

Guide to Transport Conditions under the Government Indemnity Scheme - National Heritage Act 1980, Section 16

By virtue of the National Heritage Act 1980, Government can indemnify any individual owner or institution which falls within the terms of the Act for the loss of or damage to any object loaned to another such institution subject to certain conditions which includes those relating to transport. These conditions are set out below.

1. Any transport company used to move the object(s) must have experience in the transport of fragile and valuable artefacts with employees trained in the handling of such material and must be able to meet the conditions below and confirm this in writing.
2. When objects are sent out or brought in from abroad the company used must have the ability and appropriate experience to handle consignments of valuable and fragile material. Company staff must be experienced in dealing with airport and seaport procedures and all necessary documentation.
3. The removal, packing, unpacking and transport of the loan material must be supervised by senior members of the transport company in consultation with the lender and/or borrower of the material.
4. Any vehicle, whether owned by a transport company or the borrower or the lender, used for the transport of indemnified material must conform to the specifications in paragraphs 5 to 10 below.
5. Vehicles used should normally be closed vans (ie having solid sides and roof) with a windowless freight compartment separate from the driving cab. All vehicles should be equipped with good quality locking devices. Additional locking facilities may also be required, such as closed shackle padlocks. Any locking bars or external fittings must be secured with concealed or non-return screws or welded or riveted into place.
6. Vehicles should provide appropriate protection against vibration and shock and extremes in relative humidity and temperature conditions for consignments of valuable and fragile material. Air-ride suspension and climate control equipment may be necessary in appropriate circumstances. Environmental conditions should be monitored.
7. Vehicles and crew have to be equipped with appropriate means of communications such as fixed and/or mobile radio telephones for route monitoring and emergencies.
8. Keys to the freight compartment should be kept separate from the vehicle keys.
9. Vehicles other than closed vans may be used in appropriate circumstances, eg the carriage of exceptionally large items which may demand the use of an open lorry with the load suitably covered. Furthermore, small consignments or single items may be carried by car, small van, taxi, train or air providing a sufficient number of couriers are in attendance.

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10. All vehicles must be provided with fire-fighting equipment appropriate to the load and the crew experienced in its use.

11. Whatever method of transport is used compliance with the operating conditions in paragraphs 12-19 is required.

12. A vehicle must carry two drivers on long journeys, or one driver and a courier on short journeys. The crew to consist of responsible persons experienced in the handling of valuable consignments and capable of dealing effectively with an emergency situation.

13. Where space on the carrying vehicle is limited, or where deemed essential for security control, a second escorting vehicle will need to be provided and equipped with mobile radio/telephone communications.

14. The route needs to be carefully planned and the addresses and telephone numbers of emergency services should be carried by the crews and accompanying couriers.

15. Ideally the journey should be completed in one haul.

16. When a stopover is necessary arrangements must be made to lodge the vehicle and/or material in secure premises which are protected by a 24-hour intruder and fire alarm system or under continuous supervision.

17. On no account should a vehicle be left unattended by the crew even in an emergency.

18. Special circumstances may apply to some overseas transport but arrangements must be no less rigorous than those specified above.

19. An effective "no smoking" policy must apply in areas containing loan material.

A: In the event of loss or damage due to the specified conditions not having been observed the Secretary of State shall be entitled to conduct in the name of the owner or lender the pursuit or settlement of a claim against the borrower or a third party or to prosecute in the name of the owner. The Secretary of State shall have full discretion in the conduct of any proceedings or in the settlement of any claim and the owner shall give all such information and assistance the Secretary of State may require.

B: These conditions are the minimum requirements of the Government Indemnity Scheme, but borrowers should be aware that some lenders impose additional conditions which the borrower will be required to meet for the loan to proceed.