

Scottish Motorsport Marshals Club

WE'RE NOT JUST CLOSE TO THE ACTION
... WE'RE PART OF IT!



What is vehicle idling – and why should it matter to us?

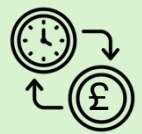
Vehicle idling happens when the engine is running, but the vehicle isn't moving – something we all do at one point or another. But every minute spent idling means fuel is being burned and harmful emissions are being released, even though you're not going anywhere.

Why it matters



Reducing idling isn't just a good habit – it's a smart, responsible practice. It helps us save money, protect our environment, extend the life of our vehicles, and support healthier communities.

The hidden costs of idling



For SMMC Rescue Units, idling can use up to a third of a litre of fuel per hour – a silent drain on our resources. It also increases engine wear, leading to more frequent repairs and downtime. Every unnecessary minute of idling costs money and maintenance time.

The environmental impact



Every idling engine releases carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and fine particulates into the air – all of which contribute to air pollution and climate change. By cutting idling time, we're actively reducing our carbon footprint and helping to protect the very communities we serve.

When idling is necessary



Of course, there are times when idling is essential – warming up the vehicle in cold conditions, powering radios and equipment, or remaining ready for immediate emergency response. This is called *operational idling*, and it plays a vital role in our readiness. The key is to know when idling is necessary and when it's simply habit.



Recognised
Club



What can we do at SMMC?

Small changes make a big difference. By being mindful of idle time, we can all help improve efficiency and sustainability without compromising our readiness.

When covering events...



Run the engine for the first 3 laps of a race, or the first 5 mins of a rally stage, and then shut it off.

The engine will retain enough heat to restart easily if needed. This cuts fuel use and emissions without affecting response time.

It's Scotland, it's cold...!



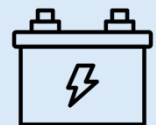
It's important to keep the vehicle warm in case we need to treat any patients in the Rescue Unit – but instead of using the engine to heat the vehicle, use the onboard diesel heater – it burns less than 0.2 litres of fuel per hour and emits fewer pollutants.

It's raining and my windscreen has misted up



Did you know that turning on the air conditioning in *Recirculation Mode* (the circular arrow button) is the fastest and most efficient way to clear fogged-up windows? It means less time with the engine running unnecessarily.

Battery management



Our radios and inverters can run for 3–4 hours without the engine being on (depending on the load plugged into the inverter).

Saltire 1 needs even less idle time thanks to its solar-powered battery support, which generates roughly 5 amps/hour straight into the battery system.



Let's lead by example

Balancing operational readiness with responsible practices is part of what makes us effective, professional, and forward-thinking.

Your awareness and action make all the difference.

Let's commit to smarter idling – for the planet, our finances, and the health of everyone we serve.