



NATIONAL TRACTION ENGINE TRUST

Preserving our heritage with Steam on the Road

SUBMISSION TO THE DVLA IN SUPPORT OF THE RETENTION OF CATEGORY B LICENCE EXEMPTIONS AS APPLIED TO HISTORIC ROAD GOING STEAM PROPELLED VEHICLES

REF: DIRECTIVE 2006/12/6/EC

(JUNE 2010)



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Introduction

On 3rd March 2010 Robert Herring, NTET Chairman and David Smith, Head of NTET Technical Services along with David Hurley of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs, Dr Colin Billington of the National Association of Road Transport Museums and Fraser Clayton of the Historic Commercial Vehicle Society met with seven senior officers of the Department for Transport, Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency and the Driving Standards Agency at the DVLA's Offices in Swansea.

Hugh Evans, of the DVLA and chairman of the meeting, explained that the DfT were at the 3rd and last stage of implementing a series of EC Directives aimed at harmonising driver licence categories and associated competence tests. In particular 8 previous exemptions, allowing Category B licences to be used on certain vehicles and given under the Second Directive were proposed to be withdrawn by the 3rd Directive. The withdrawals affected so-called steam goods vehicles, historic buses and historic commercial vehicles, amongst others.

The object of the meeting therefore was for the DfT, DVLA and DSA to learn from the affected parties of the implications of the removal of exemptions from LGV licensing requirements per the 3rd Directive 2006/12/6/EC in order that appropriate responses to the Directive's mandates could be formulated.

It was agreed that the representative organisations should each furnish the DVLA with information supporting retention of the 8 exemptions; the submissions to be with the DVLA by 15th June 2010. To ensure, as far as practical, that the submissions were consistent in style and content the DVLA furnished the group with 6 questions which would form the basis of a response template. The 6 questions are:

1. Type of vehicles within your organisation – description and pictures
2. Usage of Vehicles - how often the vehicles are used and examples of when the vehicles used (fetes, shows, runs, etc), average mileage per year
3. Training and Testing - examples of self regulation, code of practice, statistics on how many members undertake any form of training/testing, statistics on the category of licence a driver holds (vocational entitlement or category B only).
4. Driving Skills for Historic Vehicles - details of how the driving skills needed for these vehicles are different to those needed for any modern-day equivalent, and therefore why modern HGV and PSV tests are not appropriate.
5. Road Safety - insurance premiums, age profile of drivers, accident statistics (i.e. compare vocational licence holders to non-professional category B licence holders).
6. Effects if exemption lost - economic, employment, cost to the individual of sitting a driving test, impact on charities, heritage (where would the drivers of heritage vehicles be in 50 years time and what would happen to the vehicles), and education.

This document is the NTET's submission to the DVLA in support of its assertion that the proposals per Directive 2006/12/6/EC to remove Category B Exemptions as they affect historic road going steam propelled vehicles, be withdrawn.

All photographs used in this submission are reproduced by kind permission of the copyright holder, David Collidge – Steam Scenes

1. Types of vehicle within your organisation – Descriptions with Images.

Submission

A: General Purpose Engine

Total Units: 718

Weight Range: 8 - 14T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 29,000 miles



B: Road Locomotive

Total Units: 104

Weight Range: 11 – 20T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 4,400 miles



C: Tractors (Locomotive Based)

Total Units: 232

Weight Range: 3 – 6T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2
(can be single handed when off-road)

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 9,000 miles



D: Showman's Road Locomotive

Total Units: 99

Weight Range: 12 – 22T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 4,000 miles



E: Showman's Tractor

Total Units: 31

Weight Range: 5 – 8T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

(Can be single handed when off-road)

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 2,000 miles



F: Overtyp Waggon

Total Units: 78

Weight Range: 6 – 8T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 5000 miles



G: Undertyp Waggon

Total Units: 118

Weight Range: 9 – 20T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 9,000 miles



H: Tractors (Waggon Based)

