

FIA GUIDELINES FOR MINIMUM SAFETY REQUIREMENTS DURING KARTING PRIVATE TESTING

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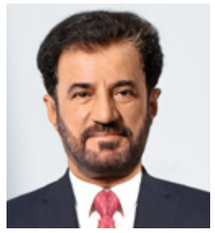
SCOPE

The aim of these new Karting Private Testing Guidelines ("Guidelines") is to complement the FIA safety regulations by consolidating the key operational and safety requirements applicable to private testing activities. These Guidelines provide an overview of essential aspects, such as circuit capacity management, medical and response provisions, minimum staffing levels, driver briefing procedures, driving conduct, required driver safety equipment and safety in areas outside the track, with the objective of promoting a safe and structured testing environment.

These Guidelines do not replace the official documents published on the FIA website and bear no regulatory value.

This is a living document that can be updated to reflect any new information, updates to regulatory or guidance documents or clarification that the FIA considers relevant to the competitors and officials. Please ensure that you take into consideration the latest available version.

PRESIDENTIAL FOREWORD



The FIA is proud to release the Karting Private Testing Guidelines, developed in collaboration with the FIA Safety Department and FIA Karting. These guidelines are designed to support ASNs, circuit operators, and teams in ensuring the highest safety standards during private testing. We hope they serve as a valuable resource for all those involved in organising karting sessions worldwide.

As a key entry point into motorsport, karting presents distinct safety needs compared to other disciplines, requiring protocols that reflect its unique environment and diverse range of participants. These dedicated guidelines provide practical, scalable solutions, from driver category separation to marshal and medical coverage, ensuring that safety always remains the priority regardless of session size or driver experience.

This expert guidance, shaped by the latest safety protocols, is freely and openly available to all as part of the FIA's commitment to doubling global motorsport participation and supporting grassroots development. By providing clear, accessible resources like this, we aim to empower our member clubs, organisers and circuit partners to uphold best practices and foster a safe, inclusive and thriving karting environment.

I encourage you to carefully study and implement these guidelines as a key reference when planning and conducting private testing activities. Together, we can ensure that karting continues to be a safe and inspiring entry point into the world of motorsport.



Mohammed Ben Sulayem
FIA President



FIA Karting has worked closely with the FIA Safety Department to develop these guidelines and ensure consistent safety standards are provided across karting circuits whenever karts are on track.

Safe karting doesn't end when the racing season ends. With more circuits providing testing sessions around the world, this document is an essential resource for ASNs, circuits and teams to implement the latest advice and guidance to keep everyone at the circuit safe.

As part of the FIA's Global Karting Plan, we are working to make karting more accessible than ever before. At the heart of this strategy is supporting the growth of karting in every corner of the globe and by producing these freely available guidelines, we aim to support the development and expansion of karting circuits, helping to bring the sport closer to communities everywhere.

I hope this document will support new and existing circuits to host more testing events safely and support the racing stars of tomorrow as they build vital experience, skill and confidence during the start of their careers.



Akbar Ebrahim
FIA Karting International Commission (CIK-FIA) President

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1. **GENERAL**

1.1/ **Object**

These Guidelines are intended to serve as a reference for the **minimum safety best practices** to be observed during **private testing on karting circuits**.

They are designed to assist circuit operators, teams, drivers, and event organisers in implementing safe and consistent procedures during non-competitive on-track activities. The focus is on **risk reduction, clarity of roles, and operational consistency**, while still allowing flexibility for varying circuit layouts, local regulations, and testing formats.

These recommendations do not replace national legislation or sporting regulations but are intended to complement them by highlighting **best practices** based on experience and FIA safety principles.



2. **DEFINITIONS**

The terms below have the following meanings as used in these guidelines:

Collective Testing: Organised testing sessions involving multiple competitors, teams, or drivers under a common schedule. These are typically managed by a promoter or circuit operator at a determined date in advance and include shared infrastructure such as marshals and medical personnel.

Private Testing: Independent, non-competitive testing carried out by a competitor, team, or manufacturer outside a formal event. Arranged directly with the circuit, without necessarily planification. Private testing requires participants to ensure their own compliance with these safety guidelines.

Karting Private Testing: Any Collective Testing or Private Testing session.



