

The purpose of the NFAN Guidance

The purpose of the National Farm Attractions Guidance is to provide a bench mark for compliance on an holistic basis across the whole spectrum of health, safety and welfare. The Industry Code of Practice, *“Preventing or controlling ill health from animal contact at visitor attractions” published in June 2012*, is aimed at all visitor attractions and similar animal contact activities. This Code of Practice is enforceable by HSE or Local Authority Health and Safety Inspectors.

Compliance to health, safety and welfare legislation is now a fact of life across all industries, including public entertainment, a category in which Farm Parks are included. It has been very evident over the last few years that Enforcing Authorities and the Public are now demanding higher standards of provisions at all public attractions. It is especially noticeable that where an entry fee is being charged, the duty of care is considered different to those areas where access is freely available. Scrutiny of our attractions is now a fact of life.

The reality is, we all actually manage health and safety every day, we don't actually consciously realise we are doing it. We subconsciously carry out risk assessments otherwise we would be injuring ourselves, damaging things or other people. We do not however keep records to show we are doing it.

Recent contact with Public Health and Health and Safety Enforcing Authorities, brought about by injury to a person or a suspected illness, resulted in the attraction being placed under scrutiny where it was felt that either the injury or illness may have resulted from attending the attraction. This meant closure of part of the attraction until the authorities were satisfied that all reasonable preventative measures were in place to prevent such an occurrence. To demonstrate compliance, the attractions had to provide evidence that they had thought about the risks involved, for the public and employees, had provided an acceptable level of control and that those controls are actively managed. This means not only having a good level of provisions in place, but also records to show that they have been there for some time.

The vast majority of good farm parks will already be well on the way to reaching a high standard of compliance and it is hoped that those who find themselves a little short will be encouraged to take the final few steps to ensure they are able to satisfy the enquiring mind. Audits have shown that the vast majority of attractions, whilst having a high level of provisions in place, are not able to provide records that risks have been assessed and controls have been introduced and managed.

The Practice Notes

These practice notes have been developed by a chartered safety practitioner and a committee of farm park operators. They have been scrutinised by a wider panel of operational NFAN members. Trials have taken place and adjustments made following feedback throughout the whole consultation process. The practice notes were further scrutinised by an ex HSE Inspector, who is now in private practice, to ensure we have reached an acceptable balance of reasonableness and to ensure we have achieved legal compliance.

How the Practice Notes are set out

The practice notes are set out in sections.

Section 1 gives an explanation of what is generally required for the subject heading.

Section 2 provides recommendations for legal compliance and best practice. The items highlighted in green are considered minimum requirements for legal compliance.

Example:

- Pedestrian and vehicle access routes to and from the car parks should be safe and clearly signed.**

Section 3 gives some suggested hazard considerations for your risk assessments, how the hazards can come about and the possible outcomes. It then gives some pointers as to how you are likely to measure should an external enforcing authority carry out an inspection. These pointers are not however a clinical prediction. It will depend on which measures you do not have in place, compared to the hazard you have at your location. The more serious the hazard, or an accumulation of a number of smaller hazards, the higher the risk of enforcement.

Example

Person tripping on surface	Poor parking surface or person tripping on loose debris	Possible	Hospitalisation
Introduction of all essential control measures only	You still run the risk that the controls may not be as effective as you desire	Introduction of the remainder is recommended, or manning of the access and car parks will be required	

The final section is completely optional as to whether you use the contents or not. They comprise of checklists and record forms which some farm parks have found useful. They do however show you what level of proof you will need to demonstrate.

Example

Location Entrances and Car Parks

Date of review: _____

Person completing the review: _____

	Requirement	Comp ✓
1	Have you made contact with the local highways agency regarding traffic management arrangements?	
2	Have you complied with the requirements of your local highways agency?	
3	Are your location entrance signs large enough so that last minute braking can be avoided?	

Specialist Assistance

Some farm attractions do not have the services of a competent safety advisor. NFAN have retained the services of a Chartered Safety Practitioner – Ray Hipkin [07743 166919] to advise on compliance issues and implementation of the practice notes. He will, if required, visit your location and assist you practically in the implementation of the standards. He will charge you for his visit but will always answer phone queries where he is able to.

Independent External Audits

We have identified an additional external other Safety Consultants who is completely independent from NFAN who will be available to carry out audits and report to you on an individual basis. There will be a charge for his services. There is however considerable benefit in having this audit as it will be a valuable opinion to have on file when discussing your attraction with your local authority and insurers. Insurers and Health and Safety Inspectors value such audits and reports highly as it gives them another view expressed by a health and safety professional at a different time. This audit service is now available.

It is also hoped that common weaknesses found during the audits will be shared with members in an attempt to raise standards across the NFAN network. The findings will also assist the scheme administrators to ensure the scheme remains current and reflects the status of participating members.