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The National Vintage Tractor and Engine Club (1967) Ltd

Code of Practice and Guidance For Exhibitors of Vintage Tractors, Engines and Bygones

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Revision History

Date	Description of Revision	Revision Issue
May 2025	Company name and details added to cover sheet	8
January 2024	Para 2.5 Revised regarding children on agricultural machines	7
	Para 3.8 Revised regarding children in engine enclosures	
January 2023	Revision history moved to rear of front cover.	6
	Para 2.5 Revised regarding the carriage of children on trailers.	
	Para 7.7 revised regarding mounting on a 3-point linkage	
	Para 7.8 revised regarding types of trailers	
November 2022	Document reformatted	5
	Para 2.5 reference the carriage of passengers	
	2.16 reference saw benches	
April 2022	Para 7.3 reference to red diesel removed	4
	Para 7.5 amended to remove duplication of para 2.5	
November 2021	Paras 2.5 & 7.5	3
	Revised re passengers and modern tractors	
January 2020	Paras 2.3 and 7.1	2
	References to full and provisional licenses removed	
October 2019	Appendix 3 revised and retitled Bibliography	1
April 2019	Approved by the National Executive for publication	0
March 2019	Revised to incorporate comments received.	2 D for C
January 2019	Document re written. 1 st Draft for Comment.	1 D for C

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Forward

This Code of Practice is commended by the National Executive Committee of the National Vintage Tractor and Engine Club (hereafter referred to as the NVTEC) to its members, and others.

It is based, in part, upon the NVTEC Short Safety Code (which it now replaces) together with experience from numerous event organisers and events over the past 50 years of the NVTEC.

It is intended to provide guidance for those exhibiting at shows or events pertinent to the aims of the NVTEC. Its contents are based upon what is, considered to be, 'good practice' at the time of publication

The contents of this Code of Practice should in no way be construed as 'law' and Event Organisers may impose additional requirements not covered by this code of practice. All appropriate Health and Safety and other Statute laws and regulations still apply and shall override the contents of this Code of Practice if there is any conflict. Any such conflicts should be notified to the NVTEC Safety Co-ordinator so this Code of Practice can be suitably revised and updated.

Dimensions within this document are generally given in metric units with the approximate imperial units following in parenthesis. The imperial dimension is not an exact conversion of the metric dimension.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Code of Practice has been prepared for the guidance of those exhibiting tractors, engines and other equipment pertinent to the aims of the NVTEC. Its purpose is to promote a safe environment for the general public, fellow exhibitors and the exhibitor themselves
- 1.2 The terms Vintage Tractor, Classic Tractor, Stationary Engine, etc are as set out in the Constitution of the NVTEC
- 1.3 This Code of Practice sets out what are considered to be the **minimum** standards for exhibitors whilst taking part in such events as is the custom for members to attend.
- 1.4 All exhibitors shall hold appropriate third-party public liability insurance.
- 1.5 Compliance with this Code of Practice shall be considered a requirement for the purposes of the third-party public liability insurance provided by membership of the NVTEC whilst exhibiting tractors, engines or other equipment pertinent to the aims of the NVTEC.
- 1.6 Whilst this Code of Practice covers the minimum requirements for the safety of the exhibitor and members of the public attending an event the Event Organiser may apply higher standards. These higher standards should then be complied with as required.
- 1.7 It is not possible within this Code of Practice to cover every eventuality that may arise from the exhibition of vintage equipment due to the varying nature of the equipment involved. Exhibitors should consider the spirit in which this Code of Practice is given and apply their own assessment if their exhibit does not fall easily into one of the categories described here in.
- 1.8 For members of the NVTEC the exhibiting of vintage machinery is a leisure pursuit and not a work activity. However, exhibitors should consider if they may need to wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) in certain situations. Open toe sandals or 'flip flops' are not advisable when unloading or loading vintage machinery. Care must be taken such that loose clothing, ties etc cannot become entangled in moving machinery, belts PTO's etc.
- 1.9 This Code of Practice does not apply to steam driven vehicles or those outside the aims of the NVTEC

