered. This measure ensures fairness within the committee, as the 2026 season will introduce significant changes to both the technical and sporting regulations, alongside the arrival of the Cadillac Formula 1 team and Audi's debut as a works team. This is because the full impact of these developments has not yet been demonstrated; they will not be considered in committee discussions.

Due to the specific nature of this committee, including the limited availability of relevant (.org) and (.gov) sources, the use of certain reputable (.com) websites will be permitted. Delegates are strongly encouraged to prioritise official Formula 1, FIA, and team websites, as well as established and reliable news outlets such as ESPN, Sky News, the BBC, Motorsport.com, Reuters, Autosport, Motorsport Magazine and Racer.com. This list is not exhaustive. Delegates who are uncertain about the reliability of a source are advised to consult the chairs for verification.

Agenda 1:  
Evaluating the Role of Sprint  
Races in Formula 1:  
Considering Whether to  
Retain, Modify, or  
Discontinue Them in Light of  
Competitive Balance, Safety,  
and Fan Engagement.

# Introduction to the Agenda

Formula 1 is continually evolving as a sport in order to increase excitement and maximise entertainment and viewership opportunities. This is often done by introducing new rules and formats. One of the biggest changes to the sport since its inaugural Grand Prix on May 13, 1950, is the introduction of sprint races. Sprint races were introduced in 2021 as a means of adding more excitement and diversity to the racing weekend, as well as greater chances for wheel-to-wheel action.

The sprint is a short race covering approximately 100 km, roughly one-third the distance of a Grand Prix, and usually lasts about 30 minutes. Its shorter length is meant to encourage flat-out racing rather than long strategic battles. There are no mandatory pit stops, although teams can stop if they want to, the race is usually too short for a tyre change to make any real difference.

Sprint venues are generally circuits known for closer racing and a variety of strategic approaches, chosen with the goal of making the sprint as competitive and entertaining as possible. Points are awarded to the top eight finishers, starting from eight points for first place down to one point for eighth.

A typical Formula 1 weekend runs from Friday to Sunday, with five on-track sessions: three one-hour free practice (FP) sessions, an approximately one-hour qualifying session to set the grid for the Grand Prix, and finally the Grand Prix itself. Sprint weekends shake this up by removing two practice sessions. Instead, Friday features Sprint Qualifying, which replaces FP2, and Saturday includes the sprint race in place of FP3. Grand Prix qualifying still takes place later on Saturday. With less practice time, teams have to get their setup right immediately, adding even more pressure to the weekend.

# Introduction to the Agenda

Sprint Qualifying on Friday is split into three short sessions: SQ1 (12 minutes), SQ2 (10 minutes), and SQ3 (8 minutes). The format is similar to normal qualifying. Five drivers are knocked out after SQ1, and another five after SQ2, which sets the grid from 20th to 11th for the sprint. The remaining ten fight it out in SQ3 to decide the top ten grid positions for Saturday's race.

Six circuits hosted sprint weekends in 2025, a season that marked the 75th anniversary of the Formula 1 World Championship and the fifth year of the sprint format. China and Miami returned for the second year in a row, joined by Austin and Qatar, which both held their third

sprint events. Belgium rejoined the lineup for the first time since 2023, and Brazil continued its streak of hosting a sprint every year since the format began in 2021.

Four drivers took sprint victories in 2025. Lewis Hamilton won the opening sprint in China, Lando Norris picked up wins in Miami and Brazil, Max Verstappen came out on top in Belgium and Austin, and Oscar Piastri closed the season with a win in Qatar.

Although the sprint format can add a great deal of excitement to a race weekend, it has also sparked ongoing debate about whether sprint races should stay as they are, be adjusted, or be removed altogether. Much of the discussion revolves around whether the format is truly worth it, especially considering the extra risks that teams take every time a sprint is held.

Those in favour of sprint races believe they bring real value to the sport. They offer extra points, add a sense of unpredictability, and attract a younger and wider audience. However, others argue that these benefits do not outweigh the concerns. Critics point to the potential for unfair influence on the championship standings, increased safety risks, higher costs, added pressure, and the reduction in strategic preparation due to fewer practice sessions on sprint weekends.



# Introduction to the Agenda

This debate is not limited to fans and the wider community. Drivers and team principals have also spoken openly about their views. Max Verstappen has been an outspoken critic of sprint weekends, but the Red Bull driver has praised the most recent change to the format. The driver stated during the post-race interview in Baku 2023 that the federation should “Just scrap the whole thing”. Max perceives this approach as lacking conservativeness and tradition within the format, describing it as “artificial excitement” and expressing his boredom with the additional qualifying session and sprint weekend events. Many team principals have also spoken out openly, such as Toto Wolff, who commented, “I think that if we were to do more, then maybe the format overall needs to be tweaked.” Toto holds this perspective due to concerns that the format may diminish the enthusiasm and significance of the Grand Prix as well as the imbalance in its risk-reward ratio and his personal commitment to preserving the sporting integrity of Formula 1. On the other hand, team principals such as Andrea Stella have been more open-minded towards this format. “There are positives in the sprint events,” Stella began. “We also need to give the time to absorb some different ways of interpreting Formula 1 race weekends.” This stance comes from the increase in competitive action across the weekend, usefulness for evaluating car performance and the offer of a new challenge and opportunity to gain points in the championship.

These differing perspectives show how complex the issue truly is. While sprint races can boost entertainment and create new competitive opportunities, they also raise important questions about the safety, cost, and future direction of the sport. As Formula 1 continues to grow and change, the committee must decide whether sprint weekends should be kept, adjusted, or removed in order to find the most balanced path forward.

Delegates are expected to come prepared with a thorough understanding of how sprint races can affect the sport from technical, safety, and economic standpoints, as well as how their respective delegations have reacted to these format changes and their overall stance on whether sprint races should be retained, modified, or discontinued. Delegates must also determine whether sprint races enhance the sport as a whole or if they need to be changed to better balance competitiveness, safety, and entertainment. Additionally, they must be prepared to offer well-reasoned, articulate ideas based on real-world Formula 1 dynamics. In order to work towards solutions that preserve the integrity, competitiveness and growth of the sport, delegates must collaborate, think critically, and present arguments supported by evidence. As a result, the committee must decide whether sprint races should primarily serve as entertainment-driven additions to the calendar or whether their growing influence risks undermining the sporting integrity and competitive balance of the championship. Delegates are expected to approach this issue in accordance with their assigned delegations, considering how sprint races affect their competitive prospects and commercial interests within Formula 1. Delegates should focus on systemic and forward-looking policy reforms rather than revisiting individual historical incidents, except where used to support broader arguments.

# Key Terms

- **Sprint Race:** A short, approximately 100 km race held on Saturday during specific Formula 1 weekends, lasting around 30 minutes. It features no mandatory pit stops and is designed to promote aggressive, flat-out racing.
- **Sprint Qualifying (Sprint Shootout):** A special qualifying session split into three knockout segments (SQ1, SQ2, SQ3) held on Friday that sets the grid order for the sprint.
- **Parc Fermé:** The period during which car setup changes are restricted by regulations. Since 2024, there are two parc fermé periods on sprint weekends: one starting before sprint qualifying and ending after the sprint race, and a second starting after main qualifying and lasting until the Grand Prix begins.
- **Race Weekend Format:** Sprint weekends feature fewer practice sessions (usually one hour compared to three on normal weekends), one sprint qualifying session, a sprint race on Saturday, and traditional Grand Prix qualifying and race.
- **Setup Optimisation:** The process by which teams adjust car settings to maximise performance. Limited practice time on sprint weekends makes setup optimisation more challenging.
- **Cost of Sprints:** Sprint races increase the amount of time cars spend on track, leading to higher fuel consumption and greater wear on power units and gearboxes. As these components need to be replaced more frequently, teams face additional costs over the course of the season.

# Key Issues

**Strategic Oversimplification:** The lack of mandatory pit stops and shorter distances reduces the tactical complexity that traditionally defines Formula 1, limiting strategy to pure pace and overtaking.

**Increased Risk of Damage:** Additional racing sessions heighten the chances of collisions or mechanical failures, jeopardising Sunday's Grand Prix and straining budgets under the cost cap.

**Resource Strain:** Limited practice time compresses setup work, forcing teams to rely heavily on simulations, with mistakes carrying higher consequences. This results in tension between Formula 1's commercial push for more on-track action and teams' need to operate sustainably within the cost cap.

**Component Usage Limits:** Sprint races accelerate wear on power units, gearboxes, tyres, and other regulated components, pushing teams closer to penalties.

**Fanbase Division:** While some fans enjoy added racing action, traditionalists argue that the sprint diminishes the prestige of the Grand Prix and increases the complexity of the weekend format. Newer fans to the sport may get confused by the sprint format

**Driver Concerns:** Some drivers express fatigue, frustration with reduced tactical depth, and worry that sprints increase risks without sufficient reward.

**Logistical Complexity:** Tight schedules challenge teams and organisers, potentially reducing the quality of both sprints and main races.

**Equity Across Circuits:** Not all tracks are equally suited to sprints; circuits with limited overtaking opportunities risk producing dull races.

**Effect on the championship:** Sprint weekends offer additional points, giving them a greater influence on both the Drivers' and Constructors' Championships. This raises concerns about fairness, as some teams and drivers may benefit disproportionately from sprint weekends depending on circuit characteristics and car design. The committee must therefore consider whether allowing certain weekends to carry additional championship weight is compatible with the principle that each Grand Prix should contribute equally to the title fight.

# Major Parties

**Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA):** The global governing body responsible for setting sporting and technical regulations, including rules governing sprint races and ensuring safety and fairness.

**Formula 1 Management (FOM):** The commercial rights holder managing the sport's promotion, broadcast rights, and event scheduling; they drive innovations like sprint races to boost fan engagement and commercial value.

**Teams (constructors) and team principals:** key operational stakeholders managing race strategy and car performance. Prominent team principals like Laurent Mekies (Red Bull), Toto Wolff (Mercedes), and Fred Vasseur (Ferrari) actively influence sprint race rules and express views balancing excitement and risk.

**Drivers:** The athletes competing on the track whose safety, workload, and racing experience are directly affected by sprint races. Views among drivers like Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton vary from enthusiastic support to cautious criticism.

**Race Promoters and Circuits:** Local organisers and circuit owners hosting sprint race weekends; they benefit from increased ticket sales and event profiles tied to the additional competitive session.

**Broadcasters and Media Partners:** Entities responsible for televising and streaming Formula 1, who leverage sprint races to increase audience engagement and advertising revenues through more race content.

**Fans and Viewers:** The global audience whose preferences and feedback shape the sport's direction, with mixed opinions ranging from support for extra racing to concerns about schedule complexity and Sponsors and

**Partners:** Companies investing in the sport, interested in sprint races as opportunities for greater visibility and brand exposure during extended race weekends.



# Previous attempts to resolve the issue

- Points allocation for sprint races was revised in 2022, expanding points awarded to the top eight finishers to encourage fuller competition throughout the sprint field, rather than rewarding only the podium finishers.
- Following feedback from teams and drivers about risk and race weekend structure, the 2023 season reformed the sprint event format so that the sprint race no longer set the Grand Prix grid. Instead, traditional qualifying on Friday determined the Sunday race order, and a distinct sprint qualifying session set the sprint grid.
- 2024 introduced two separate parc fermé periods during sprint weekends. One parc fermé governs from sprint qualifying to the sprint race, and the second covers from the Grand Prix qualifying to the main race. This change allowed teams greater flexibility to adjust car setups between sessions to better balance competitiveness and operational challenges.
- In late 2023, the weekend format was restructured by moving the Sprint qualifying from Saturday to Friday afternoon, following the sole practice session. This adjustment aimed to provide fairer conditions for teams and drivers and more clarity between qualifying sessions.

# Questions a Resolution Must Answer:

- 1- What are the principles that should be followed in governing the use of space resources with the aim of assessing their consistency with the international law that applies in space and the Outer Space Treaty?
- 2- How can governments control private companies that participate in space mining and, at the same time ensure that their activities do not breach international norms or destabilise the space environment?
- 3- How can governments make sure that in these resource-extraction-related activities, satellites and spacecraft will follow strict debris-prevention practices to avoid further congestion of LEO?
- 4- What kind of international framework is required to support active debris removal, given the legal barrier that removed objects may remain the property of the launching state?
- 5- How can the Member States contribute to mitigating the long-term risk of cascading the Kessler Syndrome-and ensure the sustainability of key orbital regions?
- 6- How might the resolution best address the dual-use nature of space technologies to ensure that extraction systems are not repurposed for military advantage?
- 7- What kind of mechanisms can be introduced to avoid conflict over resource-rich regions, especially between major spacefaring powers?
- 8- How does a resolution ensure there are clear, transparent rules for the declaration, management, and verification of "safety zones" or operational areas around extraction sites?

## Agenda 2:

Driver penalty consistency:  
Debating the introduction of a  
standardised penalty  
framework to ensure fairness,  
considering the complexity  
and variability of racing  
incidents

# Introduction to the Agenda

Throughout its extensive history, Formula 1 has continually changed its policies and systems in the name of fairness, safety, and competitive integrity. Today, as the sport is becoming faster, more technologically advanced, and visible worldwide, the demand for regulation that is consistent and transparent has become even stronger. This concern intensified following several high-profile controversies, most notably the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, where Race Control's discretionary interpretation of Safety Car procedures exposed how opaque decision-making can undermine trust in Formula 1's governance. Consistency in penalties for drivers has been one of the most critical issues in modern Formula 1. Are the existing stewarding arrangements providing equitable and predictable rulings? Or are minor structural reforms necessary? This argument has been made stronger by the modern racing incidents being very nuanced, the championship fights being very high-stakes, and the notion that similar cases can have different outcomes depending on the event or the stewards panel. Incidents such as the 2021 British Grand Prix collision, debates over advantage gained off-track at the 2022 Mexico City Grand Prix, and uneven track-limits enforcement at the 2022 United States Grand Prix have reinforced perceptions that comparable actions can yield markedly different penalties depending on context and interpretation.

Currently, the FIA hands out penalties based on a comprehensive list of sporting regulations and the Driving Standards & Penalty Guidelines for transparency. These regulations are enforced through a panel of 3-4 stewards who are present at every event. Their job is to enforce the sporting regulations created by the FIA's F1 commission. Among the possible penalties for incidents, which are noted by the race director during sessions, are time penalties, grid drops, penalty points, drive-thru penalties, stop-go penalties, and disqualifications. Even though these actions are taken to penalise unfair advantages and to guarantee safety, many teams and drivers believe that these penalties are not applied uniformly.

Differences in interpretation, particular conditions of the race and different stewarding panels are often the reasons for decisions being made that appear inconsistent or unclear to both the competitors and the spectators. The controversy surrounding the high-profile incidents, such as disputable overtakes, driving that is too defensive, and collisions, has only exacerbated the demand for a more standardised system.



# Introduction to the Agenda

The inconsistency in penalties has been a prominent issue, and it has been brought up time and again by various key figures within the sport. In particular, drivers Lando Norris and George Russell has made it clear that "the real problem is the lack of clarity" and has requested the FIA delineate the rules more clearly so that the realities of racing can be taken into account. Verstappen even went so far as to call some rulings "hard to follow", while team leaders like Toto Wolff and Zak Brown have been vocal about the necessity of more transparency in the sanctioning process. These matters highlight the very difficult situation where, on one side, there is the steward's discretion that is needed for interpreting the intricate race scenarios, and on the other side, there is the demand for the predictable standardised rules.

Supporters of a more codified and standardised penalty system argue that it would reduce subjectivity, strengthen trust in stewarding decisions, and make the sport more predictable. In this approach, each type of incident would have a clearly defined penalty. For example, any collision that results in a driver gaining an advantage would automatically lead to a predetermined sanction. Overall, the rulings would be easier to understand for teams, drivers, and viewers. Opponents express their apprehensions that inflexible regulations might downgrade very delicate situations to just black and white. For example, a driver may lose control of the car as a result of weather conditions and therefore cannot be held responsible for the incident. Some are concerned that the removal of the steward's discretion might result in a large number of penalties, ruling out hard racing and disregarding the different conditions on the track at the time. While automation and rigid frameworks promise consistency, events like the 2023 Austrian Grand Prix, which saw extensive automated track-limits penalties, demonstrated how strict enforcement can alter race dynamics and raise questions about proportionality and sporting spectacle. Conversely, extraordinary circumstances such as the 2023 Qatar Grand Prix illustrated how rigid frameworks may struggle to account for extreme environmental and physiological conditions affecting driver performance.

