



**23 September 08**

**Ref: 08-005**

## **BSS EXAMINER NEWS**

**Dear examiner,**

Plenty of updates and new information this month, I hope you find this edition of interest.

### **Solid Fuel Stoves – Update**

Further to the article in BSS Examiner News 08-003, I can update you that the BSI working group responsible for developing the code of practice for installing solid fuel stoves in boats met recently to review a preliminary draft. There is good progress and subject to some testing to establish distances from a range of appliances to combustible surfaces, the standard should be ready to go out for public comment by the end of the year with publication of the code the following year.

One strong aspect of the code is that it will guide appliance makers to include detailed instructions on the fitting, use and maintenance of solid fuel stoves in boats. While we wait for the code please continue to direct your customers to the information about keeping safe with solid fuel stoves which has a prominent position on the 'Fire Advice Portal' on the BSS website.

The portal will soon be added to with additional and important information about boaters keeping safe from the 'over-firing' of solid fuel stoves. For more information visit our web site in the next couple of days [http://www.boatsafetyscheme.com/site/FirePortal\\_216.asp](http://www.boatsafetyscheme.com/site/FirePortal_216.asp) or watch out for coverage in the boating press.

This year so far we've only had reported three solid fuel stove incidents, whereas last year at this stage the number for the year was around seventeen. I like to think that the greatly reduced numbers of solid fuel stove incidents is down to us all spreading good safety advice; so please keep this up, and if you have any knowledge of incidents, or near misses, or if you harbour strong views on this subject please let me know.

### **More portable fire extinguishers certified under the Marine Equipment Directive**

Models of portable fire extinguishers marked with the ships 'wheel mark' of the Marine Equipment Directive are appearing in greater numbers. As you know the 'wheel mark' is one of the accepted certification marks for portable fire extinguishers listed in the ECP's at 6.1.2.



The Marine Equipment Directive ships 'wheel mark' on products ensures the free movement of marine equipment between EU member states and ensures the acceptability of products to maritime authorities. We at the BSS happily accept that safety equipment so marked, including portable fire extinguishers, will have been tested and have had its production control monitored in exactly the same way as if it had been certified by BSI or LPCB, for example.

Some portable fire extinguisher products newly available to the marine market are included in the annex to this newsletter.

A word of caution however to be vigilant when inspecting portable fire extinguishers for certification marks. Most manufacturers' also produce models that do not display an accepted certification mark because they have not been tested or accredited. Extinguishers not displaying an accepted certification mark are not compliant with the Scheme's requirements.

## **Results from the BSS examiner smoke alarm survey**

Thank you to the 22 examiners who have been helping us with a survey of the use and effectiveness of smoke alarms on boats. The 10 week survey finished last week and the results make interesting reading.

Firstly, before I get onto smoke alarms, it is important for me to stress just what an important role beyond the examination, examiners play in keeping boaters safe. One of the survey questions asked owners where they get their safety advice from. Over half the people asked said that their BSS examiner was one of the sources of safety advice.

Three-quarters of boats do not have smoke alarms fitted. Of the quarter that have, approximately 15% were not working for various reasons. That means that only 2 out of 10 boat crews are protected by smoke alarms and are at risk of not being woken if asleep when a fire breaks out on their boat.

Half the owners had never considered fitting an alarm and a third had never got around to doing it. A quarter didn't know which alarm to fit or where it should be fixed.

Obviously our recommendation that smoke alarms are critical safety devices needs to be 'shared' with a lot more boat owners. When you consider that alarm may have made a difference in three fires last year where people died and, this year, thanks to an alarm raising a neighbour, a boat was saved from probable total destruction, it is an important message.

As you have the 'ears' of boat owners, please do urge owners to act on the smoke alarm advice on the BSS website to fit an appropriate alarm and to test it routinely.

We are devising a smoke alarm strategy to increase the proportion of boats fitted with alarms to mirror that of homes. The strategy will be in partnership with the government 'Fire Kills' campaign, the fire and rescue services, the fire protection industries and other key players such as BSS examiners. You can expect more news on this in the coming weeks and months.

## **Update on the BSS Examiner electrical knowledge and understanding assessment**

As previously mentioned in BSS Examiner News 08-001, all examiners will attend training and/or assessment on electrical knowledge and understanding. The aim is to help enhance and to assess the general level of examiner knowledge of electrical risks in support of, and *appropriate* to, the BSS checking procedures and the onus on examiners to keep themselves safe.

It was planned to start running the courses from this Autumn, however because we have been let down by the original contracted course developer and because the new provider can't commit to get everyone through by the end of next March, we have now moved the dates back to the late Autumn of 2009, through to the following Spring.

The course is being developed in conjunction with the BMF and currently our intention is to see training/assessment sessions around the country at venues reasonably near to you. It is certain that the training course will be run over two days, however for those who consider themselves to have sufficient knowledge and understanding, there will be an option to simply attend an assessment over half a day. Those interested in being assessed only will be sent a sample questions paper intended to help with the decision to attend the associated training or not.

As with all re-assessment training, attendance and successful completion of the assessment is necessary in order to support re-registration from April 2010. The dates, venues and cost will be made known in a Spring edition of BSS Examiner News.

