



## **The Car of the Year STATUTES AND REGULATIONS**

### **1. Definition**

- 1.1.** The Car of the Year is an internationally recognized organization that annually awards a prestigious trophy to the most exceptional new car released in the European market. The winner is selected by an independent jury composed of professional automotive journalists from various countries, overseen by a "Jury Committee" to ensure fairness and integrity in the voting process.

The organization and administration of the award, as well as all actions and decisions unrelated to voting, are managed by a consortium of European publications known as the "Organizing Committee."

Both bodies are governed by the rules and regulations which are set out below:

### **2. The Organizing Committee (O.C.)**

- 2.1.** The Organizing Committee represents a group of publications from different European countries, who together undertake to co-operate and give their patronage to the organizing of the election.
- 2.2.** The O.C. is composed of nine publications, namely: Auto (Italy), Autocar (United Kingdom), Automobil Revue/Revue Automobile (Switzerland), Autopista (Spain), AutoTrends (Belgium), Autovisie (Holland), Automobil Vox (Germany), L'Automobile Magazine (France), and Vi Bilägare (Sweden). Each publication appoints a senior staff member to represent it on the O.C.
- 2.3.** The decision to admit a new member from another media organization into the O.C. requires approval from all its members, adhering to the policy that allows only one publication per country. Any changes to the publication's country or the inclusion of a new country must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the OC.

- 2.4.** The President of the O.C. is elected by a two-thirds majority of the OC members and serves a three-year term that can be renewed once.
- 2.5.** Each publication within the O.C. is represented in the Jury by one senior staff journalist with full voting rights, approved by the Jury Committee. They will be appointed to the J.C.
- 2.6.** The O.C. meets at least once a year, at the time of the prize-giving ceremony. The O.C. and JC endeavour to convene monthly to synchronize their actions and communication, meeting no fewer than six times a year.
- 2.7.** The O.C. holds all rights to the design of an artistic trophy and the Car of the Year logo and the national flags of the publications within the O.C.
- 2.8.** Every year, the President of the O.C. sets the date for publication of the results of the Car of the Year award, in consultation with the Jury Committee, represented by its President, Vice President and Secretary General.
- 2.9.** When deciding on this date, the O.C. tries to serve the best interests of the publications in the O.C. If no general or ideal agreement can be reached, the decision is made by a majority vote of the O.C.
- 2.10.** The President of the O.C. is responsible for the organization of the prize-giving ceremony. He or she is also responsible for informing the manufacturer of the winning car of the result of the competition, based on scores provided by the J.C. He or she issues the invitations for the ceremony to members of the O.C., to all members of the Jury who have cast their votes. He or she arranges the publication of the results and the statements of justification by all Jury members in time for the presentation ceremony.
- 2.11.** The members of the O.C. ensure that the agreed date of publication of the results is respected by their own publications.
- 2.12.** The members of the O.C. ensure that the results of the election are announced to the press, radio, and TV in their countries in due time, and with the required guarantees as to release date. Since Europe consists of more countries than those represented in the O.C., members are also responsible for publication of the results in neighbouring countries, in such a way that the whole European press is thoroughly informed of the result of the election.
- 2.13.** Members of the O.C. undertake to promote the status of the Car of the Year scheme as much as possible. As part of this responsibility, they ensure that manufacturers properly use the Car of the Year logo in their advertising, and that they name the organizing publications.

- 2.14.** The members of the O.C. agree not to gain any commercial advantage from their advance knowledge of the results of the election and not to make use of their status for commercial activities.
- 2.15.** The O.C. each year decides the distribution of costs and duties between its members to achieve maximum prestige for the award-giving ceremony.
- 2.16.** The O.C. takes its decisions by a two-thirds majority. The President of the O.C. has a casting vote in the event of a tied decision.

### **3. The Jury and Jury Committee (J.C.)**

- 3.1.** The Car of the Year Jury is an independent body of professional automotive journalists, drawn from a majority of European countries. Major countries or manufacturing areas (eg, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Spain) can be represented by a minimum of six jury members. What constitutes a major country or manufacturing area is defined by the J.C. and reviewed in line with market changes. An increase in the number of jury members from a market or region can be made accordingly. Other countries can also apply for more jury members as their markets grow and evolve.
- 3.2.** J.C. members should actively encourage new countries to join the jury and no cap is set on the size of the jury accordingly.
- 3.3.** The J.C. appoints Jury members upon suggestions by the J.C. member representing the corresponding country or area. The J.C. member makes his/her suggestion(s) after consultation and in agreement with the Jury members from his country or area. The selection of the Jury is finalized each year during the J.C. meeting at the General Assembly.

To enhance the award's visibility and engagement, the J.C. must consider and propose candidates who operate in – but not necessarily exclusively - digital media, particularly in either video or social media. These candidates must adhere to all regulations outlined in Article 3.10

- 3.4.** The J.C. is comprised of up to twelve members. Nine, belonging to the nine organizing publications, are appointed as such (one per organizing publication) among Jury members. Three – the President, the Vice-President, and the Secretary General – are elected by secret ballot among its members, by the General Assembly of the Jury. Candidacies for these three positions are formally

called for by mail at least two weeks before the general assembly and received by the Secretary General, who organizes the election.

- 3.5.** The J.C. takes its decisions by simple majority. In the event of a tied decision, the President of the J.C. has a casting vote.
- 3.6.** Current matters pertaining to the award are handled by an Executive Committee comprising the President, the Vice-President and the Secretary General, OC President, general secretary, and treasurer. In the event of a tied decision, the President of the OC has a casting vote.
- 3.7.** The Jury Committee (J.C.) may confer the title of Honorary Member upon any journalist who steps down from the Jury. This title is granted through a vote requiring a two-thirds majority approval from the J.C. members.
- 3.8.** Jury members are necessarily professional journalists, with no direct link with the motor industry. They should dedicate most of their work as testers, motoring editors or editors-in-chief supervising an automotive section, a magazine, a website, or a YouTube channel. They regularly drive and test, in the course of their normal professional duties, all the new cars produced by the industry. They are selected based on personal competence, and not according to the importance of the publications for which they work. Any member of the Jury who changes his professional activity must advise the J.C. of this change without delay. The J.C. reviews the eligibility of all Jury members on an annual basis, referring particularly to the obligations of clause 3.10 and making judgements on jury members' continued suitability accordingly.

Jury members who run their own business, (a magazine, a news channel, a website, a YouTube channel etc.), should be allowed to make a living out of it. They should be treated equally to editorial houses that have advertising departments. In this function Jury members are allowed to generate income as long as they do not express personal recommendations towards a car or a brand. Advertising must be neutral. Jury members should not be biased towards a car or a brand, caused by a financial dependence to a manufacturer. The verdict towards a car or a brand must remain independent from financial motivations. The role of a Jury member as an automotive brand ambassador or similar definition is not accepted.

- 3.9.** Jury members who turn 65 in the year of an election will automatically retire following that election, unless they can demonstrate ongoing involvement with a major media outlet. Their status will be reviewed annually by the J.C.
- 3.10.** Jury members agree to adhere to the following obligations, with any violation resulting in the removal of the member in question.

- 3.10.1. To make every effort to test thoroughly all eligible cars;
  - 3.10.2. Not contribute to any other jury electing an international "car of the year" or awarding any trophy according to similar or comparable criteria;
  - 3.10.3. Exert in his or her writings and comments solidarity with, and courtesy to, the choices made by most of the Jury;
  - 3.10.4. Behave as a good and fair colleague with other Jury members;
  - 3.10.5. Respect any release date in relation to voting results, and abstain from informing third parties about the outcome of the vote, orally or in writing, before the release date;
  - 3.10.6. Express an honest and fair vote, avoiding all bias;
  - 3.10.7. Accept to publicize the reasons for his or her vote.
  - 3.10.8. Attend COTY's test drive days and manufacturers' presentations
  - 3.10.9. Mention the COTY award, refer to COTY social tags, in all their publications in direct link with all the cars mentioned in the long list.
  - 3.10.10. Communicate about the result of the Award on their professional social accounts.
  - 3.10.11. Participate in all surveys and studies the COTY organization will submit to them.
  - 3.10.12. If a juror is sanctioned with the withdrawal of his driving license, he will be suspended for the duration of the court sentence.
  - 3.10.13. Jury members must keep up with the wider media industry and publishing platforms to ensure their Car of the Year coverage reaches as wide an audience as possible.
  - 3.10.14. A Jury member must be affiliated with a primary publication from their home country, which they represent. Should this collaboration cease, the Jury member must inform the Jury Committee (JC) within 30 days and propose a new primary publication within 6 months. Failure to comply will result in removal from the Jury.
  - 3.10.15. Editorial, video, photo, or any other type of content produced within the COTY organization must not be resold to another media outlet, whether local or international, before publication in the main publication to which the Jury member is attached.
  - 3.10.16. All embargos set by manufacturers or by the COTY organization must be respected without any exception.
- 3.11.** The J.C. may convene an extraordinary meeting at any time to discuss urgent matters with the members of the jury.
- 3.12.** The J.C. is sovereign to replace any member of the Jury. It is further the J.C.'s responsibility to integrate members, belonging to the organizing publications and, if necessary, require an existing member to stand down to accommodate such a representative.

- 3.13.** The J.C., meeting in late September or October, determines the list of eligible cars. It informs the President of the O.C.
- 3.14.** Modifications in the “eligibility principles” and “voting procedure,” along with any major change in regulations, are submitted to a vote of the Jury at its annual general assembly. Any urgent case is handled by the J.C. or, between meetings, by the Executive Committee. Any major change can happen only with approval of the O.C.
- 3.15.** The Presidents of the O.C. and J.C. consult on all important matters pertaining to the organization of the award. Each can name a substitute for this consultation. In case of need, both committees can decide to invite representatives of the other committee to their meetings, or part of their meetings. The O.C. and J.C. formally meet at least once a year at the General Assembly or at another occasion.