Total Units: 15

Weight Range: 3 – 8T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 3,000 miles



I: Ploughing Engine

Total Units: 191

Weight Range: 11 – 22T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 3,000 miles



J: Miscellaneous Types

Total Units: 10 (Including Buses)

Weight Range: 11 – 18T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 5,000 miles



K: Road Roller

Total Units: 908

Weight Range: 4 – 16T

Number of Footplate Crew: 2

(Some light weight pavement/patching rollers and those built in the late 1930's are generally 1 man working designs)

Accumulative annual mileage for this type; 28,000 miles



2. Usage of vehicles – How often the vehicles are used and examples of when the vehicles are used (fetes, shows, runs, etc), average mileage per year.

Submission

Usage: There are over 750 'organised' vintage, engineering or country themed events held in the UK each year to which steam vehicles typically attend. These events are located either on parkland, museum premises, formal exhibition sites and town centres. Some events are 'end to end' road runs.

The 'rally season' starts around Easter and generally closes down in late September however there are specialist events held throughout the year.

Some events are commercially organised but the majority of events are aimed at raising money for charities and/or for the maintenance of the host facilities.

Not all traction engine and derivatives attend organised fetes and shows. Not all attendees travel by road they are often transported by LGV.

Some engine drivers and crew who don't attend organised events take pleasure from simply undertaking impromptu road runs. Others may do a combination of shows and road runs.

Typically between 20 and 40 engines are exhibited at shows.

One particular popular combined vintage and country themed show, held annually in September in Dorset, attracts the largest collection of steam powered vehicles in the world. Some 250 road going steam exhibits attend of which 80% are transported by LGV

It is therefore very difficult to accurately estimate total usage and our response is the summation of the estimated group mileages depicted in answer 1.

Estimated Accumulative Annual Road Miles: 96,400 say 100,000 miles.

3. Training and Testing – Examples of self regulation, code of practice, statistics on how many members undertake any form of training/testing, statistics on the category of licence a driver holds (vocational entitlement or category B only).

Submission

The NTET manages a number of initiatives all of which form part of its Safety Management System which in turn is based on its Health and Safety Policy (see Appendix 1)

A. Training

The Engine Owners Code of Practice: For over 20 years the NTET has published and maintained two codes of practice, one aimed at event organisers and the other at owners, drivers and crew of road going steam propelled vehicles, the EO COP.

The EO COP consists of 8 detailed sections but the areas of principle interest with respect to this response are:

Section 1 – Operation and Maintenance of Steam Traction Engines and other Road Going Steam Vehicles

Section 2 – Driving and Conduct on the Road and in Public Places

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Steam Apprentice Club: The SAC provides youngsters and young adults between the ages of 6 and 21 with the facilities to learn and acquire, in a structured manner, the necessary skills related to the operation, maintenance, and driving of a variety of steam powered road going vehicles.

The Apprentice works to a log book based learning scheme, has access to special apprentice only 'hands on' weekends and to educational visits and materials.

There are currently 550 members of the SAC of which 60 or so will be immediately affected by the removal of the 'Category B' exemptions in 2013.

Adult Training Scheme: The NTET has an adult version of the SAC log book scheme and this is augmented with an annual Traction Engine Driver Training weekend, the latter being a combination of 'hands on' and classroom tuition.

The Driver Training courses have been in operation for some 15 years and attract some 40-50 candidates per year

Voluntary Driver Competency Scheme: (See Appendix 2). Since 1998 the NTET has operated a voluntary scheme designed to examine the competence of drivers and operators of vintage steam powered equipment and road going steam vehicles.

The scheme caters for drivers of varying experience and covers all types of vehicles. To cater for a wide span of age and experience there are two routes that a participant may choose from, either of which awards the successful applicant with the NTET Certificate of Competency

Option 1 is a syllabus based points scoring physical examination process; the results are derived by direct observations and question and answer sessions underpinned with a controlled scoring template.

Option 2 is an experience based point scoring process supported by testimonials verified by 2 sponsors and 3 safety officers. These submissions are scored against a control template.

