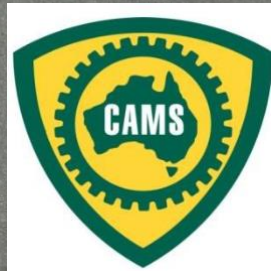


A Guide to Historic Motor Racing in Australia



Guide to Historic Motor Racing in Australia

This guide has been produced by the Australian Historic Motor Sport Committee of Motorsport Australia to assist existing and potential participants in Historic motor sport to understand how the sport is administered along with some explanations of the philosophy and the rules. It is intended as a guide only - it must be read in conjunction with the current edition of the Motorsport Australia Manual which is available from the Motorsport Australia Website

What is Historic Motor Racing?

Historic racing provides the opportunity for drivers to race Historic cars in an atmosphere similar to that enjoyed in the various historic periods.

The two major guiding principles of Historic motor sport are authenticity of vehicles and amateur sport. Preservation, restoration and appropriate use of Historic cars, in that order, are the keynotes.

Motorsport Australia refers to Historic cars as the 5th Category. It was designed originally to cater only for the actual cars that raced in the Historic periods. The category has since been expanded to include separate Groups of cars which, although not endowed with a racing history, are considered a suitable addition to Historic motor sport and are cars that are an appropriate representation of the period.

The Committee is adamant that Historic racing should accurately depict the cars that existed in the past. Particular attention is paid to the periods of the cars, the authenticity of their specifications, and the Groups in which they compete.

Historic racing in Australia now provides an ideal segment of the sport for those people with an interest in motor racing history, and in particular Australian motor racing history, and a desire to recapture the more relaxed atmosphere of the days of amateur motor sport.

Many current participants and those seeking to enter this area of the sport are largely unaware of the historical background of the Historic racing movement within Australian motor racing. Indeed, many are unfamiliar with the position of the Committee in its administrative and advisory role to the Board of Motorsport Australia.

Accordingly, before outlining the detail of the regulations and philosophy of this discipline of our sport, it is proper to consider the history of Australian motor racing briefly and, equally briefly, the development of Historic racing since it began as far back as the late 1950s.

Finally, the future of the sport is also worthy of consideration, because it does impact the participation of those to whom this guide is primarily directed.

Early Australian Motor Racing History (the very short version!)

It would be impractical to attempt to cover Australian Motor Racing history in any depth in this guide; most scribes take volumes. However, our particular interest is in the types and classes of vehicles racing. We are concerned with the cars that were raced in the past so that Historic racing will reflect that type of competition.

Australians showed an early interest in the racing car. This is evidenced by the existence, at one time or another, of early factory racing cars in our midst. The only types of competition that existed prior to World War I were of a very informal nature, such as hill climbs, regularity and endurance trials and the occasional events on horse racing tracks.

After the Great War, the Australian preference was for inter-city record breaking, but there was also track

racing at Maroubra. The Victorian Light Car Club's Under Two Litre Australian Grand Prix road racing began at Phillip Island, and subsequently spread across the country, driving the rise in the late 30s of the unique Australian Special which blossomed immediately after the Second World War.

The post-World War II era, documented so thoroughly by the *Australian Motor Sport* publication, saw a golden period which has inspired the recent revival in Historic racing.

1960 was the end of that 'Golden Period' and saw the introduction of 'new technology' cars that are ideally represented by the Lotus 18. It was thus logical to gather all of these 'new technology' cars in separate and subsequent Groups M, O, P, Q and R to race separately from the more 'old fashioned' machines.

The object of the Historic racing movement is to portray, as faithfully as possible, each of the stages in the evolution of our motor sport, with particular emphasis on the development of motor sport in Australia. History is important, whether it be in the preservation of the original cars that participated or, in certain restricted areas, allowing the appearance of facsimiles of the type of car that raced in that era.

The Birth of Historic Racing in Australia

Admittedly a strange title, but the Historic movement (if it can be so called) has a history all of its own. This history has influenced the regulations that we use today, and thus is worth acknowledging for that very reason alone.

