



Purpose

The Historic Army Aircraft Trust (hereafter Trust) holds its collection in trust for the public. This policy outlines the principles that the board of Trustees expect to be followed when objects are acquired for the collection or considered for disposal. This policy complies with guidance published from the Charity's Commission department for culture, media and sport along with UK legislation outlined by the Museums Service and other international law and standards.

The primary purpose of this Policy is to assist the Board of Trustees to fulfil the statutory requirements of the Trust; the Policy is also intended to be a public document.

Definitions

The **Collection** is defined as the total body of significant¹ items, or part thereof, held by the Trust. Collecting may result from proactive projects, or in response to the offer of material by members of the public or other institutions. In all instances collecting should be a focused outcome derived of formal review of the existing collection in support of the charitable objects and strategy of the Trust.

Acquisition defines the process of the Trust obtaining responsibility for an item, associated due diligence, rights management and transfer of title. Items may be held at Acquisition to deliver the Trust's charitable objects for as long as they fulfil the aims. Items held at Acquisition may be acquired to support HAAF learning activities (handling items), displays (props and facsimiles) and collection care and maintenance (spares). These items are not accessioned.

Accession is a status afforded to those items that the Trustees deem to be of such significance that they merit permanent retention and preservation on behalf of the Nation. Accessioned items may be disposed of at a later date, and if so should be subject to the procedures described in this Policy.

Disposal is defined as the permanent physical removal of material from the Trust's collection by gift, sale, exchange, or planned destruction. Accessioned items must be deaccessioned before they can be submitted to the disposal process.

The collection may contain items considered to be duplicates that are deemed unlikely to ever be required. However, consideration for disposal of all duplicates should be approved by the Board of Trustees in the same manner as all other significant items.

Context - History of the HAAF Trust collection

Until 2013, the HAAF collection of aircraft, spare components, tooling and associated equipment was solely owned by the UK MoD. As such, all operating costs were underwritten by the MoD. In 2013, the MoD withdrew support and thus, for the HAAF to continue, it was embodied as a charitable trust, with all assets gifted to the Trust by the MoD. The aircraft were transferred from the military register to the civilian register, with airworthiness

¹ Significant items constitute Aircraft, Airframes, Engines and parts that are either rare, or over the value of £300. Readily available items with a value up to £300 do not require referral to the Trustees, providing market value is obtained and the item is indeed readily available for the foreseeable future (eg still in manufacture). For rare/ irreplaceable items, and especially items with less than 50 years predicted stock level, all requests must be staffed through the Trustees, even small parts with low intrinsic value.



assurance transferred to CAA and LAA approved regimes as appropriate. All operating costs became the sole responsibility of the Trust.

The HAAF continues to acquire and operate historic army aircraft in order to preserve them for future generations and bring them to today's audiences in the most informative way possible.

The HAAF collection encompasses aircraft that were operated under the banner of Army Aviation from 1939 to present.

The HAAF delivers its charitable articles through acquisition, operation, public access, support to MOD outputs and support to veterans.

The collection facilitates the interpretive presentation of historic army aviation roles. The scope of the collection principally relates to British and Commonwealth army aviation; however, it is not limited to this and may expand to encompass allied and enemy forces where the value of doing so will enhance the charitable objects of the Trust.

Binding Principles

The Trustees should ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly, and with transparency.

The HAAF holds a collection of aircraft and associated spares in trust for the benefit of the public, military veterans and the MOD in relation to its stated objectives. The Trustees therefore accept the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items.

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy should only be made in exceptional circumstances.

The Trust should undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any item unless the Trustees are satisfied that a valid title to the item can be acquired. The Trust will not acquire any item unless it is satisfied that the item 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).

The Trust should confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors should also be taken into account. When disposal of an item is being considered, the Trust should establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation, such as the HLF. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant should be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale. When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below should be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange or as a last resort - destruction.

In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal should therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below should be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the Trustees should not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:

- The disposal will significantly improve the long-term benefit derived from the remaining collection.