The examiners participating in Option 1 are all high scoring holders of a NTET Certificate of Competency and are appointed only after successfully accumulating a very high threshold score achieved when subjected to a stringent syllabus based 2nd examination, combined with appropriate communication skills.

The assessors for Option 2 are also holders of a NTET Competency and are required to demonstrate accurate and consistent use of the scoring template and a very high level of impartiality.

The NTET's Voluntary Competency Scheme has become a cornerstone of the Trust's bye-line "Preserving Our Heritage with Steam on the Road" and since the introduction of the 'experience based route' more and more owners and drivers are participating. In the not too distant future the holding of a NTET 'C of C' may become de-rigor amongst the road going steam fraternity.

B. Licences

Category B: The majority of steam vehicle drivers rely on the Category B exemption in order to enjoy their hobby, even Road Roller drivers will display L plates and drive under provisional licence rules when driving on the public highway.

The number of drivers directly associated with our hobby who are currently entitled to drive under the Category B exemptions is estimated to be between 4,650 and 6,200. These figures are based on estimated ratios for licence holders per vehicle crew of 3:1 and 4:1.

Category C: Some steam traction engine drivers also hold Category C and C+ licences. In some instances the owner/driver is a professional LGV driver or owns and drives a Private LGV.

Consequently it is very difficult to arrive at an accurate figure for this group without undertaking a poll of the members but it is estimated to be 300.

Category G: Category G covers both diesel and steam powered road rollers.

A minority of steam road roller drivers take a category G licence examination. However, the circumstances under which the examination takes place can vary considerably. In our experience it is not unusual for a steam road roller driver to undertake an examination on a diesel roller and/or for the test vehicle not to be taken onto the public highway during the test.

In addition to the above observations the NTET also asserts that the Category G examination does not assess the full competency of the driver in so far that it does not examine the management and operation of the pressure system whilst driving a steam road roller.

It is estimated that the number of 'G' licence holders driving steam road rollers is 250

4. Driving Skills for Historic Vehicles – details of how the driving skills needed for these vehicles are different to those needed for any modern-day equivalent, and therefore why modern HGV and PSV tests are not appropriate.

Submission

A. Construction: Excluding steam cars, there are 3 major configurations of steam propelled road going vehicles that play a major part in the way the vehicle is crewed, managed and driven.

The Locomotive Type: See photographs A, B, C, D, E, I and K. In this type a two person crew work together standing side by side on the footplate.

There is only a crude mechanical braking system; the vehicle is retarded using the reverse application of steam in a very controlled manner.

On the larger of this type of engine there is sometimes seating available across the coal bunker area for the relief crew to rest on. This could be used by an examiner but only where fitted.

One person, the 'Driver', is responsible for maintaining the fire, managing the pressure system, the speed of the vehicle, the forward and reverse direction of the vehicle and braking and the overall safe progress of the vehicle. Historically, the Driver is reckoned to be in charge of the vehicle.

The second person, the 'Steersman' is responsible for the direction of travel

and for giving feedback to the driver relating to hazards that the driver may be 'blind' to. The steersman may also become temporarily responsible for the speed of the engine whilst the driver is attending to pressure or fire management.

Overtyping Waggon: See photographs F and H. In this type a 2 person crew work together seated either side of the steam boiler. There is only a crude mechanical braking system; the vehicle is retarded using the reverse application of steam in a very controlled manner.

Cab space can be quite restricted on this type of vehicle. Some waggons could accommodate a third person, the examiner, in the cab but generally this would restrict the ability of the crew to perform their normal functions.

One person, the 'Driver', is responsible for the steering, braking and forward and reverse direction of the vehicle. This person is also partly responsible for managing the pressure system and is reckoned to be in charge of the vehicle.

The other person, the 'Fireman', is responsible for maintaining the fire according to the instructions received from the 'Driver', for advising the Driver on unseen hazards and may take responsibility for pressure system management from time to time.