PPE (Personal Protective Equipment): Equipment worn by track personnel involved in recovery operations to ensure their safety and to clearly distinguish them from other individuals on the circuit. This may include a high-visibility tabard or vest designated for recovery roles.

Competitor Safety Equipment: The safety equipment worn by competitors, including a helmet, karting suit, gloves, boots, a karting body protector and optionally a neck brace.

Dummy Grid: The staging area where karts are lined up and drivers prepare to enter the track. It is used for final checks and must be kept orderly and supervised when in use.

Repair & Servicing Area: A designated zone for quick mechanical adjustments or setup changes. It is typically outdoors and should be clear of non-essential personnel.

Incident Marshal: A marshal positioned at high-risk points of the circuit, responsible for responding to on-track incidents and assisting drivers when needed.

Marshal Post: A fixed position along the track where marshals are stationed. Posts are equipped with signalling equipment (flags or light panels) and a handheld extinguisher, and provide visual coverage of their assigned section.**Medical Response Personnel:** Qualified individuals assigned to provide first aid or emergency care. This may include a trained first aider, medic, paramedic, or doctor, depending on national regulations and session requirements.

Paddock: A defined and secured area within the circuit premises allocated for the parking, preparation, servicing, and maintenance of competition karts. It also includes spaces for team equipment, support personnel, scrutineering, and administrative functions.



3. MINIMUM NUMBER OF COMPETITOR/CIRCUIT USERS

To ensure safe and effective Karting Private Testing sessions, careful consideration must be given to how the circuit is utilised and the number of competitors on track at any given time. The following principles should be applied.

3.1/ Track Capacity Limitations

The number of karts permitted on track simultaneously **must never exceed the maximum** allowed in the circuit's licence. This limitation is a **critical safety measure**, determined by the track's layout, width, and operational characteristics, and must be strictly respected at all times. For safety management purposes, circuit capacity is considered in three reference categories:

- **Low-capacity sessions:** 1 to 15 karts
- **Full-capacity sessions:** 16 to full capacity.

For sessions involving high-capacity levels, from 16 up to the circuit's licensed limit, the maximum number of karts permitted on track can be calculated using the formula: **Total Number = L / 28**, where L is the circuit length in metres. This formula is aligned with Appendix 13 of the Circuit Regulations.

For low-capacity sessions where third-party supervision is present but limited in scope, the circuit operator may establish a formal agreement with the driver (or, where applicable, the driver's parent or legal guardian) outlining the limits of support provided and confirming the driver's assumption of responsibility for their own participation under those conditions.

Such agreements are not a substitute for the operator's due diligence. Circuit operators must ensure that all applicable safety measures are in place, that personnel are adequately trained and deployed, and that the circuit is operated in a safe manner, regardless of whether or not a Driver Responsibility Agreement has been signed. Where no formal agreement is in place, best practice would be to maintain the full safety recommendations outlined in these guidelines.

3.2/ Driver Experience Grouping

Drivers must be grouped according to their level of experience, with licensing status used as a reference of driver experience where applicable. Mixing licensed drivers with unlicensed individuals, or drivers with significantly different experience levels, is strongly discouraged. Ensuring homogeneity in driver ability within a session contributes significantly to on-track safety and consistency.

3.3/ Category Segregation

Different karting categories must be kept separate during private testing. In particular:

- **Cadet** and **Mini** drivers must not be mixed with any other category.
- **Junior** drivers must not be mixed with **Senior** or **Gearbox** drivers.

Each category (Cadet/Mini, Junior, Senior, Gearbox) must run in separate sessions to ensure safety and suitability. This segregation is essential to reduce the risk of incidents arising from differences in kart performance, driver experience, and physical maturity.

Group mixing may only be permitted during low-capacity sessions, provided that competitors maintain a professional attitude at all times. They must allow sufficient space when overtaking lower-class drivers, remain fully aware of those around them, and refrain from engaging in any form of racing with other participants.



4. MINIMUM MEDICAL AND RESPONSE TEAM

The presence of a competent and responsive medical support system is essential for all *Karting Private Testing* activities. Circuits must ensure that appropriate medical arrangements are in place to provide immediate assistance in the event of an incident. The following requirements should be observed:

4.1/ On-Site Medical Personnel

4.1.1/ Low-Capacity Sessions (1-15 karts)

During low-capacity sessions, a minimum of one medically trained person or first aider should always be on site during Karting private sessions, with two recommended.

