

Media Information



7.8.2024

Spectacular rally scenes – but safe!

- **Sophisticated safety concept at the Central European Rally protects competitors and guests**
- **Complex planning procedure for international safety team**
- **Impossible without the cooperation of spectators**

Munich. The FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) promises to deliver pure action when it lines up at the Central European Rally from 17th to 20th October. A huge team is required to ensure a visit to watch the spectacular battles between the best rally drivers in the world is an enjoyable but safe experience: the rally organisers are planning on there being roughly 3,000 volunteers along the 1,602-kilometre route. 2,000 of them will form part of the route safety team on the 18 special stages. Their employment is the culmination of a whole year of meticulous preparation performed by recognised safety experts in Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic. They are able to call on the experiences and positive feedback from last year's premiere. They form the basis for the plans, which are in full swing, to ensure a spectacular rally experience that is, above all, a safe one for everyone involved. The spectators also form part of the concept, as they can contribute significantly with the way they behave. Anyone wishing to watch the motorsport spectacle in Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic live can get tickets now at www.centraleuropeanrally.eu.

The first step towards a safer and even better Central European Rally in 2024 was taken on the final day of last year's rally: in a joint briefing, the route safety team sat down with colleagues and observers from the International Automobile Federation FIA for an initial debrief. The first important contacts in the rally region had also already been made by this point: authorities and those in communities responsible for new special stages and route variants were incorporated at an early stage of the planning, which ultimately culminated in a very complex approval procedure in Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic. A central aspect in all three countries: ensuring maximum safety. With this in mind, the route safety team repeatedly takes officials, emergency services and the FIA out onto the special stages, in order to meticulously plan safety facilities and features.

"We are doing everything possible to give our guests from around the world a comfortable and safe rally experience," says head of route safety Andreas Spannbauer. He and his colleagues in Austria and the Czech Republic are faced with a complicated task, which means always having one eye on the surroundings. Andreas Spannbauer: "When planning safety aspects, crowd control is always a topic. On the one hand, we obviously want to allow things to run as smoothly as possible for our guests. On the other hand, we must keep the burden on residents within acceptable limits – after all, the whole event is only possible if it has the support of people in the rally regions." For this reason, visitors should use the designated spectator zones. They not only offer a safe environment, but are also selected to keep the disturbance for residents to a minimum.



Media Information



No tape – no public

Just over 300 kilometres are planned for the 18 special stages that make up the CER. Their exact composition is already being prepared in minute detail. Roughly two thirds of the scheduled special-stage kilometres will be on new routes or last year's routes but in the opposite direction. The safety measures for these stages must be reconsidered, while last year's concept can be used as a basis for the routes being used again. "We gained a lot of valuable information last year, on which we can build in 2024," says Michal Mikeš who, as deputy head of route safety, is heavily involved in coordinating the plans in the Czech Republic. "It is a privilege for us to welcome enthusiastic fans, who, in their excitement, sometimes stand where they should not be stood. However, it goes without saying that no real rally fan wants a special stage to be cancelled just because they are standing somewhere they should not be. For this reason, on every special stage, we have many locations that offer both a good view of the action and safe places. We are also observing new trends in rallying and trying to use tape to indicate safe places for spectators. Where there is no barrier tape, access is forbidden. As such, we are in line with the FIA's motto – no tape, no public."

Always with safety in mind: Rally Control directs proceedings

The entire safety system is coordinated and controlled from one central room, where all the strings come together: Rally Control is where over 30 people assemble every day to monitor the rally on all available channels. The position of the competing cars, which are equipped with GPS, is always available here. Together with reports from the marshals and personnel on site, images from the live television coverage and many other sources, this provides a comprehensive picture of what is going on. This is also where the police, fire brigade and rescue services remain in contact with their respective teams out on the routes. In order to effectively manage the large numbers of fans, the crowd control team is also represented at Rally Control. They have their own personnel in the field and, for example, communicate via social media channels and the event app. Last but not least, a final check is performed immediately before the competitors head out onto a special stage.

Visitors must also play their part!

Anyone attending the Central European Rally as a spectator can rely on the fact that those responsible are doing everything to ensure they have a safe rally experience. However, the fans themselves also form part of the safety concept, as their active participation is important. A rally is always an open stage, and the safety areas are spacious and clearly indicated. However, they are not closed off by structural elements, as is the case at a racetrack, for example. For this reason, the most important rallying cry is for the visitors to take these areas seriously. "The organisers are doing everything in their power to make the rally safe – if the fans help them to do so," says Andreas Spannbauer. The key point: "Use the designated spectator zones! They have a good infrastructure for visitors, parking, toilets, catering and much more. They are also located where viewing is both spectacular and safe. Last but not least, we are obviously also paying great heed to valuable habitats and environmental protection."

In other places where viewing is also possible, visitors are required to use their heads: "Look after yourself and find a safe place to stand," says the head of route safety. "For example, these are elevated and a safe distance from the route of the stage. Positioning oneself on the outside of corners and in the funnel-shaped restricted area behind jumps is dangerous and generally not allowed." Last



Media Information



but not least, it is a matter of fairness, which spectators must also observe: “We are working hard to give our fans a great rally. By purchasing an admission ticket, visitors are helping us, as the expenditure involved in organising a rally is obviously huge – even though a large part of the work is done on a voluntary basis.”

Media Contact

CER Media Team

Michael Kramp, T +49 221 957434-34, E-mail media@centraleuropeanrally.eu

ADAC e.V.

Oliver Runschke, T +49 89 7676-6965, E-mail oliver.runschke@adac.de

adac.de/motorsport