Undertyping Waggon: See photographs G and J. This type of vehicle is crewed, managed and driven in a similar manner to the Overtyping Waggon, the main difference being the speed of travel. This type of vehicle may easily reach 35mph. By comparison with all other types the undertyping waggon has a more efficient braking system, based on a pressure assisted design. Even though this arrangement is more effective the driver may still require the application of steam to work as a retarder in some circumstances.

Cab space is very restricted and the requirement to accommodate an examiner can generally be met only by seating the examiner in the load bay, i.e. outside of and to the rear of the cab.

Miscellaneous Types: The small numbers of vehicles that occupy this disparate group span nearly all of types mentioned above.

- B. Systems Management:** The pressure raising equipment found on most steam propelled vehicle requires regular attention. The experienced driver will efficiently juggle the fuel firing rate, emissions, pressure build/loss and water levels against traffic densities, sustainable road speed and the foreseeable or anticipated topography.
- C. Vehicle Empathy and Team Work:** The crew of a steam vehicle learn to be attentive to all of the very many mechanical and steam raising functions that are taking place simultaneously. Consequently a very high degree of practical mechanical experience is a very important attribute of every member of the working crew. Close empathy with the needs of the vehicle leads to fewer mechanical problems and less stress for the crew.

Co-ordination and mutual trust are two of the most important aspects of crew team working. Sensible management of traffic when negotiating junctions or undertaking a particularly difficult manoeuvre is called for.

- D. Driving Skills:** Despite the vehicles not moving at great speed the crews of road going steam propelled vehicles are required to be continuously alert and be able to react quickly, should the need arise; these are important skills. Most reasons for the need for quick reaction can be attributed to the lack of concentration or diffidence on the part of some other types of road users.

Moving off, up or down an incline, requires a good understanding of the mechanical functions and the steam controls of the vehicle. Hill descents, where the ability to perform an emergency stop could be very testing, are never treated lightly.

No matter what type of vehicle is being driven the crew of a road going steam vehicle are required to exercise good judgement of distance and speed, a high degree of empathy with other road users and a higher than normal tolerance level. Being physically fit is another important requirement.

These skills come significantly into play when turning, manoeuvring or reversing particularly in close proximity to obstacles.

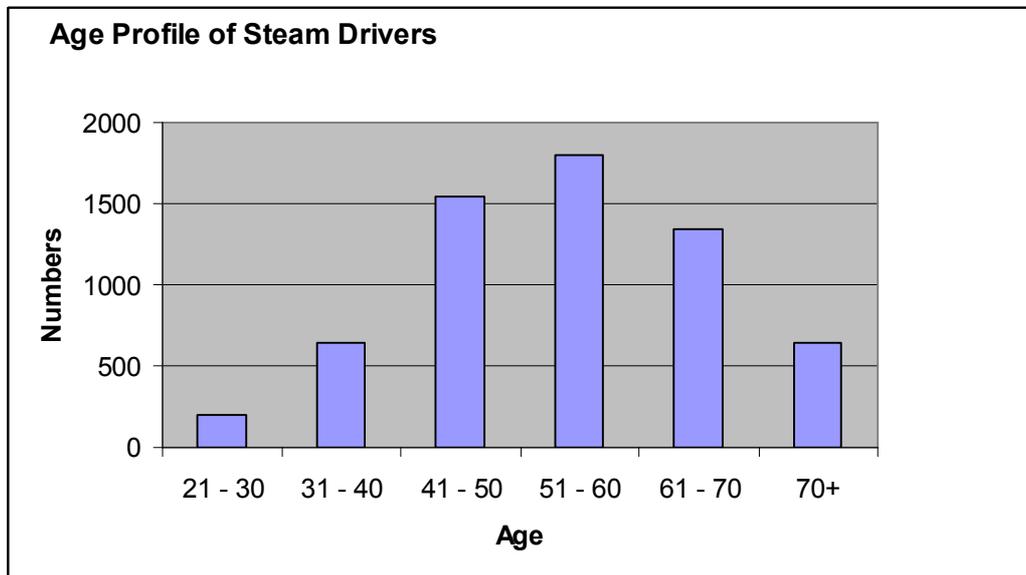
The above are all in addition to those skills that any road user is expected to demonstrate.