The FIA has been working for the past few years to come up with a more reliable penalty system; the question of stewarding frameworks has at least momentarily been opened up again. The advocates of changes in the regulations claim that a unified penalty system would lead to a positive impact on the championship through the perception of being more unbiased. They state that rules which are predictable and apply to everyone would deepen the trust in sport's governance and assist newer audiences in getting the right idea about racing incidents. On the contrary, critics maintain the view that F1's dynamic nature rules out strict uniformity, as every racing event has its own set of circumstances that are cast in the light of human interpretation. They warn that over-standardisation might even lead to harsher or excessive penalties in the end through the process of oversimplifying complex, nuanced scenarios.

# Introduction to the Agenda

In 2022 the FIA introduced the Race Operations Centre (ROC), which is a remote support facility used by the FIA to assist Race Control, which oversees all on-track activity during a race weekend, managing safety, enforcing regulations, and coordinating real-time decisions to ensure the event runs smoothly and fairly during race weekends. It operates away from the circuit (often from FIA headquarters in Geneva) and provides additional technical, analytical, and regulatory support. The introduction of the ROC supports penalty consistency by providing the stewards with additional data, historical precedents, and real-time regulatory guidance. By reviewing incidents with more comprehensive tools and offering a second layer of analysis, the ROC helps ensure that decisions are based on complete information rather than subjective interpretation, leading to more uniform and reliable penalty outcomes across race weekends. More recent examples, including stewarding decisions at the 2024 Japanese Grand Prix that explicitly referenced published Driving Standards Guidelines, suggest that improved transparency and communication may enhance consistency without fully eliminating steward discretion.

This issue is becoming more and more consequential to the future of the sport; the Formula 1 committee has to decide if Formula 1 should keep the present penalty system, make some changes, or go for a completely uniform one. The delegates will have to look into the implications regarding sport, regulations, and safety of every option and at the same time take into account the opinions and experiences of drivers, teams, and the regulating authority. The central challenge facing the committee is determining whether fairness in Formula 1 is best achieved through rigid standardisation of penalties or through steward discretion that accounts for the unique circumstances of each incident. Delegates should frame their arguments based on their role within Formula 1, balancing competitive interests with the broader legitimacy and credibility of the sport. Delegates should focus on systemic and forward-looking policy reforms rather than revisiting individual historical incidents, except where used to support broader arguments.

# Key Terms

- **Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA):** Governing body of Formula 1, responsible for regulations and stewarding.
- **Stewards:** Officials appointed to enforce rules during races and apply penalties.
- **Consistency:** uniform application of penalties across similar incidents.
- **Proportionality:** Ensuring the severity of a penalty matches the infraction.
- **Driving Standards & Penalty Guidelines:** The FIA framework (2024–2025) standardises penalty application and makes it public.

# Key Issues

- **Inconsistent Stewarding:** Across multiple race weekends, teams and fans frequently point out that similar on-track incidents are not always judged in the same way. For example, Max Verstappen received a five-second penalty at the 2022 United States Grand Prix for exceeding track limits while overtaking, whereas similar incidents earlier in the race went unpenalised. Similarly, Lewis Hamilton was given a 10-second penalty at the 2022 Mexico City Grand Prix for gaining an advantage off-track, even though other drivers escaped sanctions for comparable situations. What earns a time penalty in one Grand Prix might only receive a warning or go completely unpunished in another. This inconsistency fuels criticism that stewarding decisions can feel unpredictable, subjective, or even influenced by external pressures. As a result, trust in the fairness of race control is sometimes undermined, sparking debates about transparency, clearer guidelines, and whether a more standardised framework is needed. Any attempt to eliminate inconsistency through rigid guidelines risks reducing complex racing incidents to overly simplistic judgements.
- Every on-track incident is shaped by a wide range of variables that make consistent judgement extremely challenging. Factors like driver intent, defensive or offensive positioning, and differing interpretations of racing lines all play a role. Track layout, whether it is a tight street circuit or a wide permanent track, can drastically change what is considered “normal racing”. Weather conditions, from light drizzle to full wet conditions, add another layer of unpredictability, as do fluctuating tire wear levels and the performance characteristics of each car at different stages of the race. Because all these elements interact in real time, no two situations are ever truly identical, making it difficult to apply a one-size-fits-all penalty framework without oversimplifying the complex nature of racing.
- **Transparency Deficit:** A recurring criticism is that stewarding decisions are not always communicated clearly or thoroughly to the teams, drivers, or the public. In many cases, rulings are issued with minimal explanation, leaving stakeholders uncertain about the reasoning behind a penalty or the lack of one. This lack of clarity can make the decision-making process appear opaque or inconsistent, even when the stewards may have valid justification. Without detailed insights into how evidence was evaluated or which regulations were applied, trust in the adjudication process is weakened, fuelling frustration and calls for greater openness and documentation in real time. However, increasing transparency may also expose stewards to heightened scrutiny and pressure, potentially undermining their authority and willingness to make decisive calls.