In the late 1950s there was a small group of owners of classic European racing and sporting cars of the pre-war period, who formed a loose-knit organisation to race their cars. They were usually members of the Sporting Car Club of South Australia, or the Vintage Sports Car Club of Australia (VSCCA), in both Melbourne and Sydney. The guiding and inspiring influence was the late Doug Jarvis from Adelaide, owner of the ex-Davison P3 Alfa Romeo.

The newly formed CAMS, with headquarters in Melbourne, asked some local enthusiasts to compile the first set of regulations for this 'new' discipline of the sport. Messrs Jim and Bill Leech, Stuart Anderson and Laurence Rofe - all active competitors at the time - drafted rules and guidelines which were very close to those which apply today in Groups J and K (pre-war cars), with the addition of factory-built front engine racing cars constructed after the war, to compete with the pre-war cars. The rear-engine Cooper held sway by this time, and no one wanted Talbot Lagos and the like! The first regulations were drawn from the rules of the VSCCA (Victorian division) which accounts for the provision that a new car in a pre-war style may be constructed at any time, provided that all pre-war parts are used. However, any new car so constructed must be similar to some other car from the period, and not 'concocted' to become a potential Group winner.

This initial period of Historic racing, which started at an early Warwick Farm meeting and virtually ended with the suspension of activities at Mallala, concluded around 1966/1967 when the thoroughbred cars ceased to be raced for one reason or another, and some tracks were abandoned.

At that time, there was an enthusiast just beginning to race in an Amilcar. He was disappointed with the scarcity of events for Historic cars, and very much regretted that the Australian Special was not properly catered for either. This man was Rob Rowe of Sydney, who privately financed a newsletter and mailed it to anyone who was interested. He badgered promoters to run races and hounded competitors to support the races they arranged. Needless to say it was an uphill battle, but interest started to build.

Ultimately, in 1971 the Light Car Club of Australia agreed to take an interest in Historic racing and included cars of this category in its September programme at Sandown. This was highly successful and marked the 'arrival' of the movement. Momentum increased and in the same year an Historic Racing Register was informally created in Victoria which subsequently became the Club of the same title that we know today.

Divisions of the Vintage Sports Car Club in Sydney and of the Sporting Car Club of South Australia also formed Historic Racing Registers.

Parallel with the formation of the Historic Racing Registers, Motorsport Australia increased its interest in Historic racing, resulting in the formation of the Historic Car Committee which became the Historic Committee in 1995 and is now known as the Australian Historic Motor Sport Committee.

The Motorsport Australia Historic Motor Sport Committee

The Committee is a body appointed by the Board of Motorsport Australia to manage Historic motor sport and advise on all related matters.

It is responsible for all Historic matters and the advancement of the interests of Historic enthusiasts and competitors, and is empowered by Motorsport Australia to produce and manage the Historic business plan in accordance with the Committee Policy Statement and within parameters defined by Motorsport Australia.

One aspect of the Committee's activities is dealing with the eligibility of Historic cars. For this purpose, the Committee has established two sub committees, the Historic Eligibility Committee and the Historic Production Based Eligibility Committee. The people overseeing the eligibility of Historic vehicles are the Eligibility Officers. Each State has resident Eligibility Officers whose job, in the first instance, is to inspect and categorise each car for which application has been made for an Historic Log Book and Certificate of Description.

Each member of the Committee and the Eligibility Committees serves on a voluntary basis and does so solely in the interests of regulating and fostering Historic racing and other events involving Historic cars.

Motorsport Australia Historic Motor Sport Committee: Policy Statement

The Committee maintains a Policy Statement which articulates the principles by which it manages vehicles, regulations and sporting activities of the 5th Category. Those principles are outlined herein.

Guiding Principles

Historic racing essentially provides the opportunity for drivers to race Historic cars in an atmosphere reminiscent of that enjoyed in the various historic periods.

The two major guiding principles of Historic motor sport must be authenticity and amateur sport. Keynote issues for the use of historic cars in racing, regularity trials, or demonstrations must be preservation, restoration and appropriate use in that order.