5. Road Safety – insurance premiums, age profile of drivers, accident statistics (i.e. compare vocational licence holders to non-professional category B licence holders).

Submission

A. Insurance Premiums: These are typically based on £5/£1,000 of agreed value plus a policy fee plus IPT. Agreed values vary from £35,000 to £400,000 with road rollers at the lower end and showmans' road locomotives at the upper end of the scale.

B. Age Profile: Within the hobby generally the upper age limit is typically late 70's. The dominant age group is between 41 and 70, peaking at 55.



C. Accident Statistics: Information recently provided to the NTET by the three major insurance providers to the hobby indicates that in the past 36 months there were 13 insurance claims relating to RTA accidents and 0 fatalities. In no case was the 'crew' of the steam vehicle found to be responsible for the incident.

6. Effects if exemptions lost – economic, employment, cost to the individual of sitting a driving test, impact on charities, heritage (where would the drivers of heritage vehicles be in 50 years time and what would happen to the vehicles), and education.

Submission

Economic Effects

The effects and associated costs related to the removal of Category B exemptions are difficult to predict with certainty, however, the cost of training and examination is seen as a major deterrent to future ownership. Heritage road going steam vehicles are an expensive hobby, despite which, still manages to appeal to owners and co-owners across all social classes. The effects of economic downturn are felt early and keenly and significant additional cost burdens would be very difficult for owners to overcome.

The syllabus and examination regime attendant to acquiring a 'steam vehicle' specific licence is not known. However, if the syllabus of the NTET's Competency Scheme, Examination Route were used as a benchmark the costs of training could be in the region of £2,500 - £7,500, if undertaken by a certified training organisation, and depending upon the start point of experience of the candidate. To this would need to be added the cost of the examination.

It has been estimated elsewhere that there is a £11.5m industry surrounding the Traction Engine Movement. If the hobby were to be seriously impeded the first line casualties would be the many hundreds of charitable events that ride on the back of this hobby, followed by enthusiasts' clubs, suppliers of consumables, magazine publishers, engineering and restoration companies, insurance brokers and the backup services that support the public events.

Contrary to appearances owners of traction engines and the like are not generally wealthy people, although there are some notable exceptions to the rule. Some owners inherit their engines whilst most will buy them at auction or by private treaty. Apart from their home this purchase may represent the second largest investment of their lives and may also be the subject of a substantial bank loan or similar arrangement.

It is important to note that nearly all spare parts have to be manufactured by the owner or purchased from a specialist manufacturer/supplier. Annual safety inspections allied to boiler explosion insurance cover are a major cost. Every 10 years the steam pressure system is subjected to an additional stringent and costly examination requiring the removal of outer cladding and some pressure system components. This routine is invariably accompanied by the costly replacement of boiler tubes and other degenerating components including paintwork and other accoutrements. More and more units are now approaching the time for major refurbishment. The attendant costs of rejuvenation can be extremely high, between £25,000 and £60,000 depending upon type and complexity.

Coal, to fire the boiler, is a major cost and this will continue to be so. However, some event organisers make a contribution to expenses in order to encourage exhibits to attend.

After discounting the capital cost of the vehicle and any reimbursement for expenses the annualised cost of ownership over a 20 year period is currently estimated to be between £6,500 and £19,750 per unit, depending upon type, age and usage. This does not include any loan repayment costs.

The number of category B licence holders required to sustain the hobby can be estimated as follows: Assuming a replacement rate of 10% of licence holders per annum then, based on 6,200 licence holders (4 per engine) the figure would be 620 per annum, on 4,650 replacements (3 per engine) it would be 465 and on 3000 (2 per engine) the figure would be 300 per annum.

