

The OECD Tractor Codes and the past

Your country joined the Tractor Codes in 1988. What benefits and advantages has your country gained from the early membership?

R.H.: The United States joined the Tractor Codes in 1988. While much of the existing performance code at that time had been developed from the Nebraska Tractor Test Laboratory practices and procedures, Nebraska law was changed in this year to allow for direct participation in the Tractor Codes and to allow the use of OECD Tractor Codes for tractor testing. Early membership allowed tractor testing to become simpler as reciprocity with other OECD testing stations greatly reduced the number of foreign tractor tests performed at Nebraska. Further, the ability to perform protective structure testing using OECD codes has been a benefit for the North American tractor market.

Can you indicate key evolutions a few years after your country joined the Codes (security, noise, power levels...)

R.H.: The development of a hydraulic power test in the late 1980's was meaningful as by this time, hydraulic power had become a well used source of tractor power for implements. Participation in the OECD Tractor Codes was instrumental in gaining US government acceptance of the OECD developed static and dynamic ROPS tests also in the early 1990s. Although noise at the operator ear has been measured at the Nebraska Tractor Test Laboratory since 1970, the development of Code 5 for sound testing has been a part of the reduction in noise at the operator ear from 95+db in 1970, to levels seen today, often in the low 70 db range.

The OECD Tractor Codes and the present

The OECD Tractor Codes celebrated their 50th Anniversary in 2009. Now that 28 countries are Members of the Codes, what are, according to you, the key evolutions in the OECD Tractor Codes that new Members could benefit from?

R.H.: OECD Tractor Codes provide a consistent and internationally accepted method for providing farmers, dealers, and manufacturers with comparable tractor performance data that can allow the most appropriate tractor to be selected for a particular application. Further, operator comfort is enhanced due to the reporting of noise measurements of the tested tractor. Finally, and most importantly, OECD testing of protective structures insures users and regulating bodies that tractors complying with the OECD protective structure codes offer sufficient protection to the operator in the event of an over turn or falling object. In much of the world, tractor over turns account for the majority of serious injuries and deaths from accidents with agricultural tractors.



For the 50th Anniversary of OECD, Mr Roger Hoy, USA (Chair, OECD Tractor Codes), with his high level of expertise, provides his views on past, present and future of the OECD Tractor Codes.

This valuable statement is much appreciated in the context of the 50th Anniversary of OECD.

The OECD Tractor Codes and the future

The concept for the 50th Anniversary is “**Better policies for better lives**”. What are your views on future challenges and technological developments linked to the Tractor Codes? Based on your expertise and knowledge in the field, how would you see the evolution of the Tractor Codes in a changing environment, taking into account sustainable development, green growth, globalization, or international trade?

***R.H.:** Tractors have changed significantly in the past 50 years and there is no reason to believe that additional improvements will not occur in the future to address changing farming needs and new applications. 50 years ago, tractors delivered power only through the drawbar and often through a rather dangerous flat belt drive. Today, tractors still deliver drawbar power but they also deliver power through the PTO and hydraulics. It is reasonable to assume that electric power will become a power outlet that must be measured as well in the near future. Tractors have grown significantly in size and power and this growth is likely to continue as in some areas, fewer farmers are required to produce more output requiring higher capacity agricultural machinery. The additional power and weight brings challenges to OECD to insure that safety and performance codes remain relevant to continue to provide the assurances for farmers they have come to expect. Additionally, new risks will be identified with new technologies and farming practices that must be studied and addressed.*

(Continued)

*Mr. Roger Hoy, Chair,
OECD Tractor Codes.*