Whilst the Category was designed originally to cater only for the actual cars that raced in the historic periods, the Category has since been expanded to include some Groups, being Jb and Kb, and N and S, for cars which, although not endowed with a racing history, are considered a suitable addition to Historic motor sport and are cars that are an appropriate representation of the period.

The Committee believes that, within the limitations of practicality, Historic racing should accurately depict the cars that existed in the past. Particular attention is paid to the periods of the cars, the authenticity of their specifications, and the Group categories in which they compete.

The Role of the Committee

The primary task of the Committee is to manage and guide Historic motor sport in Australia in a manner that is in the best interests of the sport.

The details of Committee's responsibilities are set out in its Terms of Reference which are authorised by the Board of Motorsport Australia. These cover the activities and procedures of the Committee, its meetings and meeting procedure, the appointment of the Committee members, the powers of the Committee, and the functions and responsibilities of the Committee. The Committee must work within its Terms of Reference.

The Committee wishes to ensure that the diverse needs of competitors are met, and in order to achieve this, the Committee has followed a long-established principle of only taking decisions which are in the interests of Historic motor sport as a whole.

The members of the Committee are selected on the basis of their personal discipline and knowledge of both Historic motor sport in general and specific aspects of the 5th Category. As is also the case for many Historic Technical Commissioners and Eligibility Officers, situations will arise where Committee members will be faced with potential conflicts of interest. Where that occurs, Commissioners are required to declare such interest to other members of the Committee prior to the commencement of the subject discussion. To assist Committee members in deciding if such a statement is required, the following guidelines are used –

- Do I have personal or private interests that may conflict with my duty as a member of the Motorsport Australia Historic Committee?
- Could there be benefits for me or my employer, now or in the future, that could cast doubt on my objectivity?
- How will my involvement in the decision or action be viewed by others?
- Does my involvement appear fair and reasonable in all the circumstances?

Portfolios

Portfolios are allocated to the members of the Committee to cover the different responsibilities associated with Historic motor sport. The portfolios will cover:

- *Pre 1960 Groups*
- *Touring Car Groups and Sports Sedan Groups*
- *Production Sports Car Groups*
- *Safety issues*
- *Post 1960 Racing and Sports Racing Car Groups*
- *Regularity Trials, Demonstrations and related events*
- *Event promoters*
- *Historic Eligibility Committee (Racing and Sports Racing Car) and eligibility matters*
- *Historic Production Based Eligibility Committee and eligibility matters*
- *Finance Committee*
- *Other portfolios may be included from time to time.*

The Groups

An Historic racing car must be shown to be either a car, which has competed in some event in a particular historic period or, for some Groups, a car that is representative of a particular period. These cars are then grouped by the Committee as follows:

- *Groups Ja and Ka are for cars built before the end of 1940 and include thoroughbred cars and Australian Specials. Modern built J and K period Specials are allowed in groups Jb and Kb only under strict guidelines.*
- *Group L is for cars built before the end of 1960 and includes cars with a racing history in the post-war period. Modern built "square-rigger" Specials are allowed in Group Lc only under strict guidelines.*
- *Group M is for cars built before the end of 1965 and which have a racing history. It covers a period in which technology moved rapidly with great advances in chassis, suspension and tyre development.*
- *Group O is for cars built before the end of 1969 and which have a racing history. It covers a period in which engine size and performance increased and when tyre technology made rapid development up to the arrival of slick tyres.*
- *Group P is for Racing and Sports Racing Cars with a competition history established prior to the end of 1972, which are equipped with wings but still use treaded tyres rather than slicks.*
- *Group Q is for cars built before the end of 1977 and which have a racing history in the period slick tyres and wings were the significant developments.*
- *Group R is for Single-Seater Racing Cars and Sports Racing Cars with a racing history established before various end dates in the 1980s, according to the Group of the car. Ground effect technology was the significant development of this period.*
- *Group F5000 is for Formula 5000 cars with a racing history established before the end of 1977.*
- *Group F is for Formula Ford racing cars with a competition history established prior to the end of 1983. The Group is divided into Group Fa for pre-1978 cars, Group Fb for 1978-1983 cars and Fc for 1984-1989 cars.*