50 Years Time

Today, political, environmental and financial influences are proving to be more and more unpredictable and therefore the tenure of our hobby is somewhat difficult to foretell.

To crystal ball 50 years into the future is extremely difficult, especially for a hobby of this nature. In principle the work of the NTET, which includes the education of youngsters, owners and the public, publishing manuals on the safe operation and maintenance of equipment and also administering training and competency schemes, is robust enough to support the hobby almost ad infinitum.

Despite its bye-line of "Preserving Our Heritage with Steam on the Road" the NTET does not close its mind to the notion that given the different nature of transport and the numbers of vehicles that might be on the roads in 50 years there may be attempts to curtail the activities of slow moving traction engines, particularly on the public highway. Should this occur it is hoped that the members of the Trust at that time would have the resource and the inclination to seek an accommodation from the authorities on behalf of the owners.

In conclusion the National Traction Engine Trust is committed to ensuring that the owners and drivers of steam propelled road going vehicles are well informed on related technical subjects, educated in the practice of engine management and resolute about maintaining their extremely high standards of road safety.

Formal Submission Ends

Following Pages

Page 12, Appendix 1 - NTET Health and Safety Policy
Page 13 - 14, Appendix 2 – NTET Competency Scheme Pamphlet

NTET Health & Safety Policy

Statement of Intent

The National Traction Engine Trust (NTET) is committed to “Preserving our Heritage in Steam on the Road” in a safe and healthy manner.

The NTET is a voluntary organisation with membership by subscription, and as such the NTET recognises and is committed to its duty of care to its members, and others including the public.

Being a voluntary organisation with membership by subscription, the NTET cannot impose any statutory duties made under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 on its members, but will apply the requirements of the Act, and the regulations enabled by the Act as appropriate so as to enable the NTET to fulfil its duties of care, and also to help the membership to fulfil their duties of care to the public.

The NTET further recognise the requirements of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992, and will implement a Safety Management System in accordance with the Health & Safety Executive’s model HS (65) “Successful Health & Safety Management”, which will include this Statement of Intent, the Organisation and Arrangements responsible for implementing the Health & Safety standards and expectations, together with a Monitoring, Audit and Review process.

In implementing such a Safety Management System, the NTET will minimise the risk associated with the principle hazards associated with Heritage Steam Plant, such as Pressure Systems, Machinery, and Movement of People & Vehicles etc.

The NTET will, through its various ‘management centres’, consult on health and safety matters with its membership.

The NTET Membership has a duty of care to avoid acts or omissions that they could reasonably foresee would injure themselves and others.

The NTET will develop a Health & Safety Culture through:

- **Competence:** Seeking to improve the knowledge, skills, and ability of the Membership.
- **Communication:** Maintaining and improving two-way communication between the NTET and the Membership
- **Cooperation:** Maintaining and improving co-operation between groups and individuals.
- **Control:** By allocating responsibilities, securing commitment, instruction and supervision.

Organisation

The Chairman of the General Council shall assume overall responsibility for Health and Safety within the National Traction Engine Trust (NTET) and will be responsible for the annual review of this Policy.

The Chairman of the Management Committee shall assume overall responsibility for implementing health and safety standards and expectations within the NTET.

The Technical Services Unit shall advise the General Council and the Management Committee on the Safety Policy, the Safety Management System and the required health and safety standards and expectations.

The Section Heads shall be responsible for contributing to and communicating the health and safety standards and expectations on behalf of and for the membership.

The Membership shall be responsible for complying with the health & safety standards and expectations.

