



2007 HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX

From The Stewards of the Meeting
To The Team Manager
Vodafone McLaren Mercedes

The Stewards having received a report from the Race Director regarding the use at the Hungarian Grand Prix by Vodafone McLaren Mercedes (McLaren) of what they refer to as "lightweight gearbox" requested the presence today of Paddy Lowe (Engineering Director of McLaren) and David Ryan (Team Manager) and such other personnel as they considered appropriate to explain the position.

The facts as ascertained are that late in the afternoon of Thursday 2nd August Paddy Lowe disclosed to the Race Director a list of changes made to their vehicle, one of which was referred to as a "lightweight gearbox".

The matter was referred to the FIA F1 Technical Delegate for his consideration but a meeting between the parties did not take place until immediately prior to qualifying on Saturday 4th August. Changes to both cars were shown to the Technical Delegate who marked the list produced by McLaren as confirmation that the changes had been brought to his attention. His action did not constitute approval to the changes and this fact is recognised by McLaren.

The Technical Delegate asked whether the changes to the gearbox had been subjected to a further crash test. He was advised that the changes affected neither the crash structure nor the rear cover. The changes were only to the gearbox and were not significant. The Technical Delegate asked that he be given details of the changes before the next race.

Both team cars took part in qualifying and the race using the lightweight gearboxes.

When further information was received on the evening of Friday 17th August which detailed the tests carried out by McLaren on their lightweight gearboxes the FIA requested details of the actual differences between the original gearbox and the lightweight version. This information was finally received on the evening of Tuesday 21st August. It was the view of the FIA that the changes made to the original gearbox (which together with the original rear impact structure had been subjected to impact tests) were "significant".

2007 Formula One Technical Regulations Article 16.1.2 states that "any significant modification introduced into any of the structures tested shall require that part to pass a further test."

The FIA accordingly requested McLaren to carry out further tests as required by Article 16.1.1 in the presence of a FIA technical delegate.

Because of time constraints McLaren used the original (not the lightweight) gearboxes for the Turkish Grand Prix. The relevant tests were carried out and completed satisfactorily on Thursday 30th August.

The view of McLaren is that the modifications made to their original gearbox which resulted in that which is termed the lightweight gearbox were not significant within the meaning of Article



2007 HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX

16.1.2 such as to require the component to be re-tested. They base this view upon what they regard as the excessive weight and strength of the original gearbox (which was designed to meet a greater crash test requirement than that which applies in 2007) and upon the results of their own computer modelling.

The view of the FIA is that the percentage in weight reduction (which it is accepted does not necessarily correlate to a reduction in strength) was of sufficient magnitude as to be regarded as "significant" therefore requiring an impact test before use.

Whilst the term "significant" contained within Article 16.1.2 is subjective and open to interpretation (as indicated by the different views adopted by McLaren and the FIA), what is beyond doubt is that by delaying the supply of information to the FIA (which could have been supplied on completion of the modification to the gearboxes during the week commencing Monday 16th July), McLaren deprived the FIA of the opportunity before the race to consider the changes made and require impact testing to be carried out before use.

Had such information been imparted in due time the tests could have been satisfactorily completed prior to the Hungarian Grand Prix such that their use at this event would have been without criticism.

Clearly the requirement to submit information which may result in a request for impact testing is important in the FIA's endeavours to ensure the continued safety of competitors. The Stewards feel that disclosure should be made in circumstances such as this and accordingly censure McLaren for choosing to rely upon the results of their own computer modelling and denying the FIA the opportunity of requiring the results of an actual impact test before using the component concerned.

McLaren are accordingly ordered to pay a fine of US\$ 50,000 (FIA International Sporting Code Article 155).

The view of the Stewards is that the components having been satisfactorily tested indicate that the cars complied with the technical configuration required when they raced in Hungary. Nothing in this decision is to be taken as condoning the practice of retrospective impact testing resulting in the use of untested components but in the particular circumstances of this case no further sanction will be applied.

Tony Scott Andrews

FIA Stewards of the Meeting

Derek Ledger

Lajos Herczeg

Date 06 September 2007

Time 18:25

Document 39

Received by

Date 06 September 2007

Name (print) DAVE RYAN

Time

1835

Competitor Vodafone McLaren Mercedes