This individual should be licensed in the country of the test, qualified in emergency resuscitation, equipped with appropriate medical equipment, and have immediate communication access to emergency services. This may be deemed sufficient, provided that the circuit is within reasonable proximity (e.g. 10–15 minutes) of professional emergency medical care.



4.1.2/ High-Capacity Sessions (from 16 to full capacity)

A dedicated medical response team comprising a minimum of two medically trained personnel, licenced in the country of the test and qualified in emergency resuscitation, should be on site at all times during Karting Private Testing sessions where the circuit operates with more than 6 karts per session. The level of qualification may vary by country or legal requirement. These individuals may be:

- An EMT/qualified paramedic, or
- A licensed medical doctor. It is recommended that the doctor is qualified in pre-hospital emergency medicine.

Organisers/circuit operators must ensure that the appointed personnel are competent to respond to injuries typical of karting incidents, including trauma management and basic and advanced life support.



4.2/ Medical Infrastructure and Equipment

The presence of a temporary or permanent medical centre and/or ambulance should be considered for all Karting Private Testing sessions. While not always mandatory for low-capacity sessions, their presence is strongly recommended when the circuit operates with higher kart volumes per session. Where this is not directly contracted, see Section **4.3** below.

This may include:

- A dedicated medical unit or treatment room with essential emergency equipment,
- An on-site ambulance capable of patient transport and emergency care.

In the absence of a permanent medical unit, temporary arrangements (such as mobile medical posts or contracted services) may be acceptable, provided they meet the required standards for karting activity.

Doctors and paramedics attending the Karting Private Testing must carry or have available suitable medical equipment and medications to enable them to carry out the medical assessment and treatment of drivers in the pre-hospital environment to the acceptable clinical standards in place in the country of testing.

At all times, at least one ambulance vehicle should be available during the Karting Private Testing for patient transport. Where this is not directly contracted see **4.3** below.

4.3/ Access to External Emergency Services

The circuit operator should have **pre-planned arrangements** for external medical support and clearly identify the **route and estimated time to the nearest hospital** in the event of an evacuation.

Circuits should establish and confirm the availability of external medical support in case of emergencies. Key considerations include:

- The distance to the nearest hospital with emergency services,
- Expected response times from local ambulance services,
- The ability to place an emergency call and have medical staff dispatched to the site without delay.

A clear and effective emergency response protocol must be in place, including the exact location of access points for emergency vehicles and up-to-date contact numbers for all relevant services. Furthermore, should an emergency arise requiring a helicopter ambulance response, the circuit operator must have an identified landing area in close proximity to the circuit, or be aware of the nearest suitable location where a helicopter can land in order to respond to such an emergency.

5. MINIMUM TRACK STAFF TO OPERATE THE CIRCUIT

The safe operation of a kart circuit during Karting Private Testing relies heavily on the presence of trained personnel strategically positioned around the track. These individuals play a critical role in incident detection, response, and communication. The following standards are recommended:

5.1/ Marshal Deployment

Sufficient numbers of trained track marshals must be deployed to key locations around the circuit. Priority should be given to high-risk zones, such as chicanes, tight hairpins, heavy braking areas, and complex corner combinations.

Marshal Deployment Based on Track Capacity

Marshal deployment should be adapted to the scale of the activity, as follows:

- **Low-capacity sessions:** A minimum of one trained incident marshal (or two for circuits longer than 1000 m and/or with limited visibility due to elevation changes) and, if the circuit is equipped with a centralised light panel system, one light panel operator must be present. These individuals must be positioned to observe key areas and respond to incidents, with communication access to circuit control or emergency services.
- **High-capacity sessions:** Each designated marshal post must be staffed by at least one trained incident marshal, ensuring full visual coverage and rapid response capabilities.

5.2/ Incident Marshals

The incident marshals should be located near high-risk zones and be prepared to:

- Provide immediate driver assistance in the event of an incident,
- Assist medical staff if needed.

Incident marshals should be clearly identifiable and equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and basic recovery tools.

