

MOTORSPORT NEW ZEALAND INC

DECISION OF THE INQUIRY PANEL APPOINTED BY MOTORSPORT NEW ZEALAND, NAMELY

- Wayne Christie (Chair)
- Norman Oakley
- Brian Budd

THE PARTIES CONCERNED

- Amy Keighley
- Andrew Keighley
- Steve Foster (Clerk of the Course)

MOTORSPORT NEW ZEALAND REPRESENTATIVES

- Wayne Scott (Interim CEO)
- Katrina Renshaw (Sporting Manager)

DOCUMENTS PROVIDED TO THE INQUIRY

- Notice of Inquiry Panel Hearing
- Rally Inquiry Form submitted by Andrew Keighley on event
- Request for Inquiry submitted by Amy & Andrew Keighley
- Report of the Inquiry Review Panel
- Timeline for SS1 incident involving car 13 hitting cattle on the road
- Safety Plan for Dayle ITM Goldrush Rally of Coromandel 2025
- Rally Coromandel Log 2025 - SS1 Incident

INQUIRY

1. The Inquiry Panel (Panel) was appointed by MotorSport New Zealand pursuant to Part X, Articles 118(2) & 122(3) of the MotorSport New Zealand National Sporting Code (NSC) as outlined in the Notice of Inquiry Panel Hearing dated 8 December 2025.
2. The Panel was tasked with:
 - Understanding the true timeline of events on SS1 of the Dayle ITM Goldrush Rally of Coromandel 2025 involving livestock being loose on the stage, leading to a cattle beast being hit by Car 13; and
 - Establishing if the correct protocols were followed to ensure the safety of all competitors; and
 - To identify any points at which different decisions could/should have been made.
3. Additionally, the Panel was invited to give consideration to guidelines/protocols, or a process to determine guidelines/protocols, to assist Clerks of the Course with appropriate responses to such situations in the future.
4. The Inquiry was conducted by a Teams meeting with all persons named above attending and commenced at 18:00 hours on Tuesday, 16 December 2025.
5. The Chair opened the Inquiry and outlined the process for the Inquiry.
6. Andrew Keighley referred the Panel to the request for the Inquiry as the basis for their concerns and added that from a competitor perspective they wished to see more consistency around the management of incidents. He also commented that possible reputational damage for the sport needed to be considered.
7. The Clerk of the Course, Steve Foster, advised that the timelines provided were taken from a combination of the radio log, phone calls and timing.
8. He advised that it was common for livestock to be needed to be moved by safety cars on a stage ahead of the stage going live.

9. The Panel asked Steve Foster if he was aware of the condition of fencing which might have contributed to stock being loose on the stage.
10. Steve Foster replied that he always took particular note of the condition of fencing when surveying a rally route and had not noticed any areas of concern for this event.
11. Discussion ensued between the parties, summarised as follows:
 - It was established that there could have been 2 cows on the stage, positioned between two block marshals, both of whom were some distance away.
 - It is unusual that stock returned to a closed paddock would come back onto the road.
 - It was possible that there was more than one group of stock on the road in reasonable proximity to each other.
 - Marshals at SS1 Finish Control were quoted as saying they knew stock were by the bridge when sightings of the stock were reported by competitors.
 - At 08:50 Rally HQ requested that SS1 Start Control notify competitors that livestock could be on the stage.
 - The Clerk of the Course had considered stopping the stage, a decision not to stop the stage was taken at 08:52 given the numbers of cars in the stage and that a farmer was removing cattle from the road.
 - There appears to have been a time lag between Rally HQ instructing SS1 Start Control to notify competitors and when competitors began being notified.
12. Amy Keighley advised that as a competitor she felt the stage should have been stopped when it was clear that there was livestock loose on the stage, however, wasn't sure at what point such a decision needed to be made.
13. Andrew Keighley advised that he couldn't understand why reports from competitors to the Finish Control were not received at Rally HQ, and felt that all reports should have been conveyed, regardless of them being the same message.
14. Steve Foster explained that the Finish Control would have known that Rally HQ had previously been notified and would have been working on the issue.
15. Andrew Keighley felt there should have been no delay in requesting Start Control to notify competitors.
16. Steve Foster replied that their focus was on trying to establish exactly where the livestock were and to remove them before notifying competitors. A white board at the Start Control was used to notify competitors from Car 42.
17. Andrew Keighley suggested that the Finish Control could have been asked to question competitors where the stock was.
18. Discussion ensued between the parties as to whether it might be possible to better utilise RallySafe in such situations.
19. Andrew Keighley commented that the sport claims to take safety seriously, but that actions and attitude of some officials don't support that, adding further that knowingly having two cows on a live stage puts people at risk, and any delays in acting make it difficult to align safety.
20. Katrina Renshaw commented that such incidents need to be reported in Clerk of the Course and Stewards reports.
21. Wayne Scott observed that livestock getting loose onto a live stage is a risk, and the challenge is how this is managed in a way that provides the best outcome in terms of safety for all involved and the desire to allow a stage to continue.

FINDING

1. Based on the information provided, and established during the Inquiry, the Panel is satisfied that the true timeline of events was provided within the reports identified as "Timelines on the Day" and "Rally Coromandel Log 2025 - SS1 Incident".
2. The Panel observed that the NSC and associated Appendices do not provide any protocols specifically for dealing with situations involving livestock being loose on a live stage and is not aware of any other documents that might outline the protocols and actions to be taken when such events occur, and therefore determines that it is unable to establish if the correct protocols were followed to ensure the safety of all competitors.