- The disposal should not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit).
- The disposal should be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored.
- Extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken.
- The item under consideration lies outside the purpose of the established core collection.
- Due diligence is exercised to ensure that, where practicable, the item is sold to a non-profit organization and/or to further charitable objects aligned with those of the Trust.

The Trust may take control of items within its custody for which the Trust has taken temporary responsibility for an agreed and fixed duration and no transfer of title has taken place.

The HAAF Trust may not loan airworthy aircraft, whether short or long term, due to the complexities of continuing airworthiness, operating risk, reputational risk, insurance and third-party liability.

Acquisition - Themes and priorities for collecting

In early 2023, the Board of Trustees confirmed a co-operative business case to align with the heritage, veteran and commemorative objects of the MOD through Army Aviation Heritage (vested in the Army Flying Museum) and the MOD DBS supported Veteran portfolio. The Board initiated three collection development strategies, one for each epoqe represented by the collection:

- Second World War and Mid-20th Century, covering 1939–1957.
- Cold War and Late 20th-Century, covering 1957-1989.
- Contemporary Conflict, covering 1989-Present.

These strategies define the Trust's vision and aspirations, outline the objectives to be achieved and shape a roadmap for achieving the plan.

A collection review must be undertaken whenever financial evidence indicates the on-going viability of an item is in question. The binding principle should be that each strategic development area is financially self-sustaining. If this condition cannot be satisfied, the Trustees should consider the on-going viability of accession, with associated targeted areas for acquisition and disposal.

Acquisitions will be limited to those items that are of appropriate quality, significance, provenance, and afford sufficient output to deliver the charitable objects through the epoqe strategies. The Trustees should:

- Screen all potential acquisitions, with particular focus on those that have substantial resource requirements.
- Sanction all disposals of capital items, to specifically include complete aircraft, airframes, major components/assemblies, components exceeding £1000 in value and scarce/rare components of any value.

The Trustees recognise that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined should be through an annual formal review that clearly identifies which assets are included in the review at the outset.



The outcome of the formal review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection. The process should be documented, open and transparent. There should be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

Peer Organisations

The Trust recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museums Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal. The Trust should take account of the collecting policies of other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It should consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise, or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources:

- Service and unit museums.
- National Army Museum.
- National Museum of the Royal Navy.
- Royal Air Force Museum.
- Royal Engineers Museum .
- Royal Logistic Corps Museum.
- Tank Museum.
- Other museums within the scope of 'Army Museums', as appropriate.

Any decision to dispose of items from the collection should be taken by the Trustees only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the wider collection and collections held by other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields should be considered. Expert advice should be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the Trust should also be sought.

Disposal - Accountability

A decision to dispose of an item, 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 collection or for reasons of health and safety), will be the sole responsibility of the Trustees, as a board, acting on the advice of appointed post holders, and not of any trustee or volunteer acting alone.

Sale of an item may only be considered where it has been established that no other accredited organisation can demonstrate a legitimate requirement for the item, or where the item is commonly available.

Any monies received by the Trust from the disposal of items should be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collection. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions or retention within an appropriate account. Any monies received in compensation for damage, loss or destruction of items should be applied in the same way. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

Full records should 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.



The nature of disposal by exchange means that the Trust may be in a position to exchange items with another Accredited organisation. The Trustees should therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process. In cases where the Trustees wish to exchange items directly with Accredited or non-Accredited organisations or with individuals, other Accredited organisations which collect in the same or related areas should be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.

Disposal - Destruction

If it is not possible to dispose of an item through transfer or sale, the Trustees may decide to destroy it. It is acceptable to destroy items of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common items which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.

Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or where acquisition conditions are placed upon it by the donor.

Where necessary, specialist advice should be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.

The destruction of items should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the Trust. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, evidence should be obtained and retained in the archive.

Acquisition and Disposal Policy - Complaints

Members of the public wishing to register a complaint relating to an acquisition or disposal decision should do so in writing - by letter or email. It should be addressed to the Chair of the HAAF Board, Hangar 3, Army Aviation Centre, Middle Wallop, Stockbridge, Hampshire, SO20 8DY. The Chairman will investigate the matter in line with the HAAF Trust Complaints Procedure.