## **Logo change**

For quite while now the logo at the top of your BSS Examiner News has been different to the bold black background/white propeller and letters we normally use. From now on we will standardise on the new logo for the reasons that it saves on printer ink, the circular design means it is larger and clearer given a like for like space; the strapline is now incorporated within the logo and having it offset diagonally with the name, gives the design a dynamic feature.

### **Winter seminars planned**

It is planned to run compulsory BSS seminars around the country during January and into early February. The seminars will be used to introduce the new examiner website including demonstrating how to transfer private boat examination data using your home computer.

They will also be used to demonstrate the elements of the planned Examiner Technical Reference Manual and other examiner support features, and the seminars will provide a good opportunity for your feedback on the plans.

A 'practice' area of the site where you can become familiar with how to use the on line forms without worrying that you have pressed the wrong button will also be demonstrated.

The meeting will also be used to cover technical issues of your choice as drawn from the most frequently asked questions and any burning issues you may have. Should you have any technical issues you would wish to be covered, please let the BSS Office know by way of a brief email, or tell Dave the next time you speak with him.

More details on the Winter seminars will be included in the next edition of BSS Examiner News.

### **Capita to run the gas installer registration scheme**

The HSE have announced that Capita Group PLC will take over the gas installer registration scheme from CORGI from next April for a period of ten years. If you want to know more, the attached links will give further information.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/bidder.htm>

<http://www.capita.co.uk/media/Pages/rns-investor-news.aspx?id=1067>

I've already started a dialogue with Capita to push our demands for an 'inspector' class of registered gas operative.

### **Examiner website project update**

Progress on the new examiners website is accelerating with lots of positive activity during the last few weeks. Just to remind you that we are changing the BSS Office computer software systems enabling a new BSS examiner website which will be used by examiners to report examination results, order certificates and other materials, find answers to, and communicate BSS related technical information and complete annual registration activities.

The development of these systems is being assisted by a group of 10 examiners with varying levels of examining or computer experience. This group has all ready reported on the principles and overall objectives for the improvements and shortly they will be involved in development of the on line documentation

We have chosen to go forward using an existing tried and tested, "platform based" system and using a second company to integrate our documentation on to the base system. The first forms will be sent to the development group quite soon and we look to be on track to launch the website late November. Initially it will be used only by the development group until we are sure its working properly before we roll it out to all examiners.

The benefits of adopting a system used by hundreds of big and small companies across the world lie not just with the 24hr support availability, but the flexibility it offers to make a change if new improvements and useful suggestions are made at any time into the future.

So with your help this is a very exciting time as the possibilities to make a change to meet a need quickly and at minimum cost are real bonus features of the system. We will end up with an efficient, friendly, easy to use system in a relatively short time.

Best regards,



Graham Watts, **BSS Manager**

Portable fire extinguishers new to the marine market



**Fireblitz Extinguisher Ltd** announced that its FBP 1 and FBP 2 ABC dry powder units (having fire ratings of 5A/34B and 13A/70B respectively) are fully accredited to EN3 and carry the Marine Equipment Directive's 'wheel mark'.

Fireblitz is a new company established by the former management team of Firemaster who have over 30 years experience in the design, manufacture and supply of portable and self-contained automatics extinguishers for the commercial marine industry and pleasure boat market.

Fireblitz extinguishers are available from major marine distribution companies and chandleries.



**Delta Extinctors SA** of Belgium announced that their Vega, ABC Dry Powder, 1kg (8A – 34B) model is to be distributed in the UK sporting the Marine Equipment Directive 'wheel mark'.

The Delta unit will be available through car accessory shops.

MANUFACTURED AND FULLY CERTIFIED TO BRITISH AND EUROPEAN STANDARD EN3




- CONTROLLED SQUEEZE GRIP DISCHARGE FOR MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE.
- LOW RE-IGNITION RISK.
- NON-TOXIC AND SAFE IN CONFINED SPACES.
- NON-CONDUCTIVE TO ELECTRICITY.
- MULTI-PURPOSE USE, FOR DOMESTIC, CAR AND LEISURE USE.

THIS FULLY FEATURED EXTINGUISHER IS REFILLABLE AND WILL REMAIN SERVICEABLE FOR MANY YEARS IF MAINTAINED AS BELOW.

**MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS**

CHECK PRESSURE GAUGE PERIODICALLY, IF NEEDLE IS IN RED SECTOR RETURN TO MANUFACTURER FOR RECHARGE.  
BRITISH STANDARD STATES THAT EXTINGUISHERS SHALL NOT BE TESTED PRIOR TO USE, RECOMMEND INSPECTION ANNUALLY.  
RECHARGE AFTER PARTIAL/COMPLETE USE, AND DISCHARGE / REFILL 5 YEARS FROM MANUFACTURING DATE.

**IMPORTANT**

USE ONLY PRODUCTS AND SPARE PARTS IN CONFORMITY WITH THE AGREED MODEL FOR REFILLING AND MAINTENANCE.

OPERATING TEMPERATURE RANGE: -20°C TO +60°C  
WORKING PRESSURE: 14 bar PS: 16 bar  
EXTINGUISHING MEDIUM: 1 kg ABC POWDER  
PROPELLANT: OXYGEN FREE NITROGEN  
MODEL: GAB 100 YEAR OF MANUFACTURