Indy Autonomous Challenge Team Leaders,

The emergence of COVID-19 and approaches to dealing with the virus have imparted enormous pressures on collegiate faculty and students worldwide.

We recognize the challenges you are currently facing, the time-consuming efforts you have underway to adjust curriculums and implement remote work environments, and travel restrictions with uncertain or indefinite time horizons, among others.

As such, this email serves to inform you of adjustments to the IAC Rules and schedule that we hope help account for these new challenges and facilitate your continued participation in the IAC.

**Round #2 deliverable timeline and criteria**

IAC Rules currently afford two options to satisfy Round 2 requirements and qualify for Round 3.

Unfortunately, one of those options – participation in the Purdue EV Grand Prix Autonomous – is no longer possible, for this year’s competition was cancelled due to COVID-19.

The remaining option – submission of a video of a “Passenger Vehicle” that demonstrates a range of functions (i.e. left and right turns, acceleration, and deceleration to a complete stop) – is now the lone way for Teams to satisfy Round 2 requirements. But such a deliverable might be a challenge if Teams aren’t permitted to gather and film their Passenger Vehicles performing the prescribed maneuvers.

To help overcome these issues, the due date for the Round 2 video submission will now be July 10, 2020 – the day before the currently planned Hackathon #2 date.

Additionally, Teams will be granted substantial leniency in demonstrating their Passenger Vehicles “range of functions” to allow for submission of preexisting videos that Teams may have of their vehicles operations, regardless of demonstrated vehicular functions. Videos may now also be as short as 1 minute long.
As a reminder, the IAC Rules define a “Passenger Vehicle” to be “a motor vehicle capable of the carriage of at least one passenger and designed to seat no more than nine persons (including the driver). For the purposes of Round 2, Teams’ selected Passenger Vehicles may have their seats removed. Alternately, Teams may have a safety driver in the driver seat. The entry must be a ground vehicle that is propelled and steered principally by traction with the ground. The type of ground contact devices (such as tires, treads, and legs) is not restricted.”

We’d like to hear from Teams if access to such a vehicle or completion of this video proves to be a logistical or other problem.

**Hackathon #1 virtual participation**

Hackathon #1 is currently scheduled for May 21st, 2020, aligning with the schedule of the Indy 500, which is currently planned for May 24, 2020. ESN is in regular communication with the Indianapolis Motor Speedway to understand if there will be any effect on that event due to COVID-19.

Recognizing the majority of Teams’ travel restrictions the prevent their in-person attendance, as prescribed by IAC Rules, the IAC will have in place a remote connection platform for this first Hackathon, and Teams will be able to join and participate via this remote platform without incurring a non-participation penalty.

Details of such a platform and procedures for its access and use will be shared in advance of Hackathon #1. This will also still be the time when we plan to deliver the Ansys VRXPERIENCE Driving Simulator Powered by SCANeR with embedded track and vehicle models to all IAC Teams.

**Delay of public relations outreach campaign**

A recent email to you indicated the launch of a public relations outreach campaign on March 19th. This public relations outreach campaign did not commence on this date.

Instead, this campaign is paused as we wait for COVID-19 to subside, and for some semblance of normalcy to return so that our media and marketing efforts are properly received.

We will keep you posted on updates to our public relations plans and campaign timing as they emerge.

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With these adjustments, we hope we are addressing at least some of your concerns and allowing time for you to deal with existing priorities and implement updated strategies that advance your IAC goals. Subsequent emails may put forth additional adjustments to the IAC timeline and Rules in response to new COVID-19 developments and Teams’ constraints as they occur in this rapidly evolving environment.

As always, please don’t hesitate to contact us regarding these updates or for assistance on any other issues pertaining to the IAC.

Thank you
The Indy Autonomous Challenge Team