



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## PRESS RELEASE

### PIRELLI 'STAR DRIVER'

In accordance with its agreement with Pirelli, the Italian tyre manufacturer designated by the FIA as the official tyre supplier to the World Rally Championship, the World Motor Sport Council has ratified the proposal presented by the World Rally Championship Commission for the investment of funding in international rallying.

The intent is to invest in the growth of the sport worldwide and, in particular, help younger competitors reach World Championship level.

The Pirelli 'Star Driver' scheme is a worldwide search for five young rally drivers from the 2008 and 2009 FIA Regional Championships. The successful drivers from each year will then contest a series of six World Championship rallies the following season, driving identical Group N or Super 2000 cars supplied and serviced under an FIA contract with a specialist preparation company. The competitors must be under the age of 27 on 1<sup>st</sup> January in the year of the Regional Championship.

The programme will be structured through the four FIA Regional Championships, with one driver emerging from each of the Middle East, Asia-Pacific and Africa regions. Two competitors will be selected from the European region after a three-day 'shoot-out'. It is also hoped to expand the programme into South America in 2009.

The FIA regions, working with all their National Sporting Authorities (ASNs), will be provided with development assistance to promote their Regional Championship and help competitors contest their events. The project will also provide funding for personal development, fitness and safety programmes, as well as additional promotional opportunities.

During 2008 and 2009, ways in which to develop the scheme - including the opportunity for the most successful Star Driver to be offered a test drive by a registered WRC team - will be studied.

Paris, x April 2008

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For further information on the FIA, please consult our Internet site:

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