



NATIONAL TRACTION ENGINE TRUST

Preserving our heritage with steam on the road

Thinking of Organising a Road Run

Points to Consider

Introduction

Many drivers and crew will agree that being out with an engine on the road can sometimes be a challenge but it is overwhelmingly a great experience to be had and is the source of many a laugh and sometimes the odd tale of woe at someone else's expense. Put simply, a road run should be enjoyable, otherwise why do it, but going for a trundle even a short one does require a bit of planning; but we are not talking rocket science.

Undoubtedly there is loads of experience and opinion already to hand on the topic of road runs and on that understanding the 'Points to Consider' set out below are not intending in any way to try and tell granny how to suck eggs; they are a series of notes that are designed simply to jog your memory; please read on.

Responsibilities

- **Damage Limitation:** Ok, so this is not a speed or timed event but if there are more than 12 Engines in your Road Run consider checking with the local police and local people in case they have strong objections. Be prepared to modify your plans.

Avoid congested routes. If practical it might be better if engines don't congregate at the start but make their way to the venue by different routes

If the destination is a public place ensure that there is sufficient safe parking for the engines and trailers.

- **Staying overnight:** Check that there is adequate space to park caravans and cars. Also check that there are accessible toilet facilities available 'out of hours'.
- **Organisers – A Duty of Care:** Be pragmatic, don't set unnecessary challenges, organise a route map (include hydrants or watering points and any known hazards on the route; blind junctions, long gradients, narrow roads etc.). If the destination is pub or a café it's common sense, and good manners, to get the licensee involved in the planning.

Ensure that there is an adequate supply of water. See below

- **Who's in Charge:** A tricky question, the brains behind the event cannot hide away if things go wrong. However, drivers & crew should be made aware that they are responsible for their own conduct and actions and the safety of any passengers.

Generally the 'Organiser' and any Marshalls should endeavour to act in an advisory capacity, leaving the actual decision making to the drivers and crew.

Personal Safety

- **Clothing:** It is simple really but often forgotten in the excitement. Drivers and crew members should wear appropriate clothing that adequately protects all parts of the body including arms & legs from burns and scalding. For those on engines not fitted with cabs it's a good idea to wear a neckerchief.
- **Trailers:** Ensure trailers are roadworthy, are securely attached and have 'run-away' chains or other form of arrestors fitted. It's a good idea to have some form of Hi-Viz

notice or flashing lights displayed on the rear of the trailer. Carry adequate numbers of appropriately sized chocks.

- **Trailer Passengers:** Passengers shouldn't be carried on a trailer with a single axle. Passengers should have safe access to trailers (never from the off-side) and should be properly seated; sitting on the coal or tool box may well be frowned upon by those in authority

Politely instruct passengers to keep their legs and arms on the inside of the trailer and make sure none of their belongings or other tackle protrudes over the side of the trailer

It's a good idea to carry some old umbrellas; it might not rain but an umbrella will offer protection from hot ash ejected from the chimney, as will a neckerchief.

Water Supplies

Regrettably we do not have 'free access' to the utility water supply system so consider these options:

- **Buy Standpipe Licences:** Obtain licences for a small number of approved standpipes and set these up at strategic points
- **'Calm Network' Certificates:** Suggest to those who will operate a standpipe that they ought to have one of these; they're free and you have to be a real dummy not to pass the on-line proficiency test.
- **Bulk Supplies:** Organise tankers or water containers at strategic points
- **Self Sufficiency:** Advise crews to 'Bring Your Own'
- **The Serious Bits:** You might decide that you need not do any of the above but remember, should you be 'caught' taking water without an appropriate licence then the lesser offence of 'stealing water' might be applied by a friendly magistrate; you might plead you were protecting the engine from developing a dangerous condition. However, if inappropriate equipment is used, be ready for a possible £1,000+ fine.

On the Road

- **Keeping a low profile:** We all know what a great sight an engine on the road can be, and when there are several out together then the onlooker might think that all of their birthdays have come at once; but only if they aren't spouting great clouds of black smoke. Sorry, this is not an attempt to spoil your fun, on the contrary, it is to ensure that we can all continue having fun.
- **Breakdowns:** They can happen to the most experienced crew. Have a Breakdown and Recovery Plan that includes engines and trailers, no matter how simple it might be
- **Accidents:** They can happen, but don't panic. Take stock of what went wrong, and if necessary call the Emergency Services giving precise information as to location and any serious injuries. It's a good idea to carry something that can be used as a warning flag or failing that a large visible item that can be used to warn oncoming traffic.

If there is damage to a pressure system, quickly assess the options but do clear the area of onlookers and passengers and be sure to explain to the Emergency Services that a 'live steam engine' is involved.

If someone is injured be sure that any first aid applied is appropriate and if at all possible is given by a trained person.

Assist passengers in finding a safe place, preferably off the road

- **Traffic Management:** The law says that only uniformed officers may give directions to traffic. In reality it may prove necessary for someone to manage traffic in order to relieve congestion or to keep traffic flowing, in which case think of these points;
 - Do not give half-hearted instructions; they cause confusion and frustration, be positive
 - Wear Hi-Viz clothing; look the part
 - Communicate efficiently with the other people in your 'team'; shout if necessary but don't scream your instructions
 - Give way to the instructions of a uniformed officer

Accessibility

- **At the Start Point:** Try to choose a location that can accommodate the anticipated number of Engines and trailers and their transport and any extraneous vehicles.
- **Comfort Stops:** Ensure that parked up Engines do not cause too much congestion. If necessary consider multiple stops in order to spread the Engines out
- **At the Venue:** Try to arrange that Engines and trailers can easily get off the road and into adequate parking facilities. Passengers and crew should take particular care when dismounting whilst other vehicles are moving about.

Try and remember that where trains are being broken up in order to park trailers or engines or to turn items around then onlookers and well-intended helpers are an additional liability

Arrange that adequate watering facilities are available

And Finally

- **Have Fun:** We really hope that you have a great time, but stay safe out there.

David Smith
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