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2. Tractors

- 2.1 For the purposes of this Code of Practice a tractor may also be any other mechanically propelled agricultural machine such as a pedestrian controlled horticultural tractor, combine harvester, etc. that is pertinent to the aims of the NVTEC.
- 2.2 On a rally site, or any other area to which the public have access, the driver may be 16 years of age if they have passed the appropriate driving test, otherwise they shall be at least 17 years of age, hold and not be prohibited from holding the appropriate driving licence.
- 2.3 When on the public highway the driver shall hold the appropriate driving licence for the class of vehicle.
- 2.4 Tractors shall be covered by Road Traffic Act insurance and if driven on the public highway be fully taxed.
- 2.5 A tractor is not a passenger carrying vehicle and should not be used as such. Generally vintage tractors should only carry **one** person regardless of the type of seat fitted.
At the event organisers' discretion modern tractors fitted with a cab may carry a single passenger but only where a suitable seat is provided by the manufacturer **as original equipment** and seat belts must be worn where fitted.
The use of 'wing seats', as fitted to some continental tractors, and bench seats is discouraged.
Under no circumstances will any person be carried standing on the link arms, drawbar or wings of a tractor or the drawbar of any drawn implement.
It may be a criminal offence under the Prevention of Accidents to Children in Agriculture Regulations 1998 to allow a person under 13 years of age to drive or be carried on any powered agricultural vehicle including tractors.
See paras 7.7 and 7.8 regarding the carriage of children on trailers.
- 2.6 The loading and unloading of tractors shall take place either in a suitable enclosure or well away from the public areas as determined by the Event Organiser. If it is necessary to load or unload in a public area (for example due to breakdown) then the area around the loading shall be kept clear of the general public, preferably by stewards or marshals provided by the Event Organiser, and extra care shall be taken.
- 2.7 Extra care should be taken when reversing or attaching implements especially when the general public are present in which case a steward or marshal should also be present to keep the general public clear.
- 2.8 When moving about on the field, rally site or showground the tractor must be driven at a walking pace only. If the general public are present movement should be controlled by a steward or marshal provided by the Event Organiser.
- 2.9 If the tractor is required to take part in Ring Events the driver should be confident that these are not of such a nature which requires the tractor to be operated in an unsafe or dangerous manner or at a speed at which the driver is unable to exercise proper control.
- 2.10 When the tractor is on static display any battery should be disconnected, either physically or by means of a battery isolator switch, and all ignition keys removed. Where ever possible starting handles should be removed for safe keeping and to prevent unauthorised starting of the tractor.

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- 2.11 When on static display the tractor should be supervised by the owner, their representative or a person appointed by the Event Organiser to ensure the public do not tamper with the tractor in such a way as to endanger others, for example children releasing any parking brake. Owners may wish to consider the provision of suitable blocks to prevent movement and signage requesting that the public do not climb on the tractor (see Appendix 1).
- 2.12 When tractors are not in motion, but their engine is running, the owner or their representative shall be in attendance at all times.
- 2.13 When a tractor of the hot bulb type is being started by a gas torch the torch shall be extinguished as soon as the tractor has started. The gas container shall then be stored in a safe position with the valve turned off where there is no danger of it being knocked over or accidentally re ignited.
- 2.14 Gas containers, either full or empty, shall not be left lying around the tractor arena but shall be safely stored either on the tractor or in the owner's tender vehicle.
- 2.15 When starting the correct starting procedure should be used, ensure the tractor is out of gear before starting. If an electric start is fitted the driver should be sat in the seat before starting and any safety interlocks must be functional.
- 2.16 When a tractor is being used to drive stationary machinery, such as a threshing drum or saw bench, it shall be considered as a stationary engine and the requirements of Sections 3 and 5 below shall also apply where appropriate.

