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Dear BAMA members,

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I am writing to introduce myself as your new president and to set out some of our future plans. Those of you I have met will know that I am a lifelong fan of many forms of motorsport. Whether it be taking part in enduro and track riding on two wheels, or off roading and track racing on four, I am passionate about the racing and the machines. It's therefore a huge privilege to take over the presidency of British Army Motorsport Association (BAMA).

Before I set out our plans for the future, my first job is to thank you for being involved in BAMA. The organisation exists for you, to help you to pursue your interests and realise your dreams. I want to say a special thank you to those of you involved in the organisation of each of our disciplines. I know that this adds a considerable burden to your daily workload and I am hugely grateful that you are willing to serve the Army and our members in this way; one of my first aims is to secure better recognition through the MS reporting system for what you do. Finally, I want to thank my predecessor Maj Gen Simon Hutchings for his work as president, which helped to grow BAMA into the successful organisation it is today.

British Army Motorsport is in a really good place. Our total membership is now in excess of 540. Our growing membership is matched by some impressive achievements and BAMA can measure its success in many ways; the most obvious being in competition. The Two Wheeled Group have delivered outstanding results across all disciplines. In their first year of competition, after a decade's hiatus, the Army Motor Cross Team was crowned Tri-Service Champions. Army Trials were the first military team to cross the line on the Scottish Six Day Trial, including securing the first placed military rider. Enduro also saw excellent results with Cpl Coupland finishing 5th in the British Enduro Championship in his first year in the professional class. Demonstrating its not just a sport for the young, Capt Cotty finished 4th in the Vets class of the same British Championship. The Road Race team, continued its dominating form as WO2 Watts became the Interservice Championship individual winner, helping secure the team second place to the RAF.

The Four Wheel Group have had their most successful season so far, with Sports Cars taking the top three places on the podium, and the overall winners for the second year running in their Championship. Sgt Ashmore winning his class at the Silverstone Festival alongside the motorsport elite from both F1 and Le Mans teams represented a season high point. The Karting Team exploited their new chassis to win their Inter Service

Championships. Rally also had a class winner with their Mk1 Escort competing in the Historic, on one of the four remaining Closed Road Stages. The Navigation Group continue to demonstrate their ability to deliver 'operationally effective' competition with one hundred military entries onto Mudmaster.

From this strong base, we aspire to grow further. Growth must start with maximising participation at grass roots level. Doing so not only ensures that we have competitive grids, it also secures the future of our sport and helps us to attract the funding we need. We all have a role in telling our friends and colleagues about BAMA and in encouraging them to get involved. As well as supporting the grass roots, in each discipline we want to support those competing at higher levels, not least to demonstrate to newcomers what is possible. BAMA membership is not, of course, limited to those who are riding or driving. Motorsport is a team game. As you grow your discipline, please do remember that we need a diverse group of people to succeed, including: team managers; navigators; logisticians; engineers; mechanics; caterers; photographers; media experts; accountants and so on.

To keep the costs down to members, we need to secure funding. Many of the diverse skills I have listed above overlap with the STEM skills needed within the Army. The more we can demonstrate this overlap, the stronger our case for securing funding through initiatives such as the Army's Engage to Recruit programme. Increasingly, I expect our funding to be linked to our ability to reach potential recruits through various forms of media. At BAMA board level, we will explore how to improve our media profile and branding. In the meantime, please do everything you can to maximise the profile of your discipline and ensure that it is professionally branded. I was hugely impressed, for example, to walk into the paddock at Brands Hatch this year to see all bikes branded in Army colours with all riders in BAMA leathers.

Motorsport is a dangerous and expensive activity and to take part in it with Army backing requires that we govern our sport effectively. This means getting the paperwork, risk assessments and financial accounting right, and it means exploring opportunities to improve the efficiency and sustainability of motorsport and to establish proper governance structures. Over the next year, the Army has directed that we turn BAMA into a charitable organisation. I will write to you with more detail in due course to introduce our board of trustees and describe how the charity will work.

Thank you again for your membership of BAMA. I look forward to seeing you all competing as I visit each of the disciplines in the coming months and look forward to an increasingly positive future for British Army motorsport.

Yours ever
Dan