- *Group V is for Formula Vee racing cars with a competition history established prior to the end of 1985, divided into Group Va for pre-1975 cars and Group Vb for 1975-1985 cars.*
- *The broad description “Historic Touring Cars” covers touring cars built and raced over several periods from pre-1957 until the end of 1992. Group N is for Touring Cars, not necessarily with a racing history, built before the end of 1972, and is divided into three subgroups: Group Na for cars built before the end of 1957, Group Nb for cars built before the end of 1964 and Group Nc for cars built before the end of 1972. Group C is for Production Touring Cars with a racing history established in Australia between 1973 and 1984, and Group A is for Production Touring Cars with a racing history established both in Australia and overseas between 1984 and 1992.*
- *Group S is for Production Sports Cars modelled on vehicles built between 1941 and 1977, and is split into three subgroups. Group Sa is for cars between 1941 and 1960. Group Sb is for cars between 1961 and 1969. Group Sc is for cars built between 1970 and 1977. Each car must remain very close to original production specification. State of tune must be restricted in the interests of fair competition, safety, and authenticity. The use of components or assemblies which were not original equipment on a car, or which were not in common use in the period, is not allowed.*
- *Group T is for genuine Historic Production Sports Cars with a competition history established prior to the end of 1981, and genuine factory-built competition variants with or without a competition history built before the end of 1977.*
- *Group U is for Historic Sports Sedans with a competition history established in Australia prior to the end of 1985.*

A prime object of the Group philosophy is to portray, as faithfully as possible, each of these stages in the development of the racing car in motor sport. With less obvious definitions of technology development in the 1980's, such criteria as the stages of development of the racing car may not be able to be so clearly defined in the future. However, history is important, whether it be in preservation of the original cars that participated or, in certain restricted areas, allowing the appearance of replicas and facsimiles of the type of car that raced in that era. This overall philosophy will continue.

The National Competition Rules (NCR)

The Committee will review annually, or more frequently if the need arises, the NCR as they apply to Historic motor sport.

The specific regulations of the “5th Category – Historic cars” are the exclusive responsibility of the Committee and alterations or additions to the regulations will be advised to Motorsport Australia as they are determined. Aspects of the NCR which are relevant to the Historic Category but are shown outside the “5thCategory” chapter will also be considered and any proposals for alteration or addition will be submitted to Motorsport Australia for consideration.

The Committee will strive for consistency and stability, and frequent minor adjustments to the regulations will be avoided. However, the Committee must be prepared to review some regulations, such as the tyre rules, as necessary, and to permit items outside the existing regulations as the availability or the economics may demand.

Fees and Expenses

The Committee will monitor fees and expenses as they apply to the Historic Category and make appropriate recommendations with the aim of maintaining a reasonable net contribution to Motorsport Australia

Vehicle Eligibility

Matters of vehicle eligibility are the responsibility of the two Historic Eligibility Committees, one covering Historic Racing and Sports Racing Cars, and the other all Groups based on Production Sports and Touring cars. Each is a subcommittee of the Committee and reports to the Committee.

The Historic Eligibility Committees have the authority to determine matters relating to the interpretation of and compliance with the regulations, and applications for Historic Log Books and Certificates of Description. They also have a responsibility for recommending any revisions or upgrades to the regulations.

The responsibilities of the Historic Eligibility Committees are set out in detail in their respective Terms of Reference, which are separate documents.

Advertising and Signage

The Committee strongly supports the guiding principle that advertising material or signage should only be permitted on competing vehicles when it replicates period livery on a particular car. This is consistent with the strong view of the Committee that Historic Racing must remain an amateur sport. It follows that the Committee is also of the opinion that, as far as possible, the Historic Racing movement should not be compromised by commercial pressures.

