

DEMYSTIFYING THE FIA HISTORIC TECHNICAL PASSPORT

For some five years now the CAMS Australian Historic Motor Sport Commission (AHMSC), has been debating the introduction of the FIA Historic Technical Passport (HTP), as an alternative form of documentation to the traditional CAMS Certificate of Description (CoD) for vehicles competing in historic racing in Australia.

For many involved in historic racing, the HTP seems shrouded in mystery; in reality, the addition of the HTP to the Australian historic scene will open further opportunities for many participants.

What is the HTP?

The HTP is an internationally accepted document that describes the specification in which vehicles are eligible to compete in international historic events. The HTP is much more detailed than our CoD, and incorporates many more photographs, making the task of eligibility checking a more objective process.

In addition, the AHMSC has resolved to issue a CAMS Historic vehicle log book to accompany the HTP, which will enable race meeting promoters to identify them when entries are received and determine whether or not they will be accepted. Also from a safety standpoint, the log book will enable us to monitor the competition history of the vehicles in question.

Why do we need the HTP?

Firstly, CAMS has no intention, or desire, to unwind our unique but administratively demanding CoD process. However many have questioned the reasoning behind the permanent acceptance of HTP vehicles here.

1. The FIA HTP is the primary form of documentation used for vehicle eligibility in historic motor sport competition worldwide;
 2. With the ever-increasing opportunities for Australians to race overseas, a HTP is generally required to participate; and
 3. The number of vehicles being purchased by Australians with existing HTP documentation, for use here in historic competition, is increasing and this is an issue that has to be recognised and managed.
- Furthermore, as a FIA ASN (National Sporting Body), CAMS is obliged to issue a HTP to a compliant vehicle resident here, whether or not the owner plans to take it overseas. More than thirty have been issued, or are passing through the process at this time.

HTPs already in Australia

Vehicles have been running under HTP documentation in Australia for many years, but only as short-term visitors participating in major events. Obvious examples are the annual Phillip Island Classic, the Tasman Revival and subsequent versions of those meetings, and events for specific categories like F5000 and Formula Junior.

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Australian-built vehicles are now eligible

Until recently, HTPs were limited to makes and models of vehicles that competed internationally, and for any vehicles that did not satisfy this criterion, the opportunities were limited. Thanks to the efforts of our successive FIA HMSC representatives, opportunities now exist for vehicles that have a significant national competition history to gain international recognition. Locally manufactured vehicles from the likes of Elfin Sports Cars, and Lynx and even one-off designs such as the Koala Formula Junior, have already gained recognition and have been seen overseas, and others are sure to follow.

Replicas or “Continuation Models”

Because the FIA HTP does not require a clear “line of history”, replica or “continuation models”, provided that their specification is correct, are eligible for a HTP. In Australia, all HTP vehicles will be issued with a log book that will show the date of manufacture of the vehicle; it will then be up to the race meeting promoters to decide if they will accept the entry of such a vehicle. The final line of protection is where a vehicle is known to have been constructed outside of the relevant historic period, the decision to issue a log book will rest solely with the AHMSC. Where CAMS has refused to issue a log book then the status of that vehicle will be clear.

A demanding process – not a short-cut

Applying for a HTP is not a simple or cheap process: fees are payable to both CAMS and the FIA; the requirement to comply very precisely with all requirements of FIA Appendix K and the original published specifications or homologation documents for each make, model and variant are onerous. This is certainly no short-cut to historic acceptability.

Prospective owners should be aware that incoming vehicles will be inspected very closely before CAMS can submit a HTP application to the FIA, or in the case of vehicles already holding a HTP issued by another ASN, before their documentation can be transferred to CAMS jurisdiction. We cannot stress enough that prospective buyers should be very thorough in their investigations before purchasing a historic vehicle from overseas.

For further information, contact the CAMS Historic Department on historic@cams.com.au

FAQ - FIA HISTORIC TECHNICAL PASSPORT

What is a FIA HTP?

