

## NARCOA Operator Mentoring Guidelines

**Role of the Area Director:** Each Area Director (1 -11), as stated in NARCOA policy, is the Area Manager Of Mentoring (MOM). The Area Director may delegate this responsibility. Each MOM must be knowledgeable of NARCOA and Affiliate rules and procedures and be well experienced with the safe operation of motorcars and other on track equipment. If the mentoring process is delegated, the Area Director will approve the program to be implemented and continue to communicate with the MOM to ensure a consistent and complete mentoring process.

**Who Must be Mentored:** Any member who wishes to operate a motorcar or any other piece of on-track equipment must be mentored before being allowed to operate independently at a NARCOA sponsored rail excursion. Also, any mentored operator who does not purchase insurance and operate at a NARCOA event for a span of three years or more must be mentored again.

**Experienced Operator:** An EC who accepts a new member for mentoring must assign an experienced operator who is willing to mentor the operator. The experienced operator must have at least two years of motorcar operation, participate regularly in motorcar excursions, and be familiar with NARCOA and affiliate rules and procedures. If possible, the experienced operator's car will be directly behind the mentored motorcar at the beginning of the excursion. The experienced operator should also ride with the mentoring operator for 10-15 miles and then move back to their own car for the remainder of the excursion.

**The Best Mentoring Experience:** The mentoring process consists of three areas covered in a 4 or 5-hour format as outlined on the mentoring form. A best practice is to conduct this discussion on the day before an excursion or in a separate 'mentoring' run. This training may occur at the set on site prior to set on day. Extending the set on days on the Certificate of Permission would allow insurance coverage. The mentoring team (under the direction of the Area Director or Area MOM) should consist of an EC and at an experienced operator for each person being mentored.

**Steps for Mentoring:** An operator who wishes to be mentored must pass the on line operator certification test and purchase current NARCOA insurance prior to being mentored.

1. Mentoring steps should include the discussion topics, practical exercise, safe operation of the railcar, and the after operating review outlined on the mentoring form.
2. After completed on-track mentoring, the experienced operator must turn in the completed Discussion Checklist and Acknowledgment Form to the excursion Coordinator who reviews the form, signs it and forwards it to the Area Director or Area MoM for review. The completed forms are sent to the NARCOA Operator Mentoring Administrator at the address on the NARCOA website's "Officers and Directors" page.
3. The NARCOA Operator Mentoring Administrator will notify the NARCOA Membership team of each member who successfully completes mentoring via email. The membership team will update NED and send confirmation email to the member notifying them to include an "M" at the end of their qualification number when signing up for an excursion. The next time the operator purchases insurance, their insurance card will reflect completion of mentoring.

## NARCOA Operator Mentoring Checklist

*Use this checklist to ensure all operator mentoring steps are complete.*

### Part 1: Discussion

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Welcome and introductions

Safety meeting and work plan

Explain the mentoring process

Documents and forms review

The role of the Excursion Coordinator

Risks in a motorcar excursion

Components of an excursion

Importance of Safety Meetings

The requirement to always be able to stop within half the distance the operator's range of vision.

Operator responsibilities for passengers:

1. How to stop motorcar

2. Expected behaviors

3. Safety

4. Addressing complaints: questions and comments to the EC - not the railroad.

5. Flagging

Respect railroad property and rules

Stress that it is a privilege to operate on any railroad — always be safe and professional

### Part 2: Practical Exercise

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Using the NARCOA Vehicle Inspection form, demonstrate proper inspection emphasizing brakes, lights, horns, flags, wheel thickness, and profile tools. Stress turntable requirements, safety, and functioning.

Guide new operators to safely set on and set off their railcar, highlighting safe loading and unloading motorcars.

New operators will demonstrate safe turning of the motorcar, including turntable safety.

Demonstration and explanation of on track operation. Explain the purpose and function of the throttle, brake lever, lights, and other controls.

### Part 3: Safe Railcar Operation *(On track with Experienced Operator)*

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Demonstrate safe following distance and how to maintain.

Demonstrate safe braking distance of the new operator's car until the operator is familiar with how long it takes to stop the car. Explain how this distance increases in adverse weather conditions.

To complete the Mentoring process, the operator will operate under the supervision of an Experienced Operator on a scheduled NARCOA excursion.

**Part 4: Hy-rail Operation****Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

This section is only applicable for operators being mentored in a hy-rail vehicle. The Experienced operator must have hy-rail operating experience. Proper hy-rail gear manufacturers operating manuals must be available. All items that are also applicable to hy-rail operation in previous sections of this document must be completed.

Demonstrate the vehicle is properly equipped and inspected per FRA requirements.  
Demonstrate the proper inspection of the vehicle per the rail gear manufacturer and NARCOA requirements.

Demonstrate proper set on and set off procedures and operation of hy-rail gear.

Demonstrate use of steering wheel lock.

Discuss positioning of hy-rails in a line up with motorcars.

Discuss hazards of rubber vehicle tires on wet or greasy rail.

Discuss hazards of self guarded frogs and point guards.

Discuss procedures and equipment needed to re-rail a hy-rail.

**Part 5: After Operating Review****Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Following the course of training, the EC will meet with the Operator to review sessions, answer any questions or operator concerns, and share his observations with the new operator.

- If the EC considers the new operator's performance to be satisfactory, the Experienced Operator will complete the Report of NARCOA Operator Mentoring and give it the EC for forwarding.
- If the Experienced Operator or the EC do not observe safe operating skills or believe the new operator would benefit from additional study, this fact is noted on the mentoring form with specific recommendations for further study. The prospective operator will repeat the practical exercise after additional tutoring by an experienced operator and after a period of at least one month. The Mentor and EC will notify the Area Director / MOM of this recommendation.

NARCOA realizes that set on sites may not be available nor suitable for time consuming mentoring usage. Techniques other than the actual set on to the rails could be demonstrated at an unoccupied parking area or other safe setting.

## Report of NARCOA Operator Mentoring

Excursion Coordinator: Send this completed NARCOA Operator Mentoring Checklist and signed Report of NARCOA Operator Mentoring to the Operator Mentoring Administrator at the address on the NARCOA website "Officers and Directors" page.

Mentored Operator (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Insurance Card No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Qualification No. \_\_\_\_\_

Trip Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Railroad: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Motorcar: \_\_\_\_\_ Motorcar Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Experienced Operator / EC's written comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mentored Operator (Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

The mentored operator:

\_\_\_\_ Has completed NARCOA Operator Mentoring successfully.

\_\_\_\_ HAS NOT completed the NARCOA Operator Mentoring successfully.

Experienced Operator (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Excursion Coordinator (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Area Director / Manager of Mentoring (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_