However, the Committee recognizes that some support from commercial sponsors may be required:

- *to facilitate the organization of a limited number of historic races as support events at high profile national and international meetings which incur high costs; and/or*
- *to meet costs associated with the temporary importation of desirable historic racing cars to participate in 5th Category events in Australia.*

Such commercial support may be contingent on the display of sponsor signage on competing vehicles. Nevertheless, such signage will be approved only where the nature of the event can reasonably be regarded as promoting the best interests of Historic motor sport in Australia and where the principles established in this policy statement are not compromised.

Safety

Matters of safety, be they relevant to the cars, the circuits or the competitors, will be considered while respecting the ethos of Historic motor sport.

Safety features, in the context of Historic motor sport, are those features of a racing car that reduce risk to humans or property without affecting performance.

Proposals on the pretext of safety, but which have the potential to affect performance, will be critically evaluated.

Safety is not an absolute term. The Committee recognises that by its very nature, Historic motor racing may present risks that are typical of earlier eras but which may be higher than those which are now acceptable in contemporary motor sport. In recognising this, the Committee will manage those risks appropriately, having regard to vehicle safety equipment standards, driver apparel, monitoring of driving standards and the mixing of different Historic vehicle Groups. It is through the responsible and measured approach of competitors to Historic Racing that these risks will also be kept to a minimum.

The Racing

Amateur motor sport in authentic vehicles is the guiding principle in Historic motor racing, thus the attitudes and behaviour of the owners and drivers must be carefully monitored.

The Committee is very conscious of the need for a high standard of both driving and track behaviour in the 5th Category. Professional cut and thrust is positively discouraged, as safety concessions are enjoyed by the movement and the vehicles are valuable. Aggressive driving is unwelcome, yet an attitude of good competition, within the bounds of good sportsmanship, is encouraged.

The Future

The Committee believes that there must be an ongoing review of future groups for Historic motor racing because the competing car of today is likely to be the Historic racing car of tomorrow. Therefore the consideration of new groups will be undertaken when a need or a demand becomes apparent.

The introduction of new Historic groups should not occur until after thorough vetting of the proposed rules and after circulation to interested parties for their comment. The Committee will welcome extensive evaluation of such issues. It will reject any superficial approaches. The following guidelines will generally be applicable to each proposal for the creation of a new Group:

- *Any future vehicle group should cater for vehicles with a racing history or those intended for racing use, rather than modified production cars without any competition history.*
- *Cut-off dates applicable to any future group should continue to be based predominantly on significant historical changes in regulations or vehicle design features. Any future group should also be geared to cater for specific vehicle categories or formulae, rather than simply covering all vehicles from a particular period in time.*
- *Any new vehicle group should generally be restricted types of vehicles which have either:*
 - *An Australian competition history; or*
 - *A history of competition in international or national championship events where the vehicles are considered compatible with the general mix within the 5th Category*
- *New vehicle types considered for inclusion within the 5th Category should have no reasonable place in contemporary motor sport, and it would be expected that 10/15 years should have passed from the time of their competitive contemporary career.*
- *However, it should not be assumed that any vehicle/group/categories with a racing history that becomes superseded will automatically be considered for inclusion in the 5th Category.*

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How to go Historic Motor Racing

The first thing that you need in order to go Historic motor racing is an acceptable car which fits into one of the Groups of the 5th Category. Anyone who has any intention of becoming involved in Historic motor racing must read the regulations of the 5th Category, "Historic Cars" in the Motorsport Australia Manual , and any subsequent Bulletins which are issued from time to time. Generally these provide all of the information that you need to know when setting out to purchase, prepare and restore a car to compete in this category of racing.

Intending competitors should be fully aware that they are becoming involved in the racing of Historic cars and the history of the vehicle is therefore most important. It must be stressed that one cannot presume that because a car was built in a particular era, that it will automatically be eligible for Historic racing. If a car has been advertised as being eligible for Historic Racing you are well advised to request confirmation of this in writing, or by sighting an Historic Log Book and/or Certificate of Description issued by Motorsport Australia. If there is any doubt, refer immediately to the Motorsport Australia office and arrange for the vehicle to be submitted to the Eligibility Officer for an opinion.