5.3/ Use of Light Panels and Circuit Control Systems

Where a centralised light panel system (FIA Approved Karting Light Panels) is installed, operated by a **clerk of the course, circuit manager, or designated overview operator**, the requirement for manned marshal posts during high-capacity sessions may be reduced, provided that sufficient circuit coverage is maintained to ensure a rapid response around the entire circuit. The system must allow for:

- Full circuit visibility either through **direct line-of-sight** from a control tower or by use of a **reliable CCTV system**, and
- Instant light signal control at each marshal post via remote operation.

However, even with automated light systems in place, on-track incident marshals remain essential and cannot be replaced by remote monitoring. Their presence ensures immediate intervention in case of an incident, especially when it involves younger or less experienced drivers.

5.4/ Adapting staffing to circuit conditions

The staffing levels outlined above represent recommended baselines and should be adapted to reflect the circuit operator's own operational experience and the nature of their facility.

Circuits with an established track record of safe operation, experienced marshalling staff, and well-tested incident response procedures may adjust personnel numbers accordingly, provided that safety coverage and response times are not compromised. Where a centralised light panel system is in place and operated in accordance with Section 5.3, this may also be taken into account when determining appropriate staffing levels. Equally, circuits with less operational experience or newly trained personnel are encouraged to deploy additional staff beyond the stated recommendations in order to account for their reduced familiarity with the circuit's specific risk areas and response protocols.

Circuit-specific factors such as track visibility, elevation changes, blind corners, and terrain complexity should also be taken into account, as these may significantly affect incident detection and response times and may warrant additional personnel beyond the recommended minimums.

Where a circuit operator chooses to operate with reduced staffing levels, it is strongly recommended that a formal risk assessment be carried out prior to the session, identifying any areas where reduced coverage may affect incident detection, response times, or medical care. This assessment should confirm that medical support remains adequate and that any reduction in staffing does not compromise the ability to respond effectively to an incident. The welfare of drivers and participants should always take precedence over operational convenience or cost considerations.



6. DRIVER BRIEFING

A comprehensive **Driver Briefing** is essential prior to any Karting Private Testing activity. It ensures that all participants are aware of the circuit procedures, safety expectations, and session-specific details. The briefing sets the tone for a safe and structured day of testing and must be delivered with clarity and consistency.

6.1/ Mandatory Nature and Format

A driver briefing should be **mandatory** before any on-track activity begins. While a written document may suffice in limited scenarios, the **preferred method** is a **face-to-face briefing** conducted by the circuit operator, event organiser, or safety official. This allows for clarification, questions, and confirmation of understanding.

The content of the briefing must, at minimum, include:

- **Circuit layout orientation** – including direction of travel,
- **Pit lane procedures** – clearly identifying **pit entry and exit points**,
- ***Marshal Post*** **(MP) locations** – so drivers understand where signals or assistance may come from,
- **Start/Finish line location**,
- **Flags and light panel signals** – particularly if different from standard race formats,
- **Overtaking conduct and expected driving standards** – especially when sessions include drivers of varying experience levels. For detailed guidance on expected driving conduct, please refer to Section 7.

Drivers must confirm their attendance and understanding—either by signing an attendance sheet or through digital acknowledgement if a written briefing is used.

6.2/ Timetable and Session Planning

Drivers must be informed of the **full timetable** of the day's activities, including:

- **Session start and end times**,
- Allocation of sessions by **driver category or class**,
- Planned **breaks**,
- Any **specific conditions** (e.g., sessions restricted to licenced drivers or age-specific runs).

This allows for better preparation, punctuality, and safe rotation of drivers. Any changes to the schedule should be communicated promptly and clearly to all participants. It is the responsibility of track personnel to control circuit access and session starts to ensure that categories remain separated.





7. COMPETITOR DRIVING CONDUCT

Maintaining high standards of driving behaviour is fundamental to the safety and success of any *Karting Private Testing* session. All competitors must adhere to a clear code of conduct while on track. The following principles outline the expected behaviour during testing:

7.1/ Basic Driving Conduct – Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Drive within your limits and respect those of others on track.
- Leave space when overtaking and avoid aggressive or dangerous manoeuvres.
- Observe and respond to all flag signals or light panels immediately.
- Follow the correct direction of travel at all times.
- Enter and exit the pit lane safely, checking for traffic and staying within designated lanes. When entering the pit lane, drivers must raise a hand clearly to signal their intention to exit the track, ensuring those behind are aware.
- Maintain awareness of slower or less experienced drivers, particularly in mixed testing sessions.
- Stop immediately and safely in the event of a red flag or if signalled to do so by a marshal.

