

N·A·R·e·S



National Association of Re-enactment Societies

Guidance notes for historic and vintage
vehicles

Permission is given for member groups to copy and disseminate.

Mandatory Requirement

ALL vehicles MUST comply with the requirements of the Law and the Highway Code where applicable.

The Best Practice Guideline

This will apply at any re-enactment, display, performance, show, or other event at which member societies of NAReS are appearing, whether or not that society is involved with the organisation of such an event. It is intended to safeguard both NAReS Member societies and the public from injury and danger. These guidelines as with any NAReS guidance notes are recommendations only. Members Societies are welcome follow their own documented guidance safety notices. It is recommended that any member society deviating from this guidance note produces a documented Vehicle guidance safety procedure

Vehicle Condition

Vehicles used at historical re-enactments are by their nature generally not modern day vehicles. In some instances vehicles may be up to 80 years old or even older. Therefore it is the duty of the NAReS groups to ensure that their own members (+guests) using such vehicles at events, have ensured that their vehicles are maintained in a safe and roadworthy condition at all times.

If required by law a MOT test certificate should be held for the Vehicle this is a legal requirement if the vehicle is to be used on the Public Highway. For Vehicles that either do not require an MOT (MOT exempt) or are not legally allowed to drive on the public highway, or are simply not going to be used on the highway (only ever driven on Private land), it is recommended that a documented maintenance record and inspection record be kept for the vehicle. A qualified person should be used to inspect such vehicles for safety. This may go some way to protecting the owners/users in case of any legal action. Remember that the onus is on the Owner and driver of the Vehicle to prove that the vehicle is in a safe condition, for example that brakes are in good working order.

Member Societies are strongly recommended to ensure that such periodic safety checks have been carried out and that documentation is in place for the vehicles used.

Vehicle Movement Generally

Vehicles should move through a public show ground only in accordance with the wishes of the organisers. By way of a warning to members of the Public suitable advanced warning procedures should be adopted, for example: Headlamps should be illuminated and horn or siren warnings and the use of guides considered. If this isn't practical, consideration should be given to the use of historically correct warning devices such as flags or whistles etc.

All vehicle movement during a battle re-enactment should be with the agreement of the event organisers and society safety officer. When operating with ground personnel, the vehicle movements should be strictly choreographed.

The Driver is responsible for controlling the vehicle in a safe manner. The driver should not attempt to perform any other task, while in control of the moving vehicle.

Tracked Vehicle Movement

Tracked vehicles should not move through crowds unless absolutely necessary, in which case responsible adults should walk ahead and to the side of the vehicle to warn members of the public. Judicious use of an advance warning vehicle is recommended. When a tracked vehicle is taking part in a battle re-enactment, due care must be exercised by the vehicle crews and fellow re-enactors. Suitable briefings as to the movements of vehicles should be given, and the safety implications to both crew and fellow re-enactors and the public carefully considered.

Vehicle Speed

Vehicles should be driven at a responsible speed at all times. It is recommended that guidance on vehicle movement speeds around any public area at a re-enactment be sought from the event organisers. Also vehicle speeds that are acceptable to the event organiser when vehicles are performing during a staged battle re-enactment, i.e. question the event organiser and group safety officer whether the speed restrictions apply to the roped off arena.

Driver Qualification

i) Any vehicle being driven should be controlled by the holder of a current full driving licence for that class of vehicle, who is driving with the full permission of the owner and, above all, who is familiar with that particular vehicle.

If the driver has no Licence for the type of vehicle being driven on Private land, then the onus is on the Driver and Re-enactment Society to ensure that there is sufficient documentary evidence to prove that the driver is sufficiently competent to be in control of the said Vehicle.

The recommendation is to only allow vehicles to be driven at re-enactments by Drivers with the correct Licence for that category of Vehicle. Due consideration should be given to the type of Vehicle, as some older vehicles may have unfamiliar controls, so even a properly Licensed driver would be unwise to drive the vehicle in public without prior experience. If the NAReS members society does choose to allow non Licensed drivers to use motor vehicles at re-enactments held on private ground- They must ensure that this will not affect their public liability insurance which may become null and void. The member society should make it clear to their members who is, and who isn't permitted to drive vehicles at their public events.

ii) It is not advisable for Learner Drivers to take the controls of a Motor vehicle at a public event. However if circumstances permit Outside public opening times, in properly designated areas, a properly supervised provisional licence holder may drive, provided that the vehicle is displaying 'L' plates and there is no risk or danger whatsoever to other persons present at the event. The vehicle insurance must cover the use of the vehicle by any driver, and also the Societies Public Liability insurance should be checked for clauses that may render it null and void.

iii) At no time should a child or an unqualified person be in charge or control of a vehicle as this could invalidate any insurance policy (Both Vehicle insurance and possibly Public Liability insurance).

Vehicle Insurance

Owners/Drivers must ensure that their vehicles are covered for 'off-road' use and that all drivers are similarly covered. It is the responsibility of the prospective driver to confirm insurance cover with the owner before taking charge of a vehicle. Normal road insurance does not apply at 'off-road' events. It is also the responsibility of the Re-enactment group to ensure that their Public Liability insurance covers the use of Motor Vehicles at events.

