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Safety Management System Section 12.1

Footplate Experience and Footplate Rides

12.1 Introduction

The South Tynedale Railway Preservation Society (STRPS) as part of its offer to the public provides footplate experiences on steam, diesel and battery electric locomotives. In addition it provides footplate rides.

In the case of footplate experience these will be provided on a dedicated non service train run solely for the footplate experience participant.

In the case of footplate rides these will take place on a service train.

12.2 The Footplate Experience


The experience will consist of three return trips from Alston to Slaggyford. Generally a signaller/crossing keeper will be on duty and the experience will run between stations.

On steam the participant will have one observation run, one firing run and one driving run. The experience will take place on Green Dragon or on Naklo when it returns to service.

On diesel or battery electric the participant will have one observation run and two driving runs.

The maximum number of people on the footplate of a steam locomotive is three. The driver, the fireman and the participant.

The maximum number of people on a diesel or battery electric locomotive is three. The driver, second crew member and participant.

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In any case the train will consist of the usual rake of three coaches with a guard on duty and participants may have their guests travel on the train while they undergo the footplate experience.

In addition a Duty Operations Manager/Responsible Person who is rescue locomotive qualified will be on duty and in charge of the railway throughout the experience.

The steam experience offer may vary from the above specification in the light of the commercial development of this service. If it does so it will comply with the STRPS rulebook and appropriate trade body guidance and only be varied by permission of the STRPS trustees.

12.3 The Footplate Ride

Footplate Rides will take place on a service train and will be one trip from Alston to Slaggyford. The ride will be an observation experience but at the discretion of the crew could involve some firing while stationary and whistle/horn operation but not driving.


The participant will understand they are entirely under the supervision of the crew and the crew will have the discretion to terminate the ride at any time if they believe it is necessary to do so for safety or operational reasons.

12.4 Participants

Participants must be over the age of 18 years and there is no upper age limit. They should however be in reasonably good health and in particular:

- be able to get on and off the locomotive from ground level.
- have reasonable sight and hearing with suitable aids if necessary
- be able to stand without walking aids
- have sufficient cognitive ability to understand the potential dangers on a locomotive footplate and be able to respond appropriately
- be aware of the generally harsh environment that is encountered on a steam locomotive and be able to cope with this.

The participant must undertake not to take drugs or alcohol within 8 hours of the commencement of the experience.

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The participant will sign a declaration to the above effect.

12.5 Participants Friends and Family Guests

The participant in a footplate experience that involves the use of a train with coaches but not a footplate ride may bring up four friends or family guests to ride in the coaches of the train. They will be under the supervision of the guard and obey the guard's instructions at all times. They will board and alight the train at a recognised station and may not board and alight at any other location except in an emergency.

12.6 Personal Protective Equipment

The participant will provide for themselves heavy duty outer clothing such as overalls, protective gloves such as gardening gloves and sturdy footwear.

STRPS will provide a hi vis waistcoat or similar.

12.7 Preparation


The participant will given safety information that is based upon the STRPS Railway 1 course at least two weeks beforehand and will be required to study and become familiar with the course information.

12.8 Risk Assessment

STRPS has a footplate experience risk assessment and this is attached to this document and will be issued to participants.

12.9 Insurance

STRPS will provide details of the name, address and age of each participant to the railway's insurers.

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12.10 Information and Documentation

STRPS will issue the following documents to participants:

- a) Terms/medical declaration form
- b) Briefing note
- c) Risk assessment
- d) Railway 1 information
- e) Privacy notice

David Granath

14.5.25