#### **4. Rights and obligations of the nominees and winner**

- 4.1.** Any publicity regarding the Car of the Year must mention the exact wording of the award, i.e. incorporate the year of the award (“Car of the Year 20..”). This shall be the year following the one in which the voting list was drawn up.
- 4.2.** Nominees are allowed to communicate their nomination for the second round in publicity from the time that the nominations are declared by the Jury Committee until the official announcement of the final winner of the Car of the Year election. Candidate cars can communicate their nomination (Candidate Car for the Car of the Year 20xx) in publicity, from the time that the nominations are declared by the Jury Committee until the official announcement of the final winner of the Car of the Year election.
- 4.3.** The winner can use the “The Car of the Year 20..” title, always in combination with The Car of the Year logo, in his publicity from the time of the official announcement until the nominees for the following year are designated.
- 4.4.** Any printed and visual publicity must include the Car of the Year logo (national flags of the organizing publications) and the names of those publications in legible print.
- 4.5.** No reference shall be made in the publicity to the placing of other cars included in the eligibility list. The wording of the publicity shall in no way be misleading.
- 4.6.** In its publicity relating to the Car of the Year, the winning manufacturer must not refer to awards its cars might have received in other competitions, local or international.

- 4.7.** The comments made by members of the Jury in their voting form may be reproduced in their full context, mentioning their author's name.
- 4.8.** It is the responsibility of the O.C. to enforce the rules pertaining to "rights and obligations of the winners".

### ELIGIBILITY PRINCIPLES

To be eligible for the Car of the Year award, a car should fulfil the following basic requirements:

1. Be in series production.
2. Be a model that has been available to most members of the Jury for a test drive sufficient to form a founded opinion, before the first voting round.
3. It shall not have been included in a previous eligibility list. However, if a car is delayed in terms of SOP (start of production) and/or dynamic press launch, that was not foreseeable by the Jury Committee by the time of the car's nomination for the long list of the current year, it can be deleted from the list and postponed to the next year's long list.
4. Have been commercially available in at least five European markets whereof two major markets before 31st December of the current year. By "commercially available," it is understood that a price list has been published and that orders are accepted by distributors and dealers at the published prices.

A major market is defined as one represented by a group of at least five jury members.

In addition, the cars must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- a) Have an entirely or essentially new structure and design and entirely or essentially new mechanical units. (The engine, drive train and suspension are the "mechanical units.")
- b) Have a structure and/or mechanical units sufficiently modified to seriously alter the car's appeal, its destination and market position. A new body or powerplant on an existing underpan does not necessarily rank as a "new structure," unless the car's character and its market destination are altered.

Note: An estate car derived from an existing passenger car or vice versa does not rank as a new model.

Eligibility criteria remain applicable even if the car's brand changes. In cases where the eligibility of a new model is in question, the Jury Committee makes the final decision through a vote requiring a two-thirds majority.



### VOTING PROCEDURE

Each year, according to the schedule defined by the OC, the Jury Committee draws up a list of eligible cars for the Car of the Year election. Its decision is final. This list is sent to all Jury members with the first-round voting form.

#### Voting Procedure 1

Each Jury member nominates from the list of candidates the seven best cars in his or her opinion. No points are given at this stage.

All votes for nominees must be received by the Secretariat at least three days before the date of the announcement of the nominees, fixed by the J.C. in consultation with the O.C.

The J.C. then compiles an official list of the seven cars most proposed by the Jury members. In case of equal number of nominations for seventh place, the J.C. has the right to increase the list of nominees.

The final list of nominees for the Car of the Year election is drafted in alphabetical order and all manufacturers involved are informed by the J.C.

#### Voting Procedure 2

Each member of the Jury receives the official voting form together with the final list of nominees at least one week before the closing date.

Voting closes in accordance with the deadline for the release date, set by the Organizing Committee.

Each member of the Jury has 25 points, to be spread over at least five cars, with a maximum of 10 points for his or her first choice.

The same number of points cannot be given to the first two chosen cars on the voting form.

The four members of the Executive Committee should give their votes before opening the voting to all other Jury members.

The Car of the Year is that which receives the highest total points. In case of a dead heat, the car voted first by the greatest number of members of the Jury, is declared the winner. In case the dead heat persists, the tie is decided by the greatest number of second places and so on.

The main criteria on which a car should be judged are the following: general design, comfort, safety, economy, handling and general roadworthiness, performance, functionality, general environmental requirements, driver satisfaction and price. Technical innovation and value for money are major factors.

Each member of the Jury must give a summary of the reasons for his or her judgement on the voting form.