



Press Information
October 15, 2025

Mercedes-AMG celebrates 500th deployment of safety car bearing the star emblem at the F1 race in Austin

- **500th Grand Prix:** From debut at Magny-Cours in 1996 to anniversary in Austin, Texas in 2025
- **Record at Fuji:** 19 consecutive laps at the 2007 Japanese Grand Prix
- **High performance for safety:** Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series in use since 2022

Affalterbach. The F1® United States Grand Prix in Austin, Texas marks a special milestone: for the 500th time, a vehicle bearing the star emblem will be on duty as the Official FIA F1® Safety Car in the premier class of motorsport. The very first engagement dates back to June 30, 1996 in Magny-Cours (France) with a Mercedes-Benz C 36 AMG. Since then, Mercedes-Benz and Mercedes-AMG have been represented in Formula 1® and ensure the highest level of safety on racetracks worldwide. 13 different vehicle models have been used to date. Since 2022, the uncompromising Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series has taken on this task. Bernd Mayländer, former racing driver, AMG brand ambassador and a prominent figure in safety for 25 years, has been at the wheel of the Official FIA F1® Safety Car since 2000.

Mercedes-AMG brings its many years of experience to the Official FIA F1® Safety Car, as well as to the Official FIA F1® Medical Car, which is also celebrating its 500th appearance in Austin. Both vehicles are also represented in F2, F3 and other junior and support racing series. For its anniversary appearance in Austin, the Official FIA F1® Safety Car will feature a special design with the distinctive number 500.

Mercedes-Benz and Mercedes-AMG vehicles ensure safety in Formula 1®

For 29 years, Mercedes-Benz and Mercedes-AMG vehicles have been serving as Safety Cars in Formula 1®. When there is imminent danger during a race – for example, due to accidents, debris on the track or extreme weather conditions – race control sends the Official FIA F1® Safety Car into action. There, it leads the field, slows down lap times and neutralizes the race. The speed is determined by race control depending on the situation. A particular challenge for Bernd Mayländer and the technical team is striking the right pace to ensure safety on track while keeping the field of F1® cars in optimal running conditions. If the speed is too fast, uncontrolled situations can arise. For the drivers, its deployment primarily means safety. It often has a strategic component for the teams: pit stops under safety car conditions take significantly less time and can therefore be decisive for the race.

Mercedes-AMG provides a total of three Official FIA F1® Safety Cars. Two of these vehicles are on standby at every race weekend. As soon as the Official FIA F1® Safety Car is on track, the light and signal systems are activated. Since 2022, these systems have been fully integrated into the vehicle, replacing roof-mounted

lightbars, for optimum aerodynamic functionality. A total of 21 LED modules ensure visibility: six in the windshield, 13 in the rear wing and two on the rear license plate. When in use, 14 illuminate continuously in orange, while seven in the center of the rear wing flash in the same color. Together with digital information provided onsite and instructions from race engineers, this is a clear signal to the drivers to line up behind the Official FIA F1® Safety Car. When the signals turn green, the vehicle may be overtaken.

The most laps behind the Official FIA F1® Safety Car in a race were driven in São Paulo (Brazil) in 2016. A total of 33 laps were completed in four separate deployments – seven in the first, seven in the second, 12 in the third and another seven in the fourth. The longest safety car phase, with 19 laps in one go, was in 2007 in Fuji (Japan) with the CLK 63 AMG. The greatest number of times the Official FIA F1® Safety Car had to take to the track was in 2011 at the Canadian Grand Prix. Bernd Mayländer was deployed in the SLS AMG a total of five times, completing four, four, fifteen, four and three laps respectively.

Continuity and excellence: For 25 years, Bernd Mayländer has been driving the Official FIA F1® Safety Car
The 51-year-old Swabian has piloted the Official FIA F1® Safety Car since 2000 and has thus been a constant presence in the service of the FIA for 25 years. He is supported in Formula 1® alternately by co-drivers Richard Darter and Ignazio Sanzone. Behind the safety car duo is a well-coordinated team of FIA employees and three Mercedes-AMG employees – a coordinator, mechanic and electrician – who coordinate and ensure the smooth operation of the Official FIA F1® Safety Car. They manage maintenance, logistics and back-up vehicles. Before each race weekend, the Official FIA F1® Safety Car must complete three to five high-speed laps on Thursday for one hour and on each day with official sessions in the morning to test all systems.

The 500th deployment of the Official FIA F1® Safety Car is a significant milestone as well as a testament to the decades of experience, technical excellence and trust in Mercedes-AMG. It illustrates the development of safety car technology over almost three decades and underlines its indispensable role at the pinnacle of world motorsport.

Current Official FIA F1® Safety Car: Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series

Since 2022, the Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series has been used as the Official FIA F1® Safety Car in Formula 1®. This uncompromising vehicle was developed with a consistent focus on the racetrack, continuing the tradition of the Black Series models that have been part of the Mercedes-AMG portfolio since 2006.

