

## **RallySport Ontario and BILL C19 (Street Racing)**

October 13, 2006

Bill C19 is a bill currently in process in Parliament. As a very simple statement to summarize it, it proposes to criminalize street racing. In the Bill the definition of street-racing is very wide-ranging and open to interpretation. At its best this bill is not intended to include organized, sanctioned motorsport and would not affect us; at its worst it could be interpreted to include all rally activities, including navigational rallying, solo etc.

RallySport Ontario is clearly against street-racing. In fact we are actively involved in activities to denounce it and to promote safe and responsible motorsport activities, however this bill as written could put rally in jeopardy.

Months ago several RSO members urged CARS & RSO to take direct action about this piece of legislation, each offering their time and expertise to the cause. RSO discussed the issue, determined as a Board that indeed we felt official action was warranted and asked Alasdair Robertson, who has considerable experience and expertise in politics and parliamentary procedures, to head a committee. The CARS Board later did the same.

Alasdair and his group have been vigorously pursuing this project. Amongst many other resources, they have requested the assistance of the Organizers of the National rallies, Targa and CARS Board members in approaching appropriate contacts across the country. This has produced some highly positive contacts, including a direct personal conversation with the Minister of Justice.

Alasdair was granted a meeting with the Deputy Chair of the Justice Committee, who reviewed the proposed legislation with him line by line. In addition Alasdair has written to various other members of the Justice Committee and will be contacting each in person. To date all contacts have been receptive and positive.

In order for our efforts to yield the best results, we feel it is essential to support the group in every way possible and to direct all efforts through Alasdair. We believe it is best for him to be our only official spokesperson in Ottawa.

As for the legislative process, Bill C19 has just been through its second reading. Following that it will go to committee for fine-tuning and further consideration. It is of interest to note that in the debate in the house at the time of the second reading, the Liberal Justice Critic mentioned rally specifically and the Deputy Chair of the Justice Committee also mentioned rally plus other organized motorsport. Clearly our message is being heard.

At the most recent RSO meeting, Maple Leaf Rally Club announced that it will not be running the Ontario Winter Rally as a drivex event in 2007. The MLRC representative added that although statistics do not support the allegation, there is no doubt that the general perception exists that drivexes present a higher risk

than other navigational road rallies. While the Bill C19 process is ongoing, MLRC feels that it wishes to back Alasdair and his committee in every way possible and thus decided to eliminate the possibility of its drivex event harming the cause.

RSO then decided to further demonstrate its support by determining that it will not accept any drivex events in the 2007 ORRC Championship. Furthermore RSO is urging all RSO clubs to suspend drivexes for 2007.

RSO will keep all its members and clubs posted of further developments.

Ross Wood, RSO Secretary