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3. Stationary Engines

- 3.1 For the purposes of this Code of Practice a stationary engine is considered to be an internal combustion engine powered by petrol, paraffin (kerosene), diesel or gas together with hot air, vacuum engines and similar.
Steam powered stationary engines are not considered.
- 3.2 The loading and unloading of stationary engines should take place within the confines of their own enclosure or as otherwise directed by the Event Organiser
- 3.3 They shall be located at least 2m (6 ft) from the enclosure fencing or barrier. This distance may be extended by the Event Organiser depending upon the form of enclosure fencing or barrier being used.
- 3.4 There shall be at least 1m (3 ft) between adjacent exhibits.
- 3.5 There should be an area of at least 1m (3 ft) all round the exhibit that is clear of trip hazards such as tools, fuel cans, seating, etc. This clear area may overlap that of adjacent exhibits, i.e. the minimum 1m (3 ft) between exhibits may be considered as the clear area for both adjacent exhibits. See Appendix 2 Clearances
- 3.6 At all times the engine is running it shall be supervised by the owner or their representative, who shall be a person of not less than 13 years of age who holds appropriate third party public liability insurance such as that provided by membership of the NVTEC
- 3.7 At the discretion of the Event Organiser junior members aged 12 years may also exhibit and operate a stationary engine provided they are always supervised by an appropriate and responsible adult of at least 18 years of age and who holds the necessary insurance cover.
- 3.8 Those in charge of stationary engines should at all times show a careful and responsible attitude, setting a good example to the general public. Children, particularly small children and toddlers, should at all times be closely supervised by their parents or guardians and for their own safety they should not be allowed to roam freely around moving machinery.
- 3.9 Engines should not be used in such a way or for a purpose for which they were not originally designed or could reasonably be envisaged.
- 3.10 As far as is reasonably practicable engines should be arranged such that any exposed flywheel is parallel to the enclosure fencing or barrier. Where this is not possible, or desirable, then the top of the flywheel should rotate away from the enclosure fencing or barrier.
- 3.11 Before refuelling engines should be brought to a standstill and the fuel taps turned off. All sources of ignition shall be removed to at least 2m (6 ft) away. Fuel cans shall have their caps replaced and secured before any attempt is made to start the engine.
- 3.12 All fuel shall be stored in approved containers away from all sources of heat and ignition. Only sufficient fuel for the immediate requirements should be stored in the vicinity of the engine any additional fuel should be stored at the owner's tender vehicle.

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- 3.13 When bottled gas is used to power a stationary engine the gas bottle or container should always be suitably secured to maintain the container in a vertical position and prevent it being displaced.
- 3.14 When a stationary engine of the hot bulb type is being started by a gas torch the torch shall be extinguished as soon as the engine has started. The gas container shall then be stored in a safe position with the valve turned off where there is no danger of it being knocked over or accidentally re ignited.
- 3.15 Flexible connections between the gas container and the engine should be made with suitable pipe manufactured to BS 3212 or BS EN 1763 fitted with crimped joints. The flexible pipe shall not exceed 2m (6ft) in any application.
- 3.16 When the engine is not running all valves must be turned off.
- 3.17 Gas bottles must never be stored in depressions in the ground. The gas is heavier than air and collects at the lowest point.
- 3.18 Spare gas bottles must not be left in the engine enclosure. They should be stored at the owner's tender vehicle and full bottles should be clearly labelled.

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4. Bygones and Miscellaneous Displays

- 4.1 These generally consist of displays such as tools, petrol cans, dairy equipment, horticultural equipment and other farming ephemera.
- 4.2 If the exhibits are displayed at ground level a suitable barrier approximately 1m (3 ft) high should be provided to prevent the exhibits causing a trip hazard.
- 4.3 If the exhibits are displayed on a table, bench, trestles or similar they shall be exhibited in such a manner that they cannot fall onto spectators, especially small children. Consider the ground conditions when erecting the display table, is it stable?
- 4.4 When displays are contained within caravan awnings, gazebos or similar, care shall be exercised not to create trip hazards from guy lines and similar obstructions.
- 4.5 Where the items on display have functional sharp edges or points (e.g. slashers, hedging knives, saws, pitch forks, etc.) steps shall be taken to protect the edges and points to prevent injury.