The AMG GT Black Series features the most powerful Mercedes-AMG series V8 engine to date. The Handcrafted AMG 4.0L V8 biturbo with flat-plane crankshaft and dry sump lubrication delivers 720 hp and enables acceleration from 0 to 60 mph in just 3.1 seconds. Active aerodynamics ensure maximum stability. The design and numerous technical details are derived from current Mercedes-AMG race cars, including the significantly larger radiator air inlet, which has been adopted from the Mercedes-AMG GT3.

[>> 'Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series' Press Release](#)

As the Official FIA F1® Safety Car, many details of the Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series have been modified to meet the requirements of a Grand Prix weekend. In addition to the integrated LED lighting system, these include a siren in the front right wheel arch, FIA-compliant communication and radio technology for direct connection to race control, additional screens in the cockpit, a digital interior mirror for the co-driver and a camera in the rear wing. The equipment is supplemented by FIA standard telemetry, a timing system and the onboard camera system including the associated antenna – similar to F1® race cars. Since 2023, the vehicle has been fueled with PETRONAS Primax Pro-Race M2, a 100-octane fuel consisting of 40 percent sustainable components (10 percent ethanol, 30 percent eFuel).

Mercedes-Benz and Mercedes-AMG Official FIA F1® Safety Cars at a glance

1996: Mercedes-Benz C 36 AMG (W202)
1997 – 1999: Mercedes-Benz CLK 55 AMG (C208)
2000: Mercedes-Benz CL 55 AMG (C215)
2001 – 2002: Mercedes-Benz SL 55 AMG (R230)
2003: Mercedes-Benz CLK 55 AMG (C209)
2004 – 2005: Mercedes-Benz SLK 55 AMG (R171)
2006 – 2007: Mercedes-Benz CLK 63 AMG (C209)
2008 – 2009: Mercedes-Benz SL 63 AMG (R230)
2010 – 2012: Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG (C197)
2012 (since Grand Prix of Germany) – 2014: Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT (C197)
2015 – 2017: Mercedes-AMG GT S (C190)
2018 – 2021: Mercedes-AMG GT R (C190)
2022 – present: Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series (C190)

Mercedes-Benz and Mercedes-AMG Official FIA F1® Medical Cars at a glance

1996: Mercedes-Benz C 36 AMG (W202)
1997: Mercedes-Benz C 36 AMG (W202); E 60 AMG (W210)
1998 – 2000: Mercedes-Benz C 55 AMG Wagon (S202)
2001 – 2003: Mercedes-Benz C 32 AMG Wagon (S203)
2004 – 2007: Mercedes-Benz C 55 AMG Wagon (S203)
2008 – 2014: Mercedes-Benz C 63 AMG Wagon (S204)
2015 – 2021: Mercedes-AMG C 63 S Wagon (S205)
2022 – present: Mercedes-AMG GT 63 S 4-Door Coupe (X290)

“Not only Formula 1, but also the Safety Cars have continuously evolved since the first vehicle bearing the star emblem was deployed in 1996. We are proud of this long-standing collaboration and of the trust placed in us by the FIA to actively contribute to safety in the pinnacle of motorsport with our high-performance products. It underlines our ambition to unite precision and performance at the highest level. We are particularly pleased to carry this responsibility from Affalterbach and – even under extreme conditions – to remain a dependable partner. For many years, Bernd Mayländer has been an equally experienced and trusted colleague from within our ranks.”

Christoph Sagemüller, Head of Mercedes-AMG Motorsport

“I’ve had the honor of driving many fascinating Mercedes-Benz and Mercedes-AMG cars in Formula 1. I’m proud of that and at the same time deeply grateful. Over the years, I’ve experienced countless unforgettable moments. One of the most remarkable was the Grand Prix in Fuji in 2007. I was out on track for 19 laps, already keeping a close eye on the fuel gauge. Then the rain eased, the race was released and I came into the pits to switch to the second car – only to be sent straight back out again after an accident. That race will always stay with me.”

Bernd Mayländer, Official FIA F1® Safety Car Driver & AMG Brand Ambassador

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Further information about **Mercedes-AMG Motorsport** is available at customerracing.mercedes-amg.com. Learn more about current topics and events related to **Mercedes-AMG Motorsport** on our **@amgmotorsport** X channel at www.x.com/amgmotorsport.

About Mercedes-Benz USA

Mercedes-Benz USA (MBUSA), headquartered in Atlanta, is responsible for the distribution, marketing and customer service for all Mercedes-Benz products in the United States. MBUSA offers drivers the most diverse lineup in the luxury segment with 18 model lines ranging from the sporty GLA SUV to the flagship S-Class and the dynamic all-electric vehicles from Mercedes-Benz. MBUSA is also responsible for Mercedes-Benz Vans in the U.S. More information on MBUSA and its products can be found at www.mbusa.com and www.mbvans.com. To learn more about all Mercedes-Benz entities in North America, visit group.mercedes-benz.com/northamerica.

Accredited journalists can visit our media site at media.mbusa.com.

Contact:

Cathleen Decker	cathleen.decker@mbusa.com
Andrew Brudnicki	andrew.brudnicki@mbusa.com