# Key Issues

- **Impact on Championship Outcomes:** In a sport where fractions of a second can separate victory from defeat, a single controversial stewarding decision can have far-reaching consequences. A disputed penalty might drop a driver several positions, cost a team valuable points, or change the momentum of a title fight. Over the course of a season, where championships are sometimes decided by the narrowest of margins, these moments can become pivotal. Fans and teams often look back on such incidents as turning points, arguing that inconsistent or debatable rulings can influence not just individual race results but the entire championship narrative.
- **Pressure from Stakeholders:** Stewarding decisions do not take place in a vacuum. Teams often lobby aggressively, both publicly and behind the scenes, to influence interpretations of incidents in their favour. This behaviour can sway narratives and create the perception that certain voices carry more weight than others. At the same time, fans and media dissect every ruling in real time, amplifying any hint of inconsistency or perceived bias. The intense scrutiny heightens expectations for absolute fairness and transparency, placing significant psychological and operational pressure on the stewards. As a result, decision-makers must balance maintaining authority with managing external influences, all while operating under tight time constraints during a live event.

# Key Issues

- **Historical Precedent:** Previous rulings inevitably shape how teams, drivers, and fans expect similar incidents to be judged in the future. When an action was penalised or allowed in a past season, stakeholders naturally look to that case as a historic precedent. However, achieving true consistency is complicated by the fact that steward panels change from race to race, each bringing slightly different interpretations and levels of experience. In addition, the rulebook itself evolves over time, with updates to technical and sporting regulations altering how certain situations should be assessed. These shifting variables mean that comparisons with historical cases are not always straightforward. Creating tension between the desire for precedent-based consistency and the reality of a dynamic, evolving regulatory environment.
- **Team Lobbying:** Teams often engage directly with stewards or Race Control to influence decisions during and after races. While this interaction is part of the sport, it can create the perception that wealthier or more influential teams have an advantage in getting favourable outcomes. Teams can also lobby indirectly through the media, using press statements, social media, and interviews to put pressure on stewards or shape public opinion. Such direct and indirect lobbying can undermine the consistency of penalties, as similar incidents may be judged differently depending on the team involved. This raises concerns about fairness and transparency, prompting calls for clearer regulations and stricter limits on team influence over stewarding decisions.

# Major Parties

- **Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA):** Governs Formula 1, establishes rules and penalty frameworks, and oversees the consistency and fairness of stewarding decisions.
- **Stewards:** Independent officials appointed by the FIA to enforce regulations during races. They are responsible for applying penalties in accordance with published guidelines, balancing standardisation with contextual judgement.
- **Race Director:** Oversees all on-track activity, enforces regulations, and works to ensure penalties are applied consistently to maintain fairness and credibility throughout the championship.
- **Race Operations Centre (ROC):** Supports Race Control and stewards by providing additional data, historical precedents, and regulatory guidance to help ensure penalties are consistent, fair, and based on complete information.
- **Formula 1 Management (FOM)/Liberty Media:** Oversees the commercial operations of Formula 1. Ensures that rules and penalties are communicated clearly to maintain the credibility of the sport for fans, sponsors, and media partners.
- **Teams (Constructors):** advocate collectively for clearer, more consistent, and transparent stewarding. Concerns focus on standardisation of penalties, proportionality in time sanctions, predictability for race strategy, and reducing ambiguity. Multiple Formula 1 teams, including Red Bull, Williams, Haas, McLaren, Ferrari, Aston Martin, Alpine, and others, have publicly called for increased consistency, transparency, and fairness in how penalties are enforced. Over recent seasons, various team principals and drivers have criticised certain decisions as disproportionate, unclear, or unpredictable. Penalties can have a significant effect on race strategies, influencing decisions on tyre choices, pit stop timing, and risk management during on-track battles. Most teams have supported the FIA's moves to standardise guidelines and promote uniform rule interpretation throughout the championship, though specific complaints and language vary by team and incident.