Don't:

- Make sudden changes of direction that could endanger others.
- Weave, brake-test, or drive defensively in a testing environment.
- Re-enter the circuit from an off-track excursion without ensuring it is safe to do so.
- Drive unnecessarily slowly or erratically in a way that disrupts others' laps.
- Block or impede faster karts during testing—let them pass safely.
- Ignore marshal instructions or safety signals at any time.

All drivers must understand that Karting Private Testing is not a race. The primary goal is to develop skills, test equipment, and gather data—not to compete. Respect for fellow participants and circuit staff is expected at all times.



8. COMPETITOR SAFETY EQUIPMENT

The safety of all participants during Karting Private Testing depends significantly on the quality and condition of the equipment worn. All competitors are encouraged to wear FIA-homologated safety equipment where possible, as this provides the highest level of assurance regarding protective performance. Where FIA-homologated equipment is not available, equipment of an equivalent standard in good condition is acceptable, provided that it meets the requirements outlined below.

8.1/ Basic Safety Equipment Requirements

The following items are required for all competitors. Regardless of homologation status, all equipment must be in good condition, free from damage, and used correctly. Equipment that is visibly worn, damaged, or structurally compromised must not be used and the driver should be denied access to the track until a suitable replacement is provided.

Particular attention should be paid to the overall condition of all equipment, as even minor visible damage, such as cracks, tears, or deformation, can significantly compromise its protective capability in the event of an impact. Any equipment that has been involved in a previous accident should be carefully assessed before further use, as structural damage may not always be visible to the naked eye. For example, helmets may have internal cracks or damaged impact-absorbing foam that cannot be seen from the outside. For further guidance on equipment inspection and FIA safety standards, please refer to the FIA Competitor Safety Equipment Guidelines, available on the FIA Safety News page.

The following items are mostly advised:

1. **Helmet:** Drivers shall wear a full-face crash helmet. Helmets shall be free from cracks, structural damage, or any modifications that could compromise safety.
2. **Karting Suit:** Drivers shall wear a karting suit. Karting suit must be in good condition and offer freedom of movement.
3. **Karting gloves:** Drivers shall wear karting gloves. Gloves must be in good condition offering full hand coverage and good grip control.
4. **Karting boots:** Drivers shall wear karting boots. They shall be structurally intact and appropriate for pedal operation.
5. **Karting Body Protector:** Drivers shall wear a Kart Body Protector of the correct size in relation to the driver's height - or up to one size lower.

Where FIA homologated equipment is used, it is recommended that it complies with current FIA standards. A reference list of accepted homologation standards for each item is provided in Section 8.2 below.

8.2/ Reference homologation standards

Helmet:

a. **8878-2024** (Technical List N°108)
b. **CMR2016** or **CMS2016** Mandatory to use for drivers under 15 years of age.
c. **8859-2015** (Technical List N°49)
d. **8859-2024** and **8859-2024-ABP** (Technical List N°107)
e. **8860-2010** (Technical List N°33) – only valid until 31.12.2028
f. 8**860-2018** or **8860-2018-ABP** (Technical List N°69)
g. **SA2015** (only valid until 31.12.2028), **SA2020; K2015** (only valid until 31.12.2028) and **K2020**

Karting Suit:

a. **CIK-FIA N 2013-1** (HOMOLOGATED OVERALLS - Part 1 (Standard 2013-1)) – only accept until 31.12.2029
b. **8877-2022** (Technical List N°101)

Karting gloves:

a. FIA Standard 8**877-2022** (Technical List N°101)

Karting boots:

b. FIA Standard **8877-2022** (Technical List N°101).

Karting Body Protector:

c. FIA Standard 8870-2018 (Technical List N°87).

All the Technical Lists can be found here:

- FIA Website
- FIA Karting Website

8.3/ Restrictions on Driver Equipment modifications

It is essential to ensure that no external devices or accessories are attached to equipment in a manner that could present a safety risk to the driver in the event of an accident. Drivers must not carry or wear any attached objects that could create pressure points, snag hazards, or increase the risk of injury during an impact. This includes, but is not limited to, the mounting of action cameras directly onto drivers' helmets.

