



THE TANK MUSEUM

COLLECTIONS SUMMARY & COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

This document sets out The Tank Museum's policies for Collections Management activities. It was created from past Tank Museum documents, Spectrum (The UK Museum Documentation Standards), MLA standards and reference to other UK Museums' Collections Management Policies.

COLLECTIONS SUMMARY: OUR CORE RESOURCE.

The Tank Museum has the world's most comprehensive and accessible collection of armoured vehicles. The Collection is certainly the largest in the United Kingdom. No other UK Museum has a similar remit or collection policy to The Tank Museum. No UK museum with a collection of armoured vehicles approaches The Tank Museum in breadth or depth. As the world's oldest tank Museum with pioneering interpretation and displays, the Museum regularly hosts international Museum delegations.

The Museum's Collections are strong in many areas, a fact recognised by the awarding of Designation status to the entire collection.

The strength of the Museum's collection should be recognised therefore not just in the number of unique or historically important items but in the range and comprehensiveness of the story that can be told and illustrated at the Museum.

Not only are the vehicle collections readily accessible, but an extensive Archive and Reference Library has been built up in parallel with the collection items. The Archive and Reference Library is a Place of Public Deposit for the National Archives.

The Museum can be considered the prime resource for research into the history of Armoured Fighting Vehicles in the United Kingdom, arguably the world.

The Tank Museum collection is notable for having, in addition to vehicles, vehicle components, collections of medals, documents, photographs, film, sound recordings, books, fine art, uniforms, flags equipment, weapons, models and memorabilia. The collections are briefly described below.

Vehicles

The Tank Museum has the most outstanding collection of armoured fighting vehicles in the world. It is a comprehensive collection spanning the entire era of the tank and shows the history and development of this important British invention all on one site. It contains: the first tank ever made, Little Willie; a unique group of ten First World War vehicles; rare and unique Inter-war and experimental items; over 70 Second World War vehicles, with a number of unique survivors and historically important developments. The post-war collection has been considerably expanded with international exchanges and gifts, vehicles captured by British units on operations and regular gifts from the MOD as vehicles come out of service or finish prototype development.

Currently there are 145 tanks on display within the Museum buildings and a further 103 tanks stored elsewhere on the site, some under and some out of overhead cover. This extensive range of tanks allows the development of armoured fighting vehicles to be fully explained and, in a number of cases, are demonstrated in working condition. The collection is also an impressive tool to illustrate practical aspects of significant chapters in British twentieth century and now twenty-first century history. Armoured vehicles were used across the spectrum of conflict, from peacekeeping to full scale warfare, from domestic disputes to policing an empire. They have helped to shape Britain and the modern world.

In the year 2000 the Museum began a programme of returning loans and establishing the legal provenance of 'grey' items deposited at the Museum. A number of vehicles have been identified as duplicates or surplus to requirements (outside the collection policy or beyond economic repair). Some of these vehicles are being transferred to the running fleet, loaned to other museums or interest groups, or are being de-accessioned in

accordance with the disposal policy.

Whilst this process of rationalisation continues, the Museum is still acquiring vehicles that are important and key to the collection policy or where there is little chance that the opportunity to obtain them will ever arise again. The Museum also aims to acquire vehicles to increase the running fleet and these and their use should not be confused with core collection vehicles (discussed under section 1.3 below).

The Tank Museum has a difficult set of challenges. It must balance the need to collect and preserve vehicles in a field where few other Museums have the capacity to collect (and, as yet, where no national collecting strategy has been agreed), against the enormous commitment of resources when taking on a vehicle the size of a tank. Due to the resources required, there are few private collectors of armour or co-operatives. This creates an added challenge to the Museum as the 'national' collection in its broadest sense is concentrated in few Museums and not, as in many other collection fields, dispersed widely in both public and private hands.

Supporting Collections

The Tank Museum has supporting collections in a number of areas.