Signed:

Date:

Review Date:

NTET Competency Scheme Pamphlet

If you are a traction engine driver ask yourself these 10 simple questions:

1. Do you want to help ensure the continued and safe use of traction engines for future generations?
2. Can you demonstrate safe methods of raising steam and controlling combustion under widely varying conditions?
3. Can you describe the function of every component on your traction engine?
4. Can you confidently negotiate tight gateways or chicanes when moving backward or forward?
5. Can you drive confidently in the close proximity of spectators at a rally?
6. When amongst road traffic are you conscious of the needs of other users and do you endeavour to minimise the effects of a slow moving vehicle?
7. In an emergency on the road could you stop quickly and sympathetically?
8. Are you confident that you could identify and cope with most everyday problems on an engine?
9. Do you know the safe way to negotiate steep or slippery inclines?
10. Are you fully knowledgeable about the working of the ancillary equipment you use?

If, as an owner or driver of a traction engines you care enough about your engine management skills to have asked yourself the above questions; welcome to the National Traction Engine Trust's Voluntary Traction Engine Driver Competency Scheme

Background to the introduction of the scheme

The National Traction Engine Trust (NTET) is a registered charity whose primary objective is the '**Preservation of our Heritage with Steam on the Road**'. In support of this slogan the training of Owners or Drivers and the schemes aimed at the prevention of accidents within the steaming fraternity has always been a major activity of the NTET.

Today, in the early part of the twenty first century, the steam propelled vehicles upon which we hobbyists lavish care and affection could easily become an anachronism to the modern society. Despite their attractive appearance traction engines are mainly slow movers, emit smoke and steam and do not have the sophisticated controls of a modern vehicle. Moreover they consist of a vessel charged with steam pressure the operation and control of which is not to be found in a glossy 'user manual'.

Historically the modern day owner/user gains knowledge by 'working' with more experienced crews or in some rare cases simply 'goes-it-alone', there being no current legislation requiring specialist skills in the management of these devices on the road or in a public place. However, Government regulation affects almost every aspect of our lives today and our hobby is now beginning to attract the attention of the regulators. Local Authorities already have the responsibility for 'policing' rallies

and similar events and the Health and Safety Executive is keen to ensure that those who operate 'specialist equipment' are competent to do so.

The NTET is keen to demonstrate its ability to self-regulate and the voluntary, Driver Competency Scheme provides two routes leading to the award of the NTET Certificate of Driver Competency.

Route 1 is log book based and includes practical training and experience in the design, operation, maintenance and repair of steam powered traction engines, thus promoting safe operation in a public place.

The 'Log book' provides a permanent record of the named participant's progress through the NTET's Driver Competency Scheme. In essence it describes the tasks in which the participant must be fully acquainted and prescribes the number of occasions each task must be performed before the competency examination should be attempted.

The NTET recognises that the starting point of experience for each individual will vary from person to person and have therefore designed the scheme to cater for the rank novice or any combination of practice right up to someone with a lifetime of experience.

However, the newcomer should seek the assistance of a 'mentor'; someone who is knowledgeable about the operation of the scheme, is preferably assessed as competent, but essentially has the ability and time to devote to the pupil's needs.

Additional modules that will extend the scope of the competency scheme are being considered. These will possibly include a 'Theory Certificate' and an 'Engines at Work' examination.

Route 2 applies to the more experienced participant who may apply for a Certificate of Competency by submitting a verified account of experience, counter signed by two sponsors and endorsed by event safety officers representing 3 different events.

Quite separately the NTET organises an annual 'Steaming Experience Weekend' which allows folk from all walks of life to become acquainted with the rudiments of steam powered traction engines. It is highly recommended that the newcomer attend one of these events, which are held at different locations each year. The logbook issued to 'Students' attending this annual event forms a good foundation for the 'Driver Competency Scheme.

Other organisations, charitable or 'for profit', offer similar events. However, attaining competency in the safe operation of steam traction engines requires practical skill, understanding of things mechanical, patience, determination and humour. These can't all be achieved in a single weekend.

How do I get more information?

The Scheme is currently administered by John Durling on behalf of the Engine Owners Section.

Additional information including an outline syllabus may be obtained from John Durling, NTET Competency Scheme Administrator c/o 19 Mill Lane, Barton-Under-Needwood, Burton on Trent, Staffs. DE13 8HE or by emailing competency@ntet.co.uk

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