# Major Parties

- **Drivers:** As the direct subjects of penalties, drivers consistently call for predictability and fairness in stewarding. Many have voiced concerns over inconsistent rulings, disproportionate sanctions for similar incidents, and the need for clearer guidelines that allow them to race competitively without fear of arbitrary decisions.
- **Global Broadcasters and Media Rights Holders (Sky Sports, ESPN, F1TV):** Provide coverage of races and rely on clear and timely stewarding decisions to ensure accurate and coherent storytelling for audiences worldwide.
- **Race Promoters and Host Nations:** Invest in hosting events and advocate for consistent enforcement to ensure that results reflect sporting merit and preserve the reputation of their races.
- **Global Title Sponsors (e.g., Aramco, Oracle, HP, and BWT):** Tie their brands to Formula 1's image of innovation, precision, and fair competition. Consistent stewarding is essential to protect the credibility of their sponsorship investments.



# Previous attempts to resolve the issue

- Stop-go penalties were introduced to deter unsafe driving. (1991)
- 
- Time penalties and formal safety car regulations were established. (1990s)
- 
- Drive-throughs, reprimands, and grid drops were added to broaden sanction options. (2000s)
- 
- The Super Licence penalty points system was created; five- and ten-second time penalties became standard. (2014)
- 
- The Virtual Safety Car was introduced with automated monitoring of violations. (2015)
- 
- The Remote Operations Centre (ROC) was introduced to support stewards during races. (2022)
- 
- FIA published Driving Standards & Penalty Guidelines for transparency. (2024-2025)
-

# Questions a Resolution Must Answer:

- Should penalties always follow a rigid framework, or must there be room for steward discretion in unique situations? Where is the line between fairness and over-standardisation?
- Should penalties primarily deter dangerous/unsporting behaviour or preserve the spectacle of wheel-to-wheel racing? Is it better to “let them race” or intervene strictly?
- Should the FIA run a permanent global panel of stewards, or allow local ASNs to continue providing them? And does centralisation ensure fairness or risk bias from a small, entrenched group?
- Should AI and automated systems be limited to an advisory role, or should they have binding authority in penalty decisions to maximise consistency, even if this reduces human judgement and discretion?
- Does lobbying, whether direct or indirect, create bias? If so, how should Formula 1 deal with lobbying?

# DELEGATE MATRIX

Team	Drivers		Team Principals
Aston Martin Aramco Cognizant F1 Team	Fernando Alonso	Lance Stroll	Andy Cowell
Atlassian Williams Racing	Alex Albon	Carlos Sainz	James Vowles
BWT Alpine F1 Team	Pierre Gasly	Franco Colapinto	Flavio Briatore
McLaren F1 Team	Lando Norris	Oscar Piastri	Andrea Stella
Mercedes-AMG Petronas F1 Team	George Russell	Kimi Antonelli	Toto Wolff
Moneygram Haas F1 Team	Esteban Ocon	Oliver Bearman	Ayao Komatsu
Oracle Red Bull F1 Team	Max Verstappen	Yuki Tsunoda	Laurent Meikies
Scuderia Ferrari HP	Charles Leclerc	Lewis Hamilton	Frédéric Vasseur
Stake F1 Team Kick Sauber	Gabriel Bortoleto	Nico Hülkenberg	Jonathan Wheatley
Visa Cash App Racing Bulls F1 Team	Isack Hadjar	Liam Lawson	Alan Permeane

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