Engines and automotive components: an outstanding collection with a number of unique items, including the first engine designed specifically for a tank and the world's first gas turbine tank engine.

Vehicle equipment and items of personal equipment.

Memorabilia items that tell the human story, including pieces of trench art, postcards and letters, souvenirs and precious items from soldiers' loved ones. A small section is devoted to T.E. Lawrence because of his connection with the Tank Corps and Bovington Camp.

The Fine Art collection, including oil paintings, sketches, and drawings.

The Regimental silver collection.

Orders, Decorations and Medals, reflecting awards to members of the Royal Armoured Corps and its predecessors, and to the Royal Tank Regiment, from the First World War to the present.

The Textile collection, containing uniforms, clothing, insignia and flags worn and used by all ranks in the Cavalry, Royal Armoured Corps and Royal Tank Regiment from the First World War to the present.

The Weapons collection includes 600 weapons ranging from tank guns to small arms, of which approximately half are on display. The collection includes a rare armoured version of the gas-operated Vickers machine gun and a definitive range of tank-mounted machine guns.

Ammunition: the Museum has a collection of inert ammunition as fired by the tank weaponry and anti-tank weapons on display.

Models: the Museum's Models collection includes historically important models used in tank design and engineering and models of tanks made by soldiers on the battlefield. It includes toy and commemorative tanks from the early twentieth century to the present.

Archive and Library Collections

The Tank Museum Archive and Reference Library holds the most comprehensive collection of archival material and books on Armoured Fighting Vehicles in the world. The Library is used by the Army, authors, the media, family history researchers and the general public, as well as by Museum staff carrying out research. The Archive and Library is a Place of Public Deposit for the National Archives. The collections include:

Documents such as official reports, training manuals, technical manuals, diaries, maps, drawings and personal papers;

Published books and magazines on armoured fighting vehicles and armoured units;

Photographs both historic and recent, comprising 250,000 images;

The Audio-visual collection of film, video, and audio recordings relating to armoured vehicles and oral history.

The remainder of this document sets out The Tank Museum's policies with regard to managing the collections.

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. The Museum and Collections

1.1 Status. The Tank Museum is an independent museum, now a company limited by guarantee. It is a Registered Museum (Museum Number 820) and in 1998 received Designation status that recognises the Museum's collections to be of 'outstanding national importance'. Although independent, the Museum is supported by the Ministry of Defence.

The Museum is a Trust and is a registered Charity (No 1102661).

The Tank Museum houses what is in essence the national collection of tanks and other armoured fighting vehicles.

The Tank Museum is an Official Place of Deposit for material from the National Archives (under the Public Records Act 1958) that relate to the story of armoured warfare.

1.2 Vision, Mission and Mandate

Vision: For The Tank Museum to be ranked with the finest military museums in the world.

Mission: To conserve, develop and interpret the national collection of tanks and armoured fighting vehicles, to enable people the better to understand armoured warfare and its impact on society – past, present and future.

Objectives

Conserve and enhance the collection.

Have a sound financial base and business culture to ensure the Museum is sustainable and thrives.

Maximise access, intellectual and physical, for all

Interpret the story of armoured warfare to meet audience needs in an enjoyable and engaging way

Promote The Tank Museum as a centre of education and learning

Be a leading authority on the history of armoured warfare.

Promote a fuller understanding of the Army and be the custodian of the heritage of the Royal Armoured Corps and Royal Tank Regiment.

Consult and encourage involvement of the Wider Community in the life of The Museum

Provide a safe and secure working environment and to promote the professional development of staff and volunteers

The Tank Museum has the following main collecting areas:

1.2.1 Tanks used by the Royal Armoured Corps and predecessors along with important or influential tanks built for British service that never advanced beyond prototype stage.

1.2.2 Reconnaissance and other armoured fighting vehicles used by the Royal Armoured Corps and its predecessors.

1.2.3 Infantry armoured vehicles and similar equipment either used by the Royal Armoured Corps or in direct support of the Royal Armoured Corps (meaning in company with tanks up to forward positions) in military

operations.

1.2.4 Supporting armoured vehicles used either by the Royal Armoured Corps or in direct support of the Royal Armoured Corps (meaning in company with tanks up to forward positions) in armoured operations.

1.2.5 The same categories as above (1.2.1-4) but applied to vehicles used by our Wartime, Cold War and Coalition Allies.

1.2.6 The same categories as above (1.2.1-4) but applied to vehicles used by armies fighting against British forces or armies perceived as a 'threat'.

1.2.7 Vehicles of Historical and Technical Significance. This final category embraces all armoured vehicles, excluded by any of the above clauses, which, for technological or historical reasons can be shown to be of particular interest or significance in the development of Armoured Fighting Vehicles.

1.2.8 The Museum also collects related engines, vehicle equipment, personal equipment, memorabilia, fine art and silver, medals, textiles (uniforms and flags), weapons, ammunition and models relating to mechanised armoured warfare. The Archive and Library collects documents, books, photographs and audio visual material also on related matters.

1.3 Collection Types

1.3.1 The Tank Museum will designate new acquisitions either Core Collection or Running & Handling Collection objects and, where possible, re-categorise items already in the collection to clarify the future use of the items.

1.3.2 Potential donors will be advised of this policy and their agreement obtained at the time of acquisition.

Core Collection

1.3.3 Objects that are considered the 'best' and most fundamental to the Museum and its subject belong to the Core Collection.

1.3.4 Core Collection items are subject to the highest level of restriction in terms of their use and command a commensurate proportion of available resources.

1.3.5 The Core Collection is used for both exhibition and reference purposes.

Running & Handling Collection

1.3.6 The Running & Handling Collection comprises items of which the Museum holds alternative, better, examples or which are peripheral to the Museum's objectives or items that may be acquired to assist in displays. Items in this category are ultimately disposable or replaceable.

1.3.7 Objects from this category may be used for open display, demonstration, or handling.

1.3.8 The acquisition of Running & Handling Collection items will conform to the same standards as material for the Core Collection.

1.3.9 The Museum will normally use vehicles only from the Running & Handling Collection for the purposes of vehicle running demonstrations. Vehicles from the Core Collection may be used for these purposes only after due consideration.

1.4 Standards

1.4.1 The Tank Museum fully subscribes to the Museums Association's definition of a museum: "Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society."

1.4.2 The Trustees have adopted the Museums Association Code of Practice for Museum Governing Bodies (1994) and, since the Museum collects both documents and photographs, the Trustees are also guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002). It also seeks to meet, in this respect, the standards set out in Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, A Standard for Record Repositories (London, 1990).

1.5 Statement of Collecting Ethics

1.5.1 The Museum will not acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the responsible officer is satisfied that the Museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question, and that in particular it has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin, or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned, in violation of that country's laws. For the purposes of this paragraph "country of origin" includes the United Kingdom.

1.5.2 In addition to the safeguards of valid title outlined above, The Museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures, such as reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) or reporting finds through the Treasure Trove procedure (in Scotland). The Museum recognises the benefits of preserving items in situ, and the moral rights of individuals, groups, societies and peoples to hold items.

The above is in accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, and the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The Trustees will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by DCMS in 2005.

1.5.3 Further, in respect to artefacts recovered from battlefield sites, the Museum will not knowingly acquire or exhibit artefacts which have been stolen, illegally exported from their country of origin, illegally salvaged or removed from commercially exploited archaeological or historic sites in recent times.

1.5.4 The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.

1.5.5 Spoliation

The museum will use the statement of principles "Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period" issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission. Trustees and Staff members engaged in collecting activities outside the Museum must declare any conflict of interest and absent themselves from discussions about accepting items affected by their own collecting activities. This policy applies to loans as well as acquisitions and de-accessioning.

2. Acquisition and Documentation

2.1 Acquisition

2.1.1 The Tank Museum will endeavour to follow the collection guidelines given in its Collections Management Plan and will not collect outside this remit. Acquisitions outside the Plan will only be made after proper consideration by the Trustees.

2.1.2 Whilst the Museum will not confine itself to collecting a single example of any object, it will avoid unnecessary duplication of objects.

2.1.3 The Museum will avoid taking items in poor condition, except where objects are deemed to be extremely rare or of major significance to the collection.

2.1.4 The Museum will take account of the collecting policies of other Museums collecting in the same or

related areas or subject fields. Material offered to the Museum that is more relevant to another Museum's collections will be referred on. Membership of relevant discussion will be maintained, as an important means of mutual understanding and an aid to limiting duplication of major and important objects.

2.1.5 An acquisition may only be made if proper care can be provided, including adequate and appropriate storage space, and staff time and skills. The Museum will not accept items that it is unable to care for, such as hazardous materials, dangerous items, and items the Museum cannot house. The Museum's ability to provide proper care will be assessed before an acquisition is agreed.

2.1.6 The Museum will not acquire any item that contradicts its statement of collecting ethics (section 1.5).

2.1.7 Normally objects will be acquired only as a gift or purchase and without any conditions attached (except in cases where consideration of copyright, time-limited sensitivity, or the Public Records Act are relevant).

2.1.8 Written evidence of title must be obtained for all acquisitions. Transfer of title to the Museum must occur by means of signature.

2.1.9 The Museum is not obliged to accept all bequests. Appropriate documentation will be obtained for all accepted bequests.

2.1.10 A regular report of acquisitions will be presented to the Collections Committee.

2.2 Ownership

2.2.1 The majority of objects in The Tank Museum collections are owned by the Trustees of The Tank Museum. All newly issued items are gifted to the Museum.

2.2.2 The Museum will continue to research and address the ownership of all items not owned by the Trustees.

2.2.3 Records deposited under the Public Records Act (1958) S.3 (6) belong to the National Archives and must not be disposed of without the permission of the National Archives.

2.2.4 The materials that are loaned to the Museum remain the property of their respective lenders.

2.3 Accession

2.3.1 All items entering the Museum (apart from the briefest of short term deposits) are given a unique entry number. The entry number is an administrative numbering system and does not confer accession status (or any other status) on the item.

2.3.2 Items that will enter the Museum's permanent Core Collection will be accessioned by assigning a unique Accession Number and recording the identification, history, and source of each item.

2.3.3 The Museum will maintain an Accessions Register, both electronically and in hard copy.

2.3.4 Certain items (such as medals belonging to Tank Corps, Tank Regiment and those of other RAC units not passed on to other relevant Regimental Museums) will automatically be accessioned.

2.3.5 The Museum may allow a quarantine or decision period to elapse before deciding whether an item should be accessioned, especially in the case of large items such as vehicles.

2.3.6 The decision to acquire or reject an item for accession may be taken by the Curator or by the Librarian responsible for the relevant area of the collection (other members of staff in time may be given delegated powers, as appropriate), with reference, if necessary, to the Collection Committee.

2.4 Inventory and Documentation

2.4.1 The Museum shall be accountable for all objects in its care, whether accessioned or not. It will maintain

information identifying the object, its owner, its arrival into the Museum's care and current location.

2.4.2 All acquisition and disposal transactions will be recorded on designated Museum forms including, but not limited to, Entry (Transfer of Title) documents and acquisition and accession registers. These, together with other supporting documentation, will be retained as part of the Museum's Archive.

2.4.3 The Registrar is responsible for all Entry, Acquisition and Loan-In documentation.

2.4.4 All documentation will be placed in TRACER, the Museum's bespoke computerised collection management system.

2.4.5 All records from computerised documentation systems worthy of retention have been transferred to TRACER. All written Access Registers and MDA catalogue cards have been transcribed onto TRACER.

2.4.6 Records will be kept up to date by qualified staff.

2.4.7 Every item in The Tank Museum collection will carry its identity number at all times. Every item will be marked or labelled with its Entry Number or Accession Number using a method that is suitable to the object.

2.4.8 The Tank Museum adheres to the labelling and marking methods recommended by the mda and advice from conservators.

2.4.9 Items on loan will not be physically marked.

2.4.10 Items in the Core Collection will be photographed and the images added to the Tracer record.

2.4.11 The Museum is registered under the Data Protection Act with the number Z7587310.

2.5 Retrospective documentation and cataloguing

2.5.1 The Museum is and will continue to address issues of lack of documentation concerning certain items by research and referencing.

2.5.2 Items are and will continue to be catalogued in greater depth as staff time and expertise become available.

2.6 Disposal

2.6.1 By definition, the Museum has a long-term purpose and should possess (or intend to acquire) permanent collections in relation to its stated objectives. The Trustees accept the principle that, except for sound curatorial reasons, there is a strong presumption against the disposal of any items in the Museum's collection. Except as set out below.

2.6.2 Disposal will not occur other than for the following reasons:

To eliminate unnecessary duplication of accessioned or unaccessioned artefacts (at whatever level is deemed appropriate within any one part of the Collection);

To exchange accessioned or unaccessioned artefacts from within the Collection so as to be able to obtain artefacts of greater importance to the Collection;

To remove from the Collection any artefact whose condition has become such that it is no longer a viable constituent of the Collection;

To remove from the Collection any artefact that is irrelevant to past and present collecting plans.

2.6.3 Disposal will not be undertaken principally for financial reasons (either to raise money for any purpose or to reduce expenditure).

2.6.4 The Museum will not normally dispose of any artefact, accessioned or unaccessioned, to which it cannot prove title.

2.6.5 Any decision to sell or otherwise dispose of material from the collections will be taken only after due consideration (with legal advice sought where necessary).

2.6.6 In cases where the object to be disposed of was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed.

2.6.7 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections), will be the responsibility of the Museum Trustees acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.

A report of disposals will regularly be presented to the Collection Committee.

2.6.8 Priority will be given to retaining the item disposed of within the public domain. The item will be offered first, by exchange, gift or sale to Accredited Museums before disposal to other interested individuals or organisations is considered.

2.6.9 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other professional journals where appropriate.

2.6.10 The announcement will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations.

2.6.11 Disposals from the Museum will not be made to past or present members of staff or Trustees.

2.6.12 In the event of an intended sale to a body outside the UK Museum community, of an artefact donated to the Museum, the Museum will make all reasonable efforts to inform the donor.

2.6.13 Where items recommended for disposal are subject to the provisions of the Official Secrets Acts or other restrictions such as privacy agreements, they will only be disposed of to an organisation authorised to hold such material. If no suitable organisation can be found, and it is not possible to remove the restrictions, then the material will be destroyed in an approved manner.

2.6.14 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM procedures.

2.6.15 A copy of the Entry (Transfer of Title) document and any appropriate documentation associated with an artefact that has been disposed of will be made available to the new owner.

2.6.16 Any monies received by the Museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions but in exceptional cases improvements relating to the care of collections may be justifiable. Advice on these cases will be sought from MLA.

2.6.17 The acquisition and disposal policy will be published and reviewed at least once every five years. The Regional Agency / Area Museum Council will be notified of any changes to the Acquisition & Disposal policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections. The date of the next scheduled review is 2009.

2.7 De-accession

2.7.1 When the Museum disposes of an accessioned artefact, it will also de-accession that artefact, recording the fact that the artefact is no longer part of the Core Collection.

2.7.2 Objects may be de-accessioned from the Core Collection into the Running & Handling Collection. The Museum thereby decides to apply a particular standard of care to those artefacts and recognises that such items may not be held in perpetuity. Artefacts will be de-accessioned and responsibility for managing and recording them passed to the receiving department.

2.8 Computerised Collections Information and Management System

2.8.1 The Museum will maintain an up-to-date, unified electronic database (TRACER) for all Museum collections, collections information, records and documentation.

2.8.2 The information on the database will be made available as widely and as easily as possible to users, both within the Museum and to the public, subject to requirements for security and confidentiality.

2.8.3 The system will be used to assemble collections related information, images, and where possible and appropriate audio and film material.

3. Accountability Procedures, Indemnity and Insurance

3.1 Object Entry

3.1.1 All objects will be treated as if they were Museum objects in terms of care and accountability.

3.1.2 The Object Entry procedure applies to every item entering The Tank Museum's care from the time of arrival. This includes all potential gifts or purchases for the permanent or support collections, loans for exhibition or study, items to be identified, and items that are deemed not required and subsequently returned.

3.1.3 Objects will be uniquely identified, and key information recorded about the object, depositor, the owner if different, and the reason for deposit.

3.1.4 A Deposit Form must be filled in and signed for any item deposited at the Museum. The Deposit Form is attached as an appendix to this Policy.

3.1.5 New items will be accepted or rejected by the Curator, Librarian, or delegated member of staff. The Registrar will contact the depositor within two weeks of the deposit date.

3.1.6 Donors will be made aware that the Museum cannot undertake to place particular items on display.

3.1.7 If it is decided that an item lies outside The Tank Museum Collection Policy and permission for disposal has not been granted, the item will be returned to the depositor within a month.

3.1.8 The Tank Museum reserves the right to dispose of items not collected by the depositor after a period of six months has elapsed.

3.1.9 Records of returned items will be retained for five years.

3.2 Location and Movement Control

3.2.1 The normal and current locations of all objects in the Museum's care will be recorded on Tracer. The Registrar is responsible for maintaining up-to-date records.

3.2.2 A record of all movements will be kept for all objects in the Museum's care, including movement within the Museum and movement across the physical or administrative boundaries of the Museum.

3.2.3 Appropriate authorisation will be obtained and recorded for all moves according to whether they are

internal or external.

3.2.4 The condition of the object will be checked before moving to ensure that it is fit to be moved. Preparations will be made accordingly for the item and a suitable new location confirmed, prior to the move. Health and Safety Regulations will be adhered to.

3.3 Stock Check

3.3.1 A complete stock check of a defined group of objects will be undertaken at regular intervals.

3.4 Loans-In

3.4.1 The Tank Museum wishes to minimise the proportion of items in its collection that are held on loan. It will not normally accept material on loan, unless for a specified purpose and an agreed term.

3.4.2 Where loans are accepted, the loan period will be finite and specified, though it may be renewed. The Museum does not accept "permanent loans".

3.4.3 The Tank Museum will give the same degree of care to loaned items as to those which form the Museum collection.

3.4.4 There will be written and signed agreement for the loan. A Loans Form will be filled out and appropriate records kept.

3.4.5 The Owner must confirm title and provenance of the Incoming Loan.

3.4.6 The transfer of Incoming Loans to The Tank Museum to a third borrowing institution can be arranged providing that all three parties are in agreement.

3.4.7 The condition of the loaned item will be monitored and the owner given access to it if required. Conservation action must be agreed with the owner in writing before work begins.

3.4.8 In the unlikely event of the Museum ever being disbanded, objects on loan will be returned to bodies which have a call on them. The course of action regarding those belong to The Tank Museum Collection is laid down in the Trust Deed.

3.5 Loans-Out

3.5.1 The Museum will loan objects from the Core Collection to registered Museums or for well-defined and recorded purposes. Items from the Running & Handling Collection may be loaned out to schools and other groups.

3.5.2 During the period of the loan the legal title of the loaned item will remain with The Tank Museum and property will not pass.

3.5.3 The Tank Museum when considering the Loan Out of an item must be satisfied of: the borrowing individual's, group's or institution's ability to care appropriately for the item in question the future security of the person/organisation the physical security of the premises the appropriateness and acceptability of the loan's purpose.

3.5.4 Loans-out are for a finite and specified term. Any Loan Out is subject to a contract of a fixed term, renewable by written application. If this contract is not renewed by either party then the loaned item must be returned at the end of the contract.

3.5.5 The Tank Museum reserves the right to recall the loaned item before the expiry of the contract with one month's notice in writing. It can be recalled at any time if the terms of the Loan Agreement are not adhered to by the borrower.

3.5.6 Loans-Out will be monitored annually.

3.5.7 Items are borrowed for display in a specific location (as detailed in the Loan Agreement) and in no circumstances may the loaned item be transferred to any other location without prior, written permission from The Tank Museum.

3.5.8 The borrower is responsible for all costs of preparation and packing, where applicable, insurance and transport. If, for any reason, a member of The Tank Museum staff, or a designated representative, is required to accompany the exhibit to oversee loading or unloading, either from or to The Tank Museum, this cost must also be borne by the borrower.

3.5.9 The loaned item must be covered by insurance or have suitable indemnity at all times.

3.5.10 The borrower and The Tank Museum will mutually agree the transport arrangements but The Tank Museum reserves the right to specify the type of transport.

3.5.11 The borrower will meet expenses should The Tank Museum consider that during the period of the loan, the item needs to be examined by one of its officers.

3.5.12 The borrower must exercise due care in the custody, handling, transport, unpacking and repacking the loaned item. The borrower must undertake to maintain constant and adequate protection for the loaned item against the hazards of fire, flood, exposure to harmful radiation or pollution and to minimise the risk of theft or damage. The Tank Museum reserves the right to stipulate special security measures for certain loaned items.

3.5.13 The borrower must guarantee not to change the loaned item in any way (whether temporary or permanent) without consulting The Tank Museum.

3.5.14 The borrower must immediately notify The Tank Museum of any damage to the loaned item.

3.5.15 The borrower may not use the loaned item for any form of private commercial gain without the permission of The Tank Museum.

3.5.16 The borrower must make acknowledgement of the loan in labels, display or exhibition notices, along with any relevant literature, in the following form: 'Lent by permission of the Trustees of The Tank Museum, Bovington, Dorset'.

3.5.17 All decisions and documentation regarding the loan will be recorded on Tracer.

3.5.18 Overdue loans will be pursued.

3.6 Indemnity and Insurance

3.6.1 The Museum will ensure that indemnity is obtained for all loaned objects while they are in its custody. A valuation of the items will be agreed with the lender at the time of loan. Insurance cover is placed on certain areas of the collections but not all the collections are indemnified. The Museum has decided to take its own risk in a number of collection areas.

3.6.2 The Museum will undertake regular evaluations of high-value items tagged for individual valuation, and will regularly review the guidelines for valuing other objects in the collection.

3.7 Valuation

3.7.1 Museum staff will not undertake valuations for commercial organisations or private individuals.

3.7.2 Agreed valuation based on insurance/indemnity (not market) valuations are, however, provided by the Curator or Librarian for loans-in, loans-out, and as part of applications for funds as may be required.

4. Conservation and Preservation

4.1 Preventive Conservation

4.1.1 The Museum will work to improve storage and display conditions.

4.1.2 The Museum will take steps to avoid damage and deterioration to objects rather than relying on remedial conservation treatment.

4.1.3 The Museum will monitor items through regular conservation surveys and condition checks.

4.1.4 Conservation work will be undertaken by qualified staff. The Museum will consult or engage outside experts to conserve collections where necessary. In-house remedial conservation will be restricted to certain areas of engineering.

4.1.5 Records will be retained of all conservation work and condition checking.

4.2 Conservation Action and Treatment

4.2.1 The Museum will treat objects that require treatment to maintain them in good and stable condition.

4.2.2 The interventive treatment of an object shall be conservation rather than restoration, preserving both the physical and historical integrity wherever possible. Certain vehicles to be used for demonstration purposes will be restored to working order.

