NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MOTOR AUCTIONS

# Health & Safety in the vehicle auction industry.

A guide for candidates to the NAMA vehicle appraiser course.

Please ensure that you read this guide before attending your course.

# Health & Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974 (HASAWA)

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 is the primary piece of legislation covering occupational health and safety in Great Britain. The Health and Safety Executive, with local authorities is responsible for enforcing the Act and a number of other Acts and Statutory Instruments relevant to the working environment.

The HASAWA defines the roles and responsibilities of both employer and employee under the act., and both can be liable for prosecution for failure to comply.

**Responsibilities of employer**

It is the duty of the employer to:

- Ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees
- Provide safe systems of work
- Provide information, training and instruction
- Provide safe access and egress
- Provide a written statement of policy regarding health & safety

**Responsibilities of the employee**

It is the duty of the employee to:

- Take reasonable care of himself and the those around him by acts and omissions
- Co-operate with employers with regard to health & safety
- Not to interfere with or misuse anything provided for their H&S

# Reporting of Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)

Certain accidents, near misses and industrial diseases must be either ***recorded*** or reported under these regulations.

All accidents and near misses should be recorded at the place of employment. This allows the health and safety officer to monitor and perhaps intervene with preventative action if there is a trend towards certain injuries.

Certain more serious injuries and occurrences must be ***reported*** to the Health and Safety Executive.

Injuries which must be **reported** include:

- Death (work related only)
- Fractures – but not fingers, thumbs or toes
- Any injury likely to cause permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight
- Crush injures to head or torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs
- Burns covering 10% or more of the body (heat or chemical burns)
- Loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia
- Over 7 day incapacitation of workers which prevent then doing their usual work

**Diseases** which must be **reported** include: (there are many others)

- Carpel tunnel syndrome
- Occupational dermatitis
- Occupational cancer
- Vibration white finger

**Recordable** injuries

- Incapacitation, where an accident results in absence for more than 3 consecutive days
- Any accident, injury or dangerous occurrence should be recorded

# Risk Assessment

A company must asses the hazards and risks within a working environment, and minimise the risk of injury to its employees, visitors and public. A list should be made of all hazards, the risk / likelihood assessed, and any necessary control measures put in place. This process is called risk assessment, and risk assessments should be checked and re-assessed once a year.

**What is a Hazard?**

A hazard is anything which has the potential to cause harm. It can be an object, such as a sharp corner on a desk, a process, such as lifting batteries, or it could be environmental, such as fumes, heat or cold. If it can harm you, it is a hazard.

A few examples of hazards in the auction industry are:

- Moving vehicles
- Jump starting vehicles
- Inhaling exhaust fumes
- Trip & slip hazards, wet floors and objects left
- Re-fuelling vehicles

**Risks**

The risk is the severity and likelihood of an accident / injury occurring. So if a hazard was identified as 'jump starting a vehicle', the risk of something going wrong is quite high (most of us have heard of a battery exploding). If the battery explodes, the risk of injury is quite high – eg chemical burns, partial or total loss of sight etc. This is reportable under RIDDOR. Another hazard might be being hit by a moving vehicle, with the risk that possible death might occur.

**Control measures**

These are the measures that the company may put in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Examples of control measures are:

- Signage, (Warning, Prohibition, Mandatory, Caution, Safety information, Hazard)
- Training in processes (eg Jump starting, moving vehicles, good housekeeping)
- Wearing of PPE, (Not just boots & overalls, but goggles, ear defenders, rubber gloves etc.)
- Marked pedestrian walkways
- Speed limits on site
- Issue of high visibility clothing
- Good maintenance programmes

# Safety Signs

You need to be able to recognise the characteristics of safety signs, and the groups, for example, all Mandatory signs are blue circles – you must do what they say. Some examples follow.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **PROHIBITION**<br>**Red Circle & Diagonal line**<br>You must not……. | **MANDATORY**<br>**Blue Circle**<br><br>You must….. | **CAUTION**<br>**Yellow triangle**<br>Sign shows<br>Be aware…. | **HAZARD**<br>e.g. Flammable, Harmful / irritant |
|  |  | | |
|  |  | | |
| **SAFETY INFORMATION**<br>**Green squares** | **HAZARD**<br>**Orange/yellow diamond** | | |
| | | | |

# Charging Batteries and jump starting vehicles.

Like most things in life, there is a right way and a wrong way to do things, and connecting two batteries together is no different. The consequences of getting it wrong can be devastating though, so here is a brief explanation of how to do it as safely as possible, minimising the risk of injury and damage to the vehicle's sensitive electronics.

Batteries give off hydrogen and oxygen gases, in the exact proportion to explode. Inside most batteries is liquid electrolyte, which contains highly corrosive Sulphuric Acid.

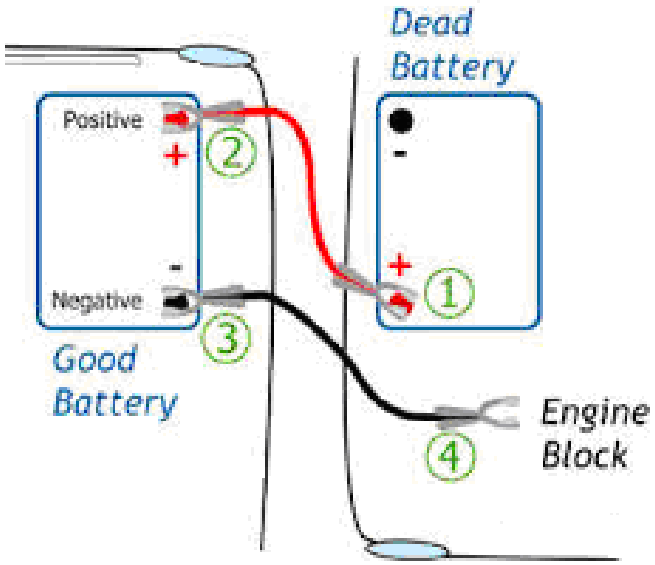
Our job is to connect the two batteries together preventing a spark which can ignite the hydrogen gas causing an explosion, and it is very simple to achieve safely with the following method.

**Step by step**.

Before connecting any leads, ensure that the vehicles (or slave battery) are both the same voltage and safely parked, handbrakes on. The vehicles should not touch. Also remove keys so that central locking will not activate and lock the car.

1. You should as a minimum wear PPE consisting of eye protection and gloves when carrying out this operation.
2. Use the red lead to connect the positive (+ve) terminal of the slave battery or (donor vehicle's good battery) to the +ve terminal of the flat battery.
3. Then use the black lead to connect the negative (-ve) terminal of the good battery to a **suitable earthing point** (not the battery!) on the engine or chassis of the other vehicle. A good earth will be a lifting bracket, inlet or exhaust manifold, alternator bracket, suspension mounting or something else metal. This earth must be away from the flat battery and fuel system as the connection is likely to spark.
4. With both leads connected, wait about 3 minutes for the vehicle voltages to equalise before starting the engine.
5. If using a donor car, start that and allow it to run for a minute or so.
6. Now start the car which has the flat battery, and ideally leave them both to run for about 10 minutes. Fast idle is good if you can do it.
7. It is best practice not to remove any leads whilst the engines are running, as this can spike the electronics and cause damage.
8. Turn off both cars after about 10 minutes, and **disconnect the leads in the reverse order**.
9. Now start the car which had the flat battery – it should start under its own steam.

NB. If you use a slave battery pack with an on / off switch, you can connect direct to both battery terminals, as long as the pack is switched off when you do it.




**How to attach Jump leads**

## Fire Extinguishers

The risk of fire is not huge in the vehicle auction industry, but working with unfamiliar vehicles, topping up with fuel and jump starting all increase the chance. Prompt action with the right equipment can not only save vehicles, but lives too.

You should be aware of which extinguishers are best for which tasks.

| Red - Class A | Cream - Class A & B | Blue - Classes A,B,C,* | Black – Classes A & electrical |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| A. Wood, paper, textiles | A. Wood, paper, textiles<br>B. Flammable Liquids | A. Wood, paper, textiles<br>B. Flammable Liquids<br>C. Flammable gases<br>*. Electrical | A. Wood, paper, textiles<br>*. Electrical |
| General all purpose for general fires, but keep well away from fuel and electrics. | Gives a smothering blanket of foam. Best not used near electrics. | Good all rounder, but powder does make a mess. | Best up close & in confined spaces so gas does not disperse. |

## Good Housekeeping

Many accidents at work are caused by trips, slips and falls which are easily avoidable. Good housekeeping by employees is an important control measure, and should be adhered to at all times. Good work-wear shoes will help against slipping on wet floors, but they will not help much on oil, which is a common hazard.

Oil spillages should be dealt with by the first person to notice it, even though they may not have done it. Remember that the employees duty is to take care of themselves and those around them, by acts ***and omissions***. An example of omissions would be to leave a hazard (eg pool of oil) and then someone else to slip and injure themselves on it. An employee could then be personally liable by omission.

Examples of good housekeeping would be:

- Do not leave obstacles on floor as trip hazards, buckets, batteries, spare tyres, fuel cans etc..
- Clean up wet floors and spillages where practical. Put up slippery / wet floor caution signs.
- Put things away when finished with – jump leads, tins of polish, sweeping brushes.
- Keep work area clean and tidy.

## Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

These regulations cover the safe us of substances, many of which we come across in the motor trade. You may need to contact the manufacturer for the Safety Data Sheet, as only general guidance is provided on the pack. Each substance will have a Safety Data Sheet, which will give information on;

- potential hazards
- information on safe handling
- safe storage
- dealing with emergencies, what do do if swallowed, for example

This will help with carrying out risk assessments relating to use. Substances found in the motor trade may be :

- Petrol
- Diesel
- Battery acid
- Cleaning products
- Cold start (ether based products)
- Anti-freeze
- Screen-wash