

2018 AZERBAIJAN GRAND PRIX

26 - 29 April 2018

From	The Stewards	Document	56
To	The Team Manager, Williams Martini Racing	Date	08 May 2018
		Time	13:48

Request for Right of Review – Decision

The Stewards have received a request from Williams Martini Racing for them to review, in accordance with Article 14.1.1 of the FIA International Sporting Code, the following decisions made by the Stewards at the 2018 Azerbaijan Grand Prix.

Decision in Document 34

Decision in Document 43

Decision in Document 51

The team has also requested the Stewards review an incident involving cars 17, 27 and 35 in Turn 2 of Lap 1 of the race and the actions of the driver of car 14 in returning to the pits. (The Stewards note that the reference to car 17 above is most likely incorrect and it should be car 14, namely Fernando Alonso).

The Stewards convened a preliminary hearing by teleconference at 1100hrs Central European Time today to consider whether any “new element”, defined under the Code as being “significant and relevant” and “being unavailable to the parties....at the time of the Competition” exists.

Attending the hearing, in addition to the four stewards, were Messrs David Redding and Mark Biddle (Williams Martini Racing) and Mr Charlie Whiting, FIA F1 Race Director.

It was noted that Mr Biddle is a lawyer and is General Counsel for Williams Martini Racing. The stewards advised that it was not usual to have legal representation at a stewards hearing, however in the circumstances, granted permission for Mr Biddle to remain as an observer.

Mr Redding presented the case for the team and expanded on the detail of the team’s written submission.

Mr Whiting gave specific evidence as to the actions of the driver of Car 14 on its return to the pits after the first lap incident.

Decision

The Stewards decide, unanimously, that there is no new significant and relevant element present, which justifies a review of any of the 5 incidents referred to in the request.

Reasons

1. In relation to the incident described in Document 34 (SIR/PER) it is noted that this was a case where one car crashed into the rear of another, and was not similar to other first lap incidents where cars were side-by-side. The penalty was similar to other penalties for similar collisions and was consistent with the minimum grid penalties given previously.

2. The fact that the written decision in Document 34 did not reach the team until 1728hrs was not deemed relevant because this was well before the time for any protest or appeal had expired. This is mentioned in the context of the team’s argument that some other incidents were not penalised or were not penalised sufficiently.

3. In relation to the incident described in Document 43 (MAG/GAS) the team, in its written request for review, argued that the penalty on MAG was “inconsequential”. The team is reminded that since the meeting of 2013 between the FIA and representatives of the teams and drivers, the consequences of penalties are not taken into account.

4. Further to the above, and in relation to other penalties, since the beginning of 2016 there have been a total of 87 incidents involving alleged “causing a collision” in the Formula One Championship. Of these, as a result of the “let them race” policy, 55 have resulted in No Further Action. 14 have resulted in 10 second penalties and 9 have resulted in 3 grid position penalties for the next race. A very small number involved other penalties. Therefore the penalties imposed on MAG, ERI and SIR were entirely consistent with previous practice and with the penalty guidelines. The cases of No Further Action were also consistent with previous practice.

5. The Race Director specifically referred to the actions of the driver of Car 14 in returning to the pits after his incident in lap one and noted that firstly, the Safety Car was present, and secondly that the driver took care to avoid the racing line, avoid following traffic and minimised risk.

6. Williams Martini Racing was aware of the actions of the driver of Car 14 as it occurred. Their team at the “mission control” in the UK saw it on the live television feed and the team on the pit wall would have seen the driver of Car 14 enter the pits, as it had to drive past them. Therefore it cannot be argued that this is a “new element”.

7. In relation to the incidents referred to above, all “no further action” incidents were well promulgated prior to publication of the results. Therefore the team had ample opportunity and time, being aware of all the other penalties above, to lodge an appeal where no penalty was imposed (noting that no appeal is permitted where time penalties or grid penalties are imposed).

8. In relation to the incident involving cars 14, 27 and 35 on lap one, as the stewards took no decision on this matter, the team could have protested the matter within the permitted time limit, but chose not to exercise this right.

9. Differing penalties imposed or incidents where no further action was taken, cannot be regarded as a new element.

10. In relation to the media reporting tabled by Williams Martin Racing in its request for a review, these reports are not considered significant and relevant.

Garry Connelly

Dennis Dean

Tom Kristensen

Anar Shukurov

The Stewards