3. In terms of identifying any points at which different decisions could/should have been made the Panel has concluded:
- 07:41 The Safety Car reported cattle on the stage between instructions 19 and 20 and advised that they had been removed.
 - 07:49 A Block Marshal reported cattle on the stage before instruction 21 (17.10km) and that spectators and a farmer were removing them. Chief Safety Officer (CSO) requested to check that the cattle had been removed.
 - 08:12 CSO reported via radio that no cattle were sighted and the stage was cleared to commence.
 - 08:29 0 Car notified Rally HQ that they had not sighted any cattle on the stage.
 - 08:38 Finish Control notified Rally HQ that Car 4 had hit a cattle beast. No information was provided in the log as to where this had happened. Rally HQ immediately set about trying to locate the cattle beast, which would be normal procedure.
 - Other cars (but not all) reported sighting cattle on the stage to the Finish Control but these reports were not notified to Rally HQ. *The Panel considers that these reports should have been reported to Rally HQ which would have alerted Rally HQ that there was possibly a bigger issue such as potentially more than one cattle beast loose on the stage. This could have provided a better picture (such as a more accurate indication of where the cattle were) from which a decision to stop or continue the stage might have been made.*
 - 08:49 Finish Control notified Rally HQ that Car 13 had hit a cattle beast. *On the basis that this was the second cattle beast reported as being hit, which could have been the first cattle beast being hit twice or it could have been another cattle beast, the Panel considers that, with the benefit of hindsight, the stage could have been stopped at this point with all further cars required to tour through the stage.*
 - 08:50 Start Control was instructed to notify competitors that there might be cattle loose on the stage. *The Panel notes that during the Inquiry it appears this message was not immediately provided to competitors, and that the first competitor to be notified could have been some minutes after this instruction was issued.*
 - *The Panel considers that, based on the information provided as it was to Rally HQ, and in the absence of any formal guidance or protocols, that the action taken by Rally HQ was consistent with normal practice at rally events, but that this incident has spotlighted a shortcoming in dealing with such incidents that has unfortunately led to livestock having to be killed and a competitor incurring damage to their vehicle.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Panel acknowledges the difficulty that rally organisers and officials have in trying to manage incidents during a live stage, and at the same time balance the desire of competitors to be able to contest a stage as well as the requirements of safety and potential risk of damage to property and livestock.
2. First and foremost, the safety of people involved with a rally must always be the first and highest priority consideration.
3. Rallying relies on the goodwill of the local communities and councils to allow roads to be closed, and it is imperative that all measures are taken to ensure the safety of livestock and damage to property. There is a reputational risk to the sport when livestock are injured or killed, and when property is damaged, and in many cases, it is the way in which such incidents are managed, that determines the level of reputational damage to the sport. In short, all people involved with a rally need to remember they are there on the good grace of the local communities, and these need to be treated with consideration, dignity and often tact. (The Panel notes that there was no evidence that there were any issues in dealing with the local community in managing this incident).
4. The Panel is mindful that when an incident such as livestock becoming loose on a stage, it can be a widely varying situation that could require different approaches to ensure a satisfactory outcome and therefore suggests that the recommendations provided below be considered as guidelines for dealing with such incidents and not necessarily be hard requirements.
5. Where livestock are found on a stage before the stage goes live, the official car convoy should report on locations where they find stock and be specifically tasked with removing the livestock by

either moving them back behind fences or well away from the road where there are no fences and cattle stops are used. A stage may not be started until Rally HQ is satisfied that the livestock have been removed from the vicinity of the stage. If there is any risk that the livestock may return to the stage competitors should be warned at the Start Control.

6. Where livestock are noticed by competitors on a stage they should, if possible, note the location and report the sighting to the Finish Control, who in turn need to notify Rally HQ of every report. Additional information that would assist Rally HQ in making a knowledgeable and timely decision includes:
 - The number of livestock sighted
 - The location on a stage, at least between instruction numbers if not able to advise the distance through a stage
 - How close to the road the livestock are
 - Whether the location of the livestock is a fenced or open area
 - If there are spectators or farmers nearby
7. It might be possible that the RallySafe system could be used by a competitor to alert Rally HQ of a livestock hazard if they were able to pull up in time, in which case following competitors could be warned of a hazard ahead. Consideration could be given to providing the competitor an assessed time for the stage, provided that the sole reason for stopping was the livestock on the stage.
8. Once advised of livestock being loose on a stage Rally HQ should take the following actions:
 - Request that the Finish Control ask each competitor if they saw any livestock and importantly the location of the livestock (i.e. how far through the stage, and how close to the road the livestock were), then report each sighting back to Rally HQ
 - Once the location of the livestock has been established, immediately request that all competitors at the start of the stage are notified that livestock had been sighted at the location
 - It might be possible to send a message through RallySafe alerting competitors already in the stage that livestock might be loose
 - The Clerk of the Course should consider stopping a stage when multiple reports of livestock sightings have been received, taking into consideration the following factors:
 - Number of reports received
 - Number of livestock sighted
 - The terrain being used for the stage (fenced or unfenced), likelihood of a farmer or spectators being able to remove the livestock, if reports that the livestock is actively being moved, if it is a tight stage with limited forward visibility or an open stage, etc
9. If it is possible to use RallySafe more widely in such situations, the Panel suggests that the Rally Advisory Commission considers whether an assessed time be awarded to a competitor who stops and uses the RallySafe hazard system to warn following cars that are already in the stage, provided the competitor has no other issues.
10. The Panel suggests that the subject of livestock being loose on a stage be an agenda item at the next Rally Clerks of the Course training session.
11. Status Awareness Systems be asked to facilitate the use of a red flag through RallySafe by the Clerk of the Course.

Dated 21 January 2026



Wayne Christie
Chair



Norman Oakley
Member



Brian Budd
Member