

Tripoli Research Safety Code

January 2012

1. Administration

1.1. Scope

- 1.1.1. This code shall apply to all individuals who wish to participate in Tripoli Research Launches.
- 1.1.2. This code shall apply to the design, construction, limitations to the kinds of propellants, their mass and power as used at a Tripoli Research Launch.
- 1.1.3. This code shall apply to other activities explicitly described herein as permitted at Tripoli Research Launches that do not involve the use of research motors.
- 1.1.4. This code shall not apply to the self-manufacture or process of manufacture of rocket motors or propellants for an individual's own use.
- 1.1.5. This code only identifies the requirements that are unique for Tripoli Research Launches. In areas where this code is silent, the requirements defer back to the Tripoli High Power Rocketry Safety Code for commercial launches.

1.2. Purpose

- 1.2.1. The purpose of the Tripoli Research Program is to foster the research and development of propulsion, payloads, electronics, recovery devices, air frame design, and construction materials.
- 1.2.2. It is the purpose of Tripoli to sanction and insure legal Tripoli Research activities as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation, Article III (a), (b), and (f).
- 1.2.3. The purpose of this code is to provide reasonable safety guidelines for the use of members of the Tripoli Rocketry Association at Tripoli Research Launches.
- 1.2.4. It is the purpose of this code to provide a means to introduce new technology or to include currently prohibited technology into Tripoli Research activities as the ability and expertise of these technologies becomes available.
- 1.2.5. This code is an extension to the Tripoli High Power Rocketry Safety Code. It is to be used to clarify the additional rules that govern Tripoli Research Launches. Fliers and launch organizers that participate in Tripoli Research Launches are governed by both safety codes.

1.3. Enforcement

- 1.3.1. This code shall be enforced according to the provisions set forth in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Tripoli Rocketry Association, Inc., and the operating rules approved by the Board of Directors (BOD).

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2. Referenced Publications

2.1. General

- 2.1.1. Some of the documents or portions thereof listed in this chapter are referenced within this code and shall be considered part of the requirements of this document except for such requirements modified or waived in this code.
- 2.1.2. TRA Publications. Tripoli Rocketry Association, Inc., P. O. Box 87, Bellevue NE 68005.
Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws
High Power Rocketry Safety Code
Tripoli Motor Testing Committee (TMT), Testing Policies
- 2.1.3. NFPA Publications. National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, P.O. Box 9101, Quincy MA 02269-9101.
NFPA 1122, Code for Model Rocketry
NFPA 1127, Code for High Power Rocketry

3. Definitions

3.1. General

- 3.1.1. The definitions contained in this chapter shall apply to the terms used in this code. Where terms are not included, common usage of the terms shall apply.

3.2. Tripoli Research Definitions

- 3.2.1. **BOD.** Board of Directors of the Tripoli Rocketry Association, Inc.
- 3.2.2. **Rocket Motor.** As used in this code, Rocket Motor shall refer only to Composite Propellant, Sugar Propellant, commercial black powder, and Hybrid Rocket Motor.
- 3.2.2.1. **Certified Motor.** Any commercial motor which has been certified by Tripoli Motor Testing (TMT) and/or NAR Standards and Testing (S&T) and/or CAR Motor Certification Committee, or at one time was certified and has expired, or has been decertified.
- 3.2.2.2. **Research Motor.** Any non-certified motor made for personal use that may or may not contain commercially available components. Research motors shall not be sold or distributed for a profit.
- 3.2.2.3. **Commercial Motor Approved for Research Use Only.** Any commercial motor that has been reviewed and approved by Tripoli Motor Testing (TMT) that exceeds the limits of total thrust limit identified in NFPA 1127.
- 3.2.2.4. **Composite Propellant Rocket Motor** Any device as defined under Rocket Motor that utilizes a propellant charge consisting primarily of an inorganic oxidizer dispersed in a carbonaceous polymeric binder.
- 3.2.2.5. **Hybrid Rocket Motor.** A rocket motor in which the fuel exists in a different physical state (solid or gaseous) than the oxidizer and that derives its force or thrust from the combination thereof.
- 3.2.2.6. **Sugar Propellant Rocket Motor.** A propellant charge containing potassium nitrate as the primary oxidizer, and containing either dextrose or sorbitol or erythritol as the primary fuel and binder.

