



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP**

#### **Socio-Economic Impact Analysis**

A group of leading universities across the world is to work on a major research project examining the socio-economic impact of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC). The new initiative, covering five countries, will draw together leading sports research centres.

The project will involve five universities covering World Rally Championship events in Finland, New Zealand, Spain, Germany and Ireland. The lead institution in the project is the University of Ulster (Ireland), which will work closely with associates at the University of Jyväskylä (Finland), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain), Auckland University of Technology (New Zealand) and the University of Zweibrücken (Germany).

Morrie Chandler, President of the WRC Commission said:

“The FIA recognises the importance of having well-researched information.”  
“The promoter of the events in each of these countries will work closely with its local research partner to provide a worldwide view of the true value of the World Rally Championship. The intention is that, in the following year, this research will be expanded to gain in international impact profile.”

Dr. David Hassan, from the University of Ulster, Sport and Exercise Sciences Research Institute (SESRI) said:

“This is a very exciting development and the WRC is to be commended for demonstrating such foresight. In an expanding sports marketplace it is inevitable that all sports will have to outline their value to sponsors, public bodies and the media.”

The research, which will commence on August 3 at the ninth round of the series in Finland, will conclude with the first-ever staging of an FIA WRC event in Ireland on November 16. The report from the first phase of the research will be presented to the World Rally Championship Commission in January 2008.

Paris, 2 August, 2007