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5.0 Working Exhibits

- 5.1 Working exhibits can take many forms from a simple water pump driven by a stationary engine to the recreation of a threshing event with threshing drums, balers, chaff cutters, etc all driven from tractor pullies. Exhibits driven by steam engines are not considered in this Code of Practice.
- 5.2 For the purpose of this Code of Practice a stationary engine and any equipment driven from it by a belt or similar shall be considered a single exhibit.
- 5.3 Drive belts should not be excessively long consistent with the correct operation of the equipment, a flat belt drive will generally be much longer than a 'V' belt drive. The belt drive should not be within reach of the general public and should as far as possible be arranged not to cause a hazard to other exhibitors within the same enclosure. If a belt should come adrift, it should not be possible for it to cross the enclosure fence or barrier into the public area.
- 5.4 Many vintage generators and electrical equipment, such as may be driven from a stationary engine, have exposed live electrical terminals and parts in normal operation. The exhibitor should consider to provision of suitable shrouds to prevent accidental contact with these parts. Clear "Perspex" is a suitable material which will not unduly detract from the interesting appearance of the equipment.
- 5.5 Vintage electrical equipment was not constructed to the same stringent standards as are applied today, coupled with the fact that most are also exhibited outdoors, additional safety measures should be considered such as earth spikes and RCD's (not suitable for DC dynamos) which may be enclosed in a suitable box so as not to detract from the display.
- 5.6 Small exhibits driven by stationary engines which do not require constant attention of the exhibitor, such as water pumps, small generators, etc should follow the same guide lines as given above for stationary engines in respect of the distances from barriers etc.
- 5.7 Larger exhibits which require attention the from the exhibitor, and or others, such as a mill, driven from a stationary engine, being used to grind corn or a threshing machine, driven from a tractor pulley, threshing corn shall have enough clear space all around to allow the operators safe access with no trip hazards. See Appendix 2 for further guidance.
- 5.8 It is likely in the case of large machines such as threshing drums that a separate enclosure will be required and the distance from the enclosure fencing or barriers will need to be increased to at least 3m (10 ft).
- 5.9 Saw benches need extra care when being demonstrated, ideally, they should be located within their own separate enclosure.
The area around the saw bench and its power source must be kept clear of all trip hazards such as tools, spare pieces of timber etc. See Appendix 2 for further guidance.
The part of the saw blade below the bench table should be enclosed to the greatest extent possible and a top guard should be fitted above the saw blade extending beyond the point where the blade passes through the table.
A riving knife should be fitted as near as is practicable to the saw blade.
The Health and Safety Executive offer further information and guidance in their Information Sheet No 16 "Circular Saw Benches Safe Working Practices" available to download at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wis16.pdf> to which reference is recommended.

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Only competent operators over 18 years of age should operate a saw bench and its operation should be discussed and agreed with the Event Organiser.

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6. Ploughing Matches

- 6.1 Ploughing matches present some 'special circumstances' with regard of the operation of moving vehicles since the general public is likely to be present in close proximity to tractors and ploughs. By the very nature of a ploughing match event it is not practicable to provide fences or barriers to segregate the public and moving machinery.
- 6.2 Drivers should take extreme care when turning at the headlands where the general public are likely to be spectating from.
- 6.3 As far as is reasonably practicable all relevant parts of Section 2 above will apply.

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7. Tractor Road Runs

- 7.1 The driver shall hold the appropriate driving licence for the class of vehicle.
- 7.2 Tractors shall be covered by Road Traffic Act insurance and be fully taxed.
- 7.3 Deleted
- 7.4 Drivers of TVO fuelled tractors should hold a current TVO licence if they mix their own TVO
- 7.5 Participants shall comply with all relevant parts of Section 2 above.
- 7.6 Tractors should be in a safe and road worthy condition especially with due regard to the braking system.
- 7.7 Transport boxes, or similar, mounted on a 3-point linkage are not designed for the carriage of passengers. Their use as such may invalidate the driver's insurance and event organisers may restrict or prohibit their use.
- 7.8 The carriage of passengers in a trailer drawn by a tractor on a public highway may give rise to an offence under the Construction & Use Regulations 1986 as amended. This may invalidate the driver's insurance. However, the Health and Safety Executive offer guidance on the use of trailers for the transport of workers in their leaflet "Carrying Passengers on Farm Trailers" Agricultural Information Sheet No 36. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais36.pdf> to which reference is recommended.
Any children carried must be supervised by a responsible adult.
Event organisers may restrict or prohibit the use of trailers for the carriage of passengers.
- 7.9 Drivers should show due regard to other road users. Wherever possible allow space for other road users to pass safely. Do not drive too close to the tractor in front, allowing sufficient space for an overtaking vehicle to pull in.
- 7.10 Drivers should try to maintain visual contact with the both the tractor in front and the tractor behind to reduce the risk of participants becoming disorientated and lost.
- 7.11 If it is necessary to use any railway crossing extra vigilance must be used. Before entering onto the crossing ensure your exit is clear, do not stop on or within 3m (10ft) of any railway line. If there is any doubt about being able to cross safely contact the signal box via the telephone located adjacent to the railway crossing for permission to cross.
Always be aware trains may be approaching and cannot stop in a short distance.