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- 3.2.3. Research Rocket.** Any rocket flown from the Research / High Power Launch Area during a Tripoli Research launch.
- 3.2.4. Range Safety Officer (RSO).** A Tripoli Level 2 or Level 3 member who is responsible for the safety of the launch.
- 3.2.5. Launch Director (LD).** A Tripoli Level 2 or Level 3 member who has overall administrative responsibility for the launch.
- 3.2.6. Launch Site.** The primary parcel of land from which research activities are conducted and all adjacent parcels which are owned by the same property owner, or other property owners, and who have granted permission for Tripoli Research Launch activities to be conducted on their property. This includes the Research / High Power Launch Area, Model Rocket Launch Area and Preparation Area.
 - 3.2.6.1. Research / High Power Launch Area.** An area or areas designated by the Launch Director or Range Safety Officer from which research / high power rockets are launched or motors are static tested.
 - 3.2.6.2. Model Rocket Launch Area.** An area or areas designated by the Launch Director or Range Safety Officer from which certified model rockets are launched.
 - 3.2.6.3. Preparation Area.** An area designated by the Launch Director or Range Safety Officer in **which** rocket motors, research rockets, or electronic components for research rockets are prepared for launching or static testing.
- 3.2.7. Named Insured.** Individuals that are not Tripoli Members but are members of groups that have been submitted to, and approved by the Tripoli Insurance Liaison.
- 3.2.8. Tripoli Regular or Certified Launch.** Any Tripoli launch where only certified motors may be flown.
- 3.2.9. Shall.** Indicates a mandatory requirement.
- 3.2.10. Tripoli (TRA).** Tripoli Rocketry Association, Inc.
- 3.2.11. TRC** Tripoli Research Committee
- 3.2.12. Tripoli Research Launch.** Any Tripoli Research launch where research activities, as described in this code, may be conducted.

4. Limits of Liability

4.1. Use

- 4.1.1.** The use of all motors at Tripoli Research Launches shall be conducted in accordance with this code.

4.2. Disclaimer

- 4.2.1.** The Tripoli Rocketry Association does not in any way participate in the manufacturing or fabrication process of Research Rocket Motors or propellants.
- 4.2.2.** The Tripoli Rocketry Association does not regulate, approve, or officially support or endorse any propellant manufacturing or fabrication process, or in any way imply such approval.

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- 4.2.3. The Tripoli Rocketry Association does not endorse or provide any safety codes for the self- manufacture of any propellant.
- 4.2.4. The publishing or reporting of any research rocketry activity in any publication shall not imply TRA endorsement of any research activity or endorsement of any research manufacturing or fabrication procedure.

4.3. Legality

- 4.3.1. The Tripoli Rocketry Association does not claim Research Rocketry to be legal in every municipality or in every state.
- 4.3.2. Participants in the Tripoli Research program shall comply with all local, municipal, state, and federal regulations where said activities are conducted.

4.4. Insurance

- 4.4.1. The Tripoli Rocketry Association supports Tripoli Research activities where said activities are conducted legally.
- 4.4.2. Tripoli Research activities are only insured when the provisions of this code are followed.
- 4.4.3. No Tripoli member shall imply to any authority or landowner that Tripoli Research activities are insured when, due to not following the provisions of this code, they are not.

5. Exclusions

5.1. Black Powder Rocket Motors

- 5.1.1. Black powder-based research motors shall not be included as composites, regardless of binder and/or formulation modifications. Certified black powder motors are not excluded by this code.

5.2. Liquid Rocket Motors

- 5.2.1. With the exception of nitrous-oxide hybrid rocket motors, liquid rocket motors are prohibited at Tripoli Research Launches. BOD approval may be given for very well documented liquid motor projects.

5.3. Additional Prohibited Propellants

- 5.3.1. The following propellants shall also be excluded from Tripoli Research launches: double- and triple-based propellants, and micro-grain propellants, including zinc/sulfur propellants.

6. Process of Inclusion

6.1. General

- 6.1.1. A proposal for the introduction of new technologies and the inclusion of currently prohibited technologies into the Tripoli Research program shall be submitted, in writing, by one or more Tripoli Research members to the Tripoli Research Committee (TRC) for review, after which the proposal is forwarded to the BOD.
- 6.1.2. The originator(s) of the proposal shall provide any and all technical documents that may be requested by the TRC and/or the BOD.