A HTP is a Historic Technical Passport, an alternative form of documentation to the traditional CAMS Certificate of Description (CoD) for vehicles competing in historic racing in Australia. The HTP differs from a CoD in that it is:

- Internationally accepted and describes in detail the specification in which vehicles are eligible to compete in international historic events; and
- More detailed, incorporating many more photographs, making the task of eligibility checking a more objective process.

Why do we need to consider FIA HTPs as an alternative form of documentation to our established CoD system?

The HTP is the form of documentation required by most major international historic motor sport event organisers as proof of the eligibility of a vehicle. CAMS is required to issue a HTP for a vehicle owned by an Australian who is wishing to compete overseas, provided of course that they conform with the FIA's vehicle specification requirements. It is also seen as necessary due to the increasing number of historic vehicles that are being traded internationally, and that we are seeing more vehicles arriving in Australia that have HTPs issued by the FIA through an ASN, particularly those in the USA, the UK and Continental Europe.

Does the HTP have any obvious advantages over the CoD?

Holding a HTP will automatically make a vehicle eligible for historic competition conducted by an FIA affiliated ASN anywhere in the world.

Is applying for a HTP an easier or cheaper process than applying for a CoD?

No, the application form for a HTP is more detailed and requires more photographs, and there are fees payable to the FIA through CAMS. The HTP is a superior document to the CoD and there are plans to align them more closely in the future.

Are all historic vehicles eligible for a HTP?

Not all historic vehicles are eligible for a HTP. A HTP is limited to:

- A vehicle of a make and model that has a history of participation in international period events; and
- A locally manufactured vehicle with a significant competition history in national events.

Is a proven "line of history" or "provenance" needed for a vehicle to be considered historically genuine and obtain a HTP?

The aim of the HTP is to determine the classification and specification of a vehicle for competition purposes, i.e. to ensure that it is raced in the correct category. Due to the difficulty of determining precise competition history and the consequent legal issues, a HTP does not provide any proof of period history. The vehicle owner may sign a single page that asserts the year of manufacture and the origin of the vehicle.

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Is it true that replica or 'continuation' vehicles can be eligible for a HTP?

Yes, provided the specification of the vehicle conforms to the FIA's detailed requirements for the make and model of the vehicle in question. In the case of a locally manufactured vehicle, only those deemed to be original and with proven period history are eligible. The HTP includes a page that documents, among other things, the year that the vehicle represents and the year that it was manufactured, thus clearly highlighting when the vehicle is a replica.

Are there any safety concerns with replica vehicles competing alongside those with period history?

No, and in fact the reverse could be true as a recently produced replica will have new componentry throughout. CAMS will also require that each vehicle running under HTP documentation will have to use the same tyres as the original vehicles running in the same period group, so technically there should be no difference whatsoever.

Will replicas become an integral part of Australian historic racing?

In the Historic Commission's view, no. A replica vehicle is only a viable proposition where the original and highly desirable vehicles are beyond the resources of local competitors, and most enthusiasts would rather see a recreation of a rare and valuable vehicle competing than not ever see one at all.

Will a HTP vehicle have a CAMS historic log book in which to record competition history and changes in ownership?

Generally speaking yes, as it is important that each vehicle in competition has a record of participation, accident damage and involvement in the audit program. When a vehicle with a HTP does not have a CAMS log book then it is an indication that the Historic Commission is not satisfied that the information provided by the owner is correct.

How can enthusiasts tell the difference between an original or a replica vehicle?

This will be up to the meeting organiser, who will determine if a replica will be allowed to race alongside a historic vehicle with a period competition history. It is proposed that a replica will be clearly identified in the Race Meeting program, and some organisers may wish to identify the vehicle themselves, but CAMS will not require that they be formally identified.

Who makes the final decision on the eligibility and specification of vehicles that are issued with a HTP?

It is CAMS' responsibility to ensure that the HTP application form is completed correctly and meets all of the stated vehicle eligibility requirements. The final decision whether or not the application is accepted is taken by the relevant FIA Historic Technical Working Group.