Restricted Driver Vision

If any moving vehicle has restricted vision (for example an armoured car/tank), a responsible adult must act as vehicle commander. He must be in voice contact with the driver. It is the commander's responsibility to ensure passenger safety, especially when persons are mounting or dismounting from the vehicle, which should be done other than by using the tracks or wheels as footrests. Dual vehicle isolation switches for driver and commander should be considered.

Projections From Vehicles

Drivers must ensure that any projections outside the normal overall width, length and height of their vehicle such as whip aerials or ring-mounted machine-guns, are properly secured before moving off, especially when moving through crowds.

Passengers

No vehicle must carry more passengers than the number of seats on that vehicle. All Personnel should be correctly seated and properly supervised. On fully armoured, tracked vehicles, no passengers or crew must be carried on the exterior of the vehicle under any circumstances. Although the carrying of passengers on the exterior of armoured vehicles is historically correct, it is also extremely dangerous and may invalidate any vehicle insurance.

On amphibious vehicles, all crew and passengers must be equipped with flotation devices or life jackets when waterborne. While waterborne, appropriate seafaring regulations must be complied with for ocean going craft.

Use Of Vehicles In Parades

If vehicles are to be utilised as part of a marching parade on the Highway then they must possess the relevant documentation required by law. The Driver must have the required License to operate the type of vehicle on the public Highway as required by law, and be suitably insured. The Vehicle must possess all required Legal documentation, and should be in a fit roadworthy state.

When operating a vehicle at low speeds as part of a procession etc, great care should be taken to ensure that fellow participants in the parade and the public are not endangered. It may be worth considering the placement of vehicles within the parade, taking into account such factors as vehicle stopping distances.

Securing Vehicles

All Motor vehicles used as part of a re-enactment or static display should be secured so as to prevent members of the public driving them away. Consideration should also be given to securing any objects into or onto the vehicle which are likely to be stolen by members of the public.

Circumstances may dictate that the best security would be for the Vehicles to be either roped off, or guarded to prevent unauthorised access. The use of Vehicle Immobilisation devices is highly recommended. Consideration of vehicle tracking devices or chemical security marking may be appropriate. Vehicles left on Static display should have wheels chocked, and engine starters immobilised. If applicable, doors should be locked to stop unauthorised access.

Public Liability Insurance Requirements

All Motor Vehicles used at Re-enactments must be covered by the Society's own Public Liability insurances. The Vehicle itself must be separately insured, to include a public liability clause.

It is worthwhile making sure that the vehicle insurance covers the drivers that intend to operate the vehicle at the event and that the insurance covers off road use.

Storage of Hazardous Substances

Many Vehicles, in particular Military types, are equipped with securing brackets for the fitment of external fuel carrying devices such as Jerry cans. Care should be taken when carrying Flammable fuels in such containers to ensure that no unauthorised access is given to the public to such containers. It is recommended that these containers are empty or removed if at all possible. If containers are to be stored in large quantities at an event then consideration should be given to the provision of suitable fire buckets (Sand filled for spillage) and extinguishers.

Consideration should also be given to restricting access to the hazardous area, and also suitable warning signs if required. The hazardous storage area should be clearly designated and separated from the re-enactment area, taking into consideration factors such as security, safety and access.

If it is necessary to re-fuel a vehicle from cans on site it is common sense to be vigilant and ensure that there are no members of the public that may be smoking or using transmitting equipment or naked flames in the vicinity.

Fire Risk/Fumes

It is recommended that all Vehicles be fitted with a Modern suitable Fire Extinguisher in a prominent position. If the vehicle is fitted with fuel cut off switches then these should be suitably marked. Care should be taken when vehicles are to be used at public events where there is a risk of fire, i.e. in especially dry conditions. Consideration should be given to the possibility of a build up of hazardous flammable or noxious gasses that may ignite or cause respiratory problems. Suitable ventilation should be considered.

Number Plates

It is a legal requirement that all road going vehicles are fitted with suitable Number plates when travelling on the public highways. However from a historical point of view, many historic vehicles may not have been fitted with such plates during the period that is being recreated (for example when depicting different nationalities). It is worthwhile considering the removal of historically inaccurate plates when vehicles are being displayed at an event that does not involve driving the vehicle on the highway.

Public Rides

It is not recommended that Historic Vehicles be used to offer rides to members of the Public at events. If however this is a requirement then consideration must be given to the insurance implications of such an activity.

Non Historic Vehicles Used In Re-Enactments

Many periods of historic re-enactment may involve the use of modern motor vehicles not as part of the main re-enactment display or performance. This document is NOT designed to cover the use of such vehicles. A typical example may be the use of Modern vehicles to tow period muzzle loading cannon into place on a show ground prior to and after a battle reenactment.

Vehicles which are of modern manufacture, yet outwardly depict a historical type (e.g. a reproduction Panzer built on a modern AFV chassis) will be regarded as a historical vehicle for the purposes of this guidance.

First Aid Kits

It is recommended that all historic vehicles used at re-enactment are equipped with suitable First Aid Kits, and that suitably trained first aid personnel are in attendance when vehicles are being used.

Disclaimer

NARes guidance notes are based on what is believed to be current good practice. They are not intended to be exhaustive in their content and are open to revision. These notes are intended for guidance only and should not be construed as being mandatory, or applying to all circumstances which may arise. They are designed to work in conjunction with any member groups' own rules, regulations or recommendations. NARes cannot be held responsible for the actions of other official bodies, or for the imposition or effect of any legislation/regulation of which it was unaware at the date of issue of this guidance note.