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- 6.1.3. Following review, the TRC and BOD may set a time and location for a demonstration of the requested technology, as is deemed necessary by the TRC and BOD.
- 6.1.4. After demonstration and testing, the TRC and BOD shall determine whether or not to introduce the requested technology into the Tripoli Research program.
- 6.1.5. Acceptance of new technology shall be based on technical data, and/or on review of any federal regulations that may impact the association or the hobby with the inclusion of any new technology, and/or on the impact of said technology on TRA insurance coverage.
- 6.1.6. If the requested technology is introduced, the TRC shall recommend any necessary changes to this code to safely introduce said technology for Tripoli Research use.
- 6.1.7. Any new technology approved shall be used in accordance with this code and any future requirements that may be added to this code.

7. Tripoli Research Launches

7.1. Launch Scheduling

- 7.1.1. All Tripoli Research launches shall take place at a time which is to be separated from any other Tripoli Regular or Certified launch, or any other non-TRA launch, at that same site by no less than 8 hours and a change of calendar date.
- 7.1.2. Operating separate range heads at separate locations on the same or adjacent property shall not meet this requirement unless launch/firing times for Tripoli Regular or Certified flights (or any non-TRA flights), and Tripoli Research flights are separated by no less than 8 hours and a change of calendar date.

7.2. Participation

- 7.2.1. Participants entering the Research / High Power Launch Area at a Tripoli Research Launch shall be members of Tripoli in good standing and 18 years of age or older.
 - 7.2.1.1. **Exception:** Non-Tripoli Members age 18 and over that are students of an accredited educational institution may participate in joint projects with Tripoli members. These individuals are allowed in the research / high power launch area if escorted by a Tripoli member. The maximum number of non member participants shall not exceed 5 per Tripoli Member.
 - 7.2.1.2. **Exception:** Children younger than 18 years of age may conduct flights from the Model Rocket Launch Area under the direction of an adult Tripoli Member. These individuals are not allowed in the Research / High Power Launch Areas except for recovery of rockets launched from the Model Rocket Launch Area and only then if the Research / High Power Launch Area is open and no rockets are being launched from there.
 - 7.2.1.3. **Exception:** Named Insured individuals approved by Tripoli Insurance may conduct flights from the Model Rocket Launch Area. These individuals are not allowed in the Research / High Power Launch Areas. except for recovery of rockets launched from the Model Rocket Launch Area and only then if the Research / High Power Launch Area is open and no rockets are being launched from there.
- 7.2.2. Rockets may be launched from the Research / High Power Launch Areas only after verification that Children and other Named Insured individuals are not in the Research / High Power Launch Areas.

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- 7.2.3. All flights and static tests conducted by the member shall be within the member's certification level, with the exception of permitted TRA flyer certification attempts, using certified rocket motors.
- 7.2.4. All flights and static tests that use research motors shall be conducted by Tripoli members who are Tripoli certified level 2 or higher.
- 7.2.5. The member shall provide proof of membership and certification status by presenting their membership card to the LD or RSO upon request.
- 7.2.6. Group Project Participants
 - 7.2.6.1. All participants in a group project shall be Tripoli members in good standing, or invited guests of the Tripoli member(s) of the group project. All group projects must have a minimum of one Tripoli member in good standing as the flyer of record, with a flyer certification level sufficient for the installed impulse of the project.
 - 7.2.6.2. A person who makes the research motor(s) for a Tripoli Research group project may do so only if he/she is an official member of said group, and may collect only the costs (without profit) for materials used to produce the motor(s) for use in the group project.
 - 7.2.6.3. The person who makes the research motor(s) for a Tripoli Research group project shall be physically present at that Tripoli Research group project flight, and shall retain possession of the rocket motor(s) for the group project until such time as the motor(s) are installed.

7.3. Attendance by Non-Tripoli Members (Invited Guests and Spectators)

- 7.3.1. Non-Tripoli members are either invited guests or spectators.
- 7.3.2. Tripoli members shall be responsible for the conduct of their invited guests.
- 7.3.3. An invited guest (including non-Tripoli members of a group project) may be permitted in the Model Rocket Launch Area and preparation areas upon approval of the RSO but may not be present at the High Power / Research launch area (except as allowed in 7.2.1.1).
- 7.3.4. Spectators, who are neither TRA members nor invited guests, shall be confined to the spectator areas as designated by the RSO and shall not be present in the motor/rocket preparation areas nor at the launch site.
- 7.3.5. Invited guests or spectators who meet all the other requirements of this code may have access to these restricted areas if they join TRA and have the permission of the RSO and the person or group personnel involved in a project.

7.4. Prohibitions

- 7.4.1. Research motors shall not be used for certification flights.
- 7.4.2. Research motors shall not be fabricated of steel or other frangible materials.
 - 7.4.2.1. Cases (including hybrid cylinders), front and rear closures, and nozzles shall not be fabricated of steel.
 - 7.4.2.2. Screws, washers, compression rings and related closures, and sealing devices shall be exempt from requirement 7.4.2.1

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7.4.3. No range activity shall be conducted when a thunderstorm has been sighted within ten miles or less of the launch site or if audible thunder or lightning is present.

7.5. Distances

7.5.1. The maximum launch altitude for flights containing research motors shall be 90% of the waiver altitude established for the launch.

7.5.1.1. The BOD may waive this requirement when it can be demonstrated (by past performance, actual thrust curves, etc.) that the performance of the motor(s) to be used shall not exceed the limits of the waiver.

7.5.1.2. Computer simulations without actual thrust data derived from one or more actual test stand firings shall not satisfy the requirements of 7.5.1.1

7.5.2. The minimum safe standoff distance from the spectator area for the Model Rocket Launch Area shall be 50 feet (15 meters) .

7.5.3. The minimum safe standoff distance from the spectator and Model Rocket Launch Area for any research / high power flight and / or static test shall be per the table below.

Research / High Power Launch Area Safe Standoff Distances

Total Installed Impulse, N-s		Motor type	Non-Complex		Complex	
			feet	meters	feet	meters
0.01 to	1,280	A-J	200	61	250	76
1,280.01 to	2,560	K	250	76	350	107
2,560.01 to	5,120	L	300	92	500	153
5,120.01 to	10,240	M	500	153	1,000	305
10,240.01 to	20,480	N	1,000	305	1,500	457
20,480.01 to	40,960	O	1,500	457	2,000	610
40,960.01 to	890,000	P-T	2,000	610	2,500	762

7.5.3.1. The Launch Director or Range Safety Officer may, at their discretion, require greater standoff distances.

7.6. Tripoli Certifications

7.6.1. Tripoli certification flights shall be permitted at Tripoli Research launches only for fliers using certified motors.

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7.7. Launch Director and Range Safety Officer

- 7.7.1. The LD/RSO may, for any reason, refuse to allow the launch or static testing of any rocket motor or rocket that he or she deems to be unsafe.
- 7.7.2. Decisions of the Launch Director and/or the Range Safety Officer shall, in every case, be final.

7.8. Approved Motors

- 7.8.1. Research Motors, Certified Motors, and Commercial Motors Approved for Research Use Only shall be allowed at a Tripoli Research Launches.
- 7.8.2. Rockets containing a total impulse of more than 81,920 N-s shall not be flown without prior approval of the BOD.

7.9. Recovery

- 7.9.1. A rocket shall be launched only if it contains an active recovery system that is designed to return all parts of the rocket to the ground intact and at a landing speed at which the rocket does not present a hazard.
 - 7.9.1.1. Increased descent rates for Class 3 Rocket activities conducted at the Black Rock Desert venue are acceptable if needed to insure a controlled descent to remain inside the FAA approved Dispersion Area.

8. Waived Rules and Exceptions

8.1. Application for Waiver or Exceptions

- 8.1.1. Any provision of this code waived or excluded by the BOD shall be on a case-by-case basis.
- 8.1.2. Application for exceptions to any provision of this code shall be submitted in writing to the BOD at least 30 days prior to the activity covered by the exception.
- 8.1.3. In the event that BOD approval for waiver or exclusion from any provision of this code is granted, said approval shall apply only to a single event, at a single location.