4.2.3 Working vehicles will be serviced regularly and maintained.

4.2.4 All conservation procedures will be documented on Tracer.

4.2.5 No conservation work may be undertaken unless a programme of work following best conservation practice has been devised. No conservation work may be undertaken without appropriate authorisation.

4.2.6 Invasive conservation treatments always, and preventative conservation measures usually, follow the outcome of a condition check or technical assessment, which must be recorded.

4.2.7 Conservation work will only be undertaken by staff or outside specialists with appropriate qualifications and/or expertise. Curatorial staff will keep up to date with current practice and undertake training as required.

4.2.8 The Tank Museum will adhere to the guidelines set out in Working with Independent Conservators MGC, 2000. All conservation treatments and procedures shall comply with current Health and Safety legislation and COSHH regulations.

4.3 Condition Checking

4.3.1 The collections will be surveyed and their condition assessed at regular, pre-determined intervals. Condition checking documentation will be standard and as far as possible conform to National Standards.

5. Storage and Security

5.1 Storage

5.1.1 The Museum will always seek to provide accommodation for the collections that is safe, physically secure, environmentally stable, and appropriate.

5.1.2 Storage areas will be improved over time to meet relevant standards.

5.1.3 Any new storage areas will be designed to professional standards.

5.1.4 Storage areas will be monitored, condition-checked and maintained on a regular basis.

5.2 Physical Security

5.2.1 Objects in the collection will be secured and protected against damage or loss at all times, and wherever they are.

5.2.2 Objects will be handled, stored and secured so as to avoid risks or harm to people.

5.2.3 Legislative requirements for the storage of hazardous or other controlled materials are to be observed (e.g. firearms, radioactive substances, weapons).

5.2.4 Security will be monitored on a regular basis.

5.3 Risk Management

5.3.1 The Museum will continuously assess potential hazards and risk of damage or loss to objects and records.

5.3.2 The Museum will continuously assess potential hazards and risks posed by the collections to staff, visitors, and any people working with the collections on-site or off-site.

5.3.3 Measures will be taken to minimise risk in both cases.

5.4 Disaster Response Plan

5.4.1 The Museum will provide the knowledge, skills and equipment to protect against and respond to a threat or unexpected event efficiently and quickly with the aim of safeguarding the collections and records.

5.4.2 The Museum will ensure that there are effective preventive measures and response procedures.

6. Public Access To and Use Of The Collections

6.1 Physical and Virtual Access

6.1.1 The Museum will uphold the policies described in the Access Policy and will work to meet objectives for increasing access to the collections.

6.2 Reproduction

6.2.1 Vulnerable and regularly used documents and photographs will be copied so that researchers need not handle the originals.

6.2.2 Where appropriate and feasible three-dimensional objects may be reproduced provided that the object will not be damaged and after permission has been sought from the owner, Curator and Director.

6.3 Operation of Objects

6.3.1 Objects to be operated will in most cases be from the Running & Handling Collection. Objects may be restored for the purposes of safe operation.

6.3.2 Objects will be designated for operation only after satisfying a number of criteria as to their suitability and safety. Rare, unique or irreplaceable objects will not, as a rule, be operated.

6.3.3 Objectives and benefits of operating the object will be clearly defined.

6.3.4 Objects will be operated in such a way that they do not pose a hazard to staff or to the public.

6.3.5 The MGC's Standards for the Care of Larger and Working Objects will be consulted and referred to.

7. Collections Management Research and Development

7.1 Research and Development

7.1.1 The Museum will work to develop its understanding of collections management and to develop its knowledge of best conservation practice. Staff will keep up to date on current literature, will undertake training where required and will participate in professional development activities.

7.1.2 Museum staff will share knowledge with other staff, volunteers, and staff of other Museums and professional organisations.

7.2 Monitoring and Evaluating this Policy

7.2.1 This policy will be monitored on a regular basis and updated where necessary.