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8 Appendices

Appendix 1 Signage

Wording for a suitable sign for tractor owners may be;

For your Safety
Please do NOT climb on the Tractor

Alternative wording covering other types of machinery may be;

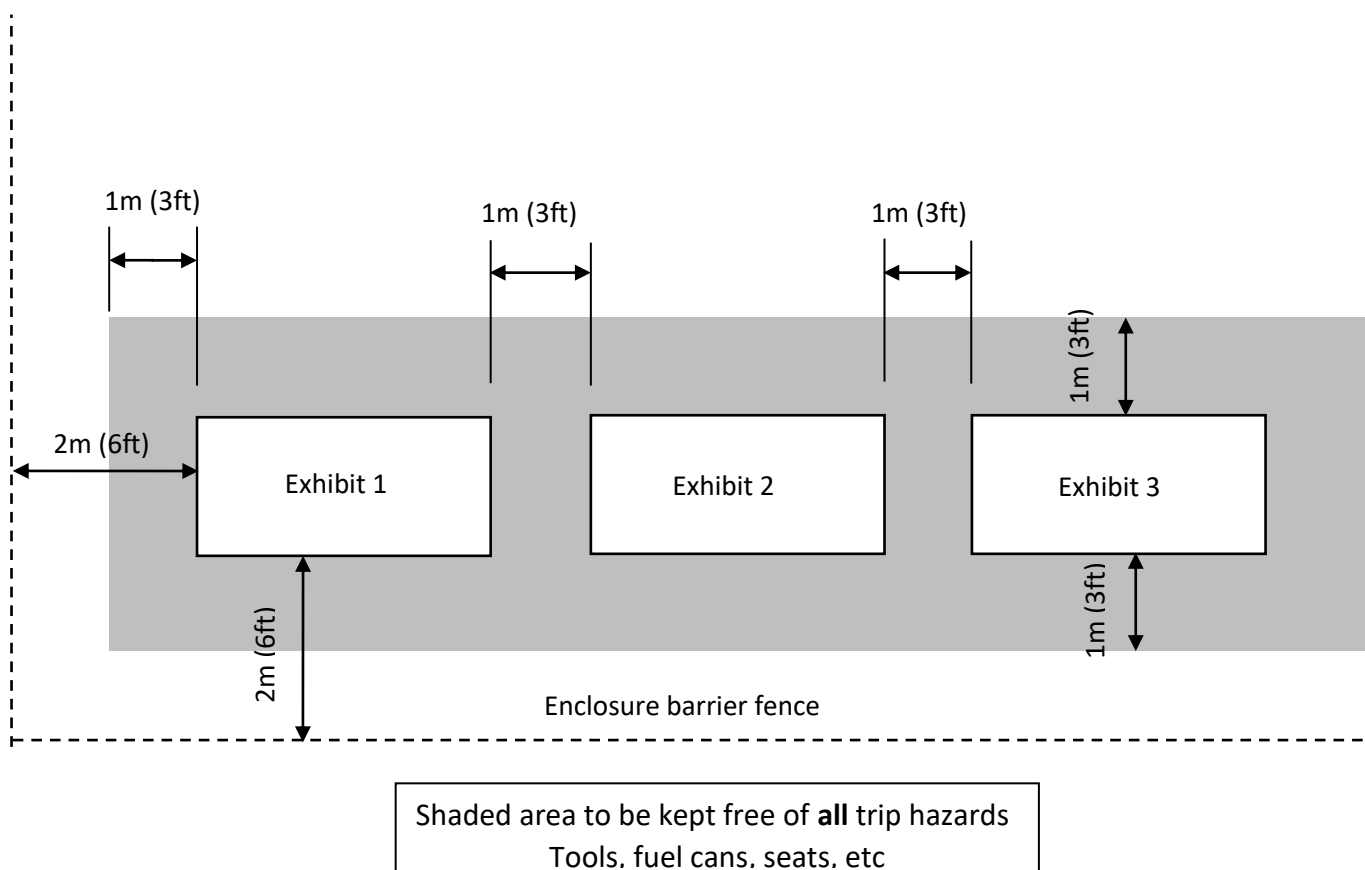
Spectators are requested
NOT to climb on the machinery
or tamper with it at any time

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Appendix 2 Clearances

Minimum dimensions around stationary engines, working and similar exhibits, to provide compliance with paragraphs 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 and guidance for compliance with paragraphs 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 of the Code of Practice.



Appendix 3 Bibliography

HSE Carrying Passengers on Farm Trailers (Agricultural Information Sheet No 36 Rev1)

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais36.pdf

HSE Circular Saw Benches Safe Working Practices Information Sheet No 16

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wis16.pdf

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