The Committee through its Eligibility Committees and its Eligibility Officers requires that, in every instance, an applicant seeking classification of a car demonstrates the suitability and acceptability of the vehicle to be recognised by Motorsport Australia. This may involve a lot of effort on the part of the applicant, and it should be borne in mind that it is the applicant's responsibility to prove that the car is eligible. Hearsay evidence is not acceptable. If in any doubt at all, one should at all times ask the Motorsport Australia Historic Department about the vehicle before it is purchased, or before its construction is commenced. Motorsport Australia will direct you to the relevant Eligibility Officer, who will be pleased to assist. It is too late to ask once the car has been completed, and it is possible that much effort may have been wasted.

Regularity Trials

Regularity Trials are a variation of the rules for Historic competition to allow those individuals who are unwilling or unable to race to run their vehicles for the enjoyment of themselves and the spectators. As such, it is exempted from some of the requirements of race competition.

At the discretion of the event organisers, historic regularity events may include any vehicle of a type suitable for inclusion in the 5th Category. Where accepted by organisers, a replica is permissible for participation providing it is clearly listed and identified as a replica on the entry form and entry list.

A Level 2S licence is necessary to contest these events. They are essentially time trials. Each competitor nominates a lap time before the competition, and the winner is the driver who achieves lap times closest to those nominated.

Regularity Trials provide an opportunity to field interesting cars not suited to racing and also to provide drivers with an opportunity to get the feel of driving on a race track, possibly as a prelude to racing.

Where to go Historic Racing

There is now an extensive calendar of exclusively Historic race meetings throughout Australia, with around ten such race meetings each year. Some organisers may also choose to offer Historic events within the programme of a general race meeting.

Most circuits hold an all-Historic race meeting at least once a year and each of those meetings is generally promoted by a car club that specialises in the Historic activity.

The calendar page on the Motorsport Australia web site lists Historic Events.

Driver Behaviour and Attitudes

This subject is all important in the context of Historic racing and is referred to in other sections of this Guide. Many people have said that Historic racing is putting the “Sport” back into Motor Sport. Certainly, Motorsport Australia and the Committee are very conscious of the need for a quite different standard of driving and track behaviour, and a different attitude to be displayed by drivers in this category of racing.

Historic racing drivers compete for trophies and not for prizemoney. Advertising is not permitted on competing vehicles.

These two factors alone mean that commercial involvement is minimal, with professional cut and thrust being actively discouraged (and indeed quite unnecessary). Aggressive driving has no place in the Historic racing scene. Similarly the policy against “updating” of Historic cars really means that the win-at-all-costs philosophy has no place in this sphere of the sport.

The attitude which is encouraged is good competition, within the bounds of good sportsmanship. The Stewards of the Meeting, and the Clerk of Course, are specifically instructed to look closely at any behaviour which, whilst possibly tolerable in modern racing, is incompatible with Historic motor sport.

The Historic car clubs in each State have recognised the need to maintain standards in these matters and, to this end, seminars and practical instruction are held from time to time. This is good reason to join an appropriate car club which caters for the interests of those who wish to compete in Historic cars.

How to get a Motorsport Australia Licence

The means by which one obtains an entrant/driver licence to race a motor vehicle is by application to Motorsport Australia.

Specifically, any person wishing to take part in Historic race meetings should look into getting a Provisional Circuit Licence, or a Speed licence for competing in regularity trials or hill climbs. Information listing the requirements, prerequisites, costs and the application forms are available from the competitors section of the Motorsport Australia web site.

We also point out that many of the clubs catering for Historic racing, conduct lectures and practice days from time to time. These days enable those with Historic cars to attain the minimum standard to obtain their competition licences and to engender a sense of what Historic car racing is all about.

Any person intending to take up Historic racing is urged to join any of the clubs which cater for this activity. Club details can be found on the Motorsport Australia website.

What is an Historic Racing Car?

Basically, an Historic racing car must be shown to be either a car which has competed in some event in a particular Historic period or, in some Groups, a car that is representative of a particular period.

In most historic Groups, it is essential to establish the authenticity of the vehicle by tracing its history and establishing its specification at a date within the desired period.

In Groups allowing “period specials”, it is necessary to establish the authenticity of the components, that the intended specification portrays the period, and that the car is built in the likeness of a car which existed in the relevant Group period.

Some Groups cater for vehicles which do not have an actual racing history, but which visually represent production specifications as closely as possible.

How to get your Historic Racing Car classified

To race your Historic car in 5th Category Historic racing, you will need an Historic Log Book. If you intend to race a car that has a history, you will also require a Motorsport Australia Certificate of Description.

Historic classification takes two forms. The first is the Historic Log Book, which records the basic specification of the car, its Historic Group, its competition history and its chain of ownership. The second is the Certificate of Description, which applies to each car, except those in Groups N and S which are covered by individual specification sheets. The Certificate of Description covers the detailed technical specification of the particular car, in words and in pictures, and provides the information required for eligibility checking.

Information on how to apply for an Historic Log Book and Certificate of Description is available from the Motorsport Australia website. Regularity events do not require a Log Book, although there will be some detail requirements for regularity events set out in the Supplementary Regulations for each event.

When should you apply for an Historic Log Book? Timing is important. If your car is ready for competition, then all you need to do is allow some time to have your application processed prior to your intended competition date. The usual allowance in these circumstances is six to eight weeks. If you are intending to restore or build a car, it is recommended that you make application for “Approval in Principle” prior to starting work on the vehicle. This ensures that you do not waste time and money on restoring or building a car to an unacceptable specification.

Historic classification can take one of three forms depending on the Group for which your car is eligible. The first is cars with a competition history, the second is Historic Specials and the third is Production Cars without a competition history.

For a car with a competition history, the first item to consider is the moment within the period that you wish your car to represent. Many cars competed in more than one historic period, being modified as time went by and competition demanded. You may choose any moment within the period of a car’s history and request classification applying to that date. The principle is to select the desired moment within the period and describe on the application

form the specification of the car as it was at that date. It is important to note that the car in its entirety must be as it was at that one point of time. It is unacceptable to have a mix of specification, perhaps with a view to maximising performance.

You will also be required to describe any current variations from that period specification. Generally, these are acceptable only in areas of safety, e.g. safety harnesses, ROPS, dual circuit braking systems, fuel specification, etc.

It is also essential to establish the chain of ownership. This provides the authentication that the vehicle is the actual car being classified and not a modern creation. Evidence of period competition history is also required, such as original Log Books, race programs, race reports, etc. Photographs of the car in the historic period and as it is today are also required.

For an Historic Special, you will need to detail the specification of the car you would like to build it to and justify that, in its general concepts, it reflects a car that existed in the period, supporting that with good illustrations and photographs. Group Lc applications require detailed information on specification and appearance of your intended "square-rigger" Sports Car.

The Production Car groups require you to fill out the Technical Detail Form to ensure your car complies with the specification sheets for that model of vehicle, and to provide photos to support that written information. Specification Sheets are available from Motorsport Australia.

Given the difficulty of adequately describing vehicle specifications, photos are a critical component of your application. Bear in mind that your application will be reviewed by Eligibility Officers who have not seen your car and all they have to rely on is the information you provide, so more information and photos is better than less.

Your completed application will be referred to the Historic Eligibility Committee. If the Committee members agree with the application, you will receive your Historic Log Book and Certificate of Description. If questions are raised about your application, these will be conveyed to you for response, prior to the classification of the car.

In the case of Approval in Principle, the Eligibility Officer will need to inspect the car once your restoration or rebuild is finished. Once the Officer is satisfied that the car complies with the originally agreed specification, the Officer will forward the completed application with the current fee to the National office for issue of the Log Book and Certificate of Description.

It is important to note that the Motorsport Australia Historic Eligibility Committees reserve the right to classify any car to a Group to which the Committee believes the car conceptually belongs. A car may be classified in an earlier or later Group than might seem appropriate at the time of the application. If you have any doubt about the appropriate Group for your car, you should contact your local Eligibility Officer for help.

As you will by now have gathered, Historic classification is a thorough process, hence it is essential that you plan well ahead to allow time for your application to be processed.

If you think these processes are cumbersome, remember that classification of a Historic car is motor sport's equivalent of a building being classified by the National Trust. The process is not regarded lightly by Motorsport Australia, which is committed to maintaining a high level of authenticity in historic vehicles.

The Groups

Historic Groups are:

- Production-based Groups - A, C, N, S, T, U
- Sports and Racing Groups - F, F5000, J, K, L, M, O, P, Q, R, V

Detailed information on each Group is outlined in the 5th Category regulations.

New Groups and Categories

The Committee regularly reviews existing Groups, cut off dates and criteria and considers the possibility of the introduction of new groups for more recent cars.

The Committee considers that a time period of between ten years and fifteen years is an appropriate gap between the end of the Historic period and the present day.

Owners and aspiring owners of such cars are assured that, when the time is appropriate, new Groups will be introduced.

Reporting of Incidents

Whilst this Guide is applicable to Historic car racing, trackside marshals need to apply quite different criteria as to what may or may not be a reportable incident during races for Historic vehicles.

These differing criteria are equally applicable, whether you are officiating at an all Historic meeting or at a meeting which incorporates some events for Historic cars.

It is important to be fully aware of certain factors which apply to Historic car racing, in order to have a better appreciation of Motorsport Australia' attitudes and philosophy towards it.

First, Historic cars enjoy a number of exemptions from normal safety requirements, including ROPS, safety harnesses, etc.

Second, Motorsport Australia does not permit monetary awards for Historic racing in any circumstances, hence the incentive to win is very much diminished when compared with contemporary racing.

Third, individual advertising is not normally permitted on cars, again reducing the incentive to win so as to impress a sponsor. (This does not prohibit signage which is proven to have been on the car in the period).

Historic racing has been developed and fostered by Motorsport Australia as a purely amateur activity with the accent very much more on participation than upon results. In other words, Historic racing is intended to be fun with more emphasis on the preservation and use of cars, rather than a demonstration of driving ability or outright performance.

With this brief background, therefore, you may better appreciate the need for closer monitoring of race tactics in Historic events.

Since 1996, the Committee has been recording the incidents reported by flag points and reported in Stewards' or Clerk of Course reports where drivers are involved. This database enables the Committee to make recommendations with regard to driver behavior when needed.

We cannot afford, nor do we want, any incidents in Historic racing. Instances of over exuberance to the point of folly or poor sportsmanship will be reported.

It is better that every driver knows full well that a different set of conditions and criteria apply to their discipline of motor sport, so that it remains as incident-free as possible.

Remember, that Historic drivers are not racing for sheep stations. At best they stand to win a pot, and they have no sponsor to impress. It is “fun” racing, and is essentially an opportunity for owners of classic cars to give them an airing and enjoy themselves whilst doing so.

Conclusion: Get Involved!

In conclusion, we hope that this guide will have proven helpful, and remind anyone seriously interested in becoming involved to do a number of things, each of which has already been identified.

1. Join a club specialising in competition for Historic cars.

You can find an Historic club by visiting the Motorsport Australia website and searching for an Historic club.

2. Seek approval in principle from Motorsport Australia for a vehicle which is being considered for purchase or restoration.

This can sometimes avoid subsequent embarrassment or heartache where a project is not undertaken in complete awareness of the guidelines. The fact that a car has a previously issued a Log Book does not guarantee its eligibility for classification.

3. Review the 5th Category regulations

The Motorsport Australia Manual is available from the Motorsport Australia website. It contains full regulations for Historic competition and Historic vehicle classification.

4. Feel free to seek advice from Motorsport Australia

...or from any of the Historic Eligibility Officers, the Motorsport Australia Historic Administration or from people within the Historic racing movement. Advice is free, and is generally freely given.

We suggest that you contact any of the clubs which organise Historic race meetings, or which appear to suit your needs best. In any case, don't hesitate to contact a Motorsport Australia state office for further information.