Wherever possible, all ancillary equipment should instead be mounted onto the kart structure or other approved fixed locations, using appropriate mounting systems and secured in a safe and reliable manner at all times, preferably by mechanical attachment (wired, bolted, etc.), so as to prevent detachment, the shedding of debris on the track, or any resulting hazard to drivers and officials.



9. PADDOCK, DUMMY GRID AND SERVICING AREA SAFETY

Safety must be maintained not only on the circuit, but also throughout the surrounding areas including the *paddock*, *dummy grid*, and servicing zones. Clear rules and good organisation in these areas help prevent unnecessary incidents and ensure a safe working and preparation environment for all participants.

9.1/ General Paddock Rules

The *paddock* is a shared space where teams, drivers, and support personnel operate. The following rules apply:

- **Karts must not be driven in the *paddock* under any circumstances** – they may only be pushed or transported with engines off, except when on the designated circuit or *dummy grid*.
- A strict walking pace must be observed by any support vehicles or scooters in the *paddock*.
- Refuelling and engine starting must only take place in designated areas, away from tents and flammable materials.
- Fire extinguishers must be readily available and visible at each team awning or working area.
- Support vehicles must only be operated by adults who hold the appropriate driving accreditation or authorisation.

9.2/ Dummy Grid

The *dummy grid* serves as the final staging area before entering the circuit. It must be:

- Restricted areas must not be accessed by 'minors'
- Clearly marked and separated from the *paddock*,
- Supervised by a responsible person or official when in use,
- Free of unnecessary personnel or equipment to avoid congestion.
- Mechanics and drivers must wear a visible form of identification, such as a wristband or vest.

Engines can be started in this area only when permitted by the organiser or at a specified signal.

9.3/ Repair and Servicing Area

A designated area for quick mechanical adjustments and setup changes must be established near the *dummy grid* or *paddock*. While not typically enclosed, it is still important to maintain order and safety in this space. Key considerations include:

- The area must be kept clear of foot traffic not directly involved in servicing, to reduce the risk of accidents or interference.
- Tools and equipment should be organised and secured, ensuring no loose items create trip hazards or delay quick operations.
- Engines must not be run in this area unless specifically permitted, and all work must be carried out in a safe and controlled manner.
- No kart may re-enter the track from the servicing area without first passing through the *dummy grid* (unless otherwise authorised by the organiser).

9.4/ Renforcement in Drivers Briefing

These rules must be reiterated during the **Drivers Briefing** to ensure that all participants, including mechanics and parents or guardians, understand their responsibilities and the boundaries of safe conduct off-track.

10. SUMMARY OF KEY REQUIREMENTS

OPERATIONAL CAPACITY CONSIDERATIONS	• Low Capacity: 1–15 karts. • High Capacity: 16 to maximum circuit capacity.
DRIVER GROUPING	• Drivers must be grouped by experience: - Cadet and Mini should not be mixed with other categories. - Junior should not be mixed with Senior or Gearbox. - Licensed drivers should not be mixed with inexperienced drivers. • Younger drivers are recommended to participate in low-capacity sessions for a safer environment.
MEDICAL TEAM	• Low Capacity: Minimum of 1 medically trained personnel (2 recommended). • High Capacity: Minimum of 2 medically trained personnel. • Emergency plan and communication plan with external emergency medical services must be in place before the event. • The presence of an ambulance and a medical centre on site is strongly recommended for all Karting Private Testing sessions.
TRACK STAFF	• Low Capacity: 1 incident marshal + 1 light panel operator (if applicable). • High Capacity: All marshal posts fully staffed. • All personnel must be identifiable and wear PPE. • Staffing may be adapted based on operational experience and circuit characteristics.
DRIVERS BRIEFING	• Drivers Briefing should be conducted before the start of the private testing session. - Explain operational considerations and rules of conduct. - Communicate the timetable. - Highlight any safety considerations to drivers, mechanics and parents/ guardians, including off-track areas.
DRIVER'S SAFETY EQUIPMENT	• Drivers must wear: - Helmet. - Karting suit. - Karting gloves. - Karting boots. - Karting body protection. • The integrity of the equipment should be verified before any on-track activity. • The use of FIA-homologated equipment is **strongly recommended**.

NOTES



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