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DEDICATION TO EXTRICATION

FIA Institute presented latest developments in extrication to ASNs from around the world

The FIA Institute today ran a major extrication demonstration for National Sporting Authorities (ASNs) attending the inaugural FIA Sport Conference Week.

Using crash-tested Subarus, which had been utilised for an FIA Institute project on Roll-Over Protection Systems, the Institute invited one of the UK MSA's Licensed Rescue Units and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service to demonstrate how to extricate a driver from a crashed car.

When a car crashes, there is always potential for a driver to be injured. When this occurs, or where the forces are so great that medics think there may have been an injury, the drivers are removed from the vehicles or extricated cautiously and this may involve cutting the car apart to release them.

The process is something motor sport has in common with crashes on public roads, however in motor sport while the drivers have better protection, the speeds are higher and the difficulties greater as the car technology is far more advanced.

This has led the FIA Institute to look at the cutting equipment used and develop new standards to help overcome the strength of the new high tensile steels used in modern race cars, which respond to being cut by becoming even stronger.

As part of the demonstration, the Hampshire Fire and Rescue services tested new cutting equipment that may eventually be used by extrication teams around the world.

FIA Institute President Gérard Saillant said: "This highlights the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach to motor sport safety. It is essential for the engineers to make these cars as safe as possible and we also need to ensure the drivers can be extricated by medical teams following an accident. So now the doctors are working with engineers to find new solutions."

During Conference Week, the Institute also displayed a prototype of a new Formula One extrication tub, which will be used for practice and training at circuits around the world.

Built from fibre-glass, it is a replica of an Formula One car from just behind driver to the nosecone. It has everything you would expect in a modern Formula One tub from camera and steering wheel, to a removable seat. It also offers the chance for extrication teams to practice without worrying about damaging the car.

Saillant added: "The aim is to help ASNs have access to the right kind of chassis to practice on. Even an old Formula One chassis would cost tens of thousands of Euros to purchase so this offers a cheaper, more practical solution. They can practice throughout the year, so when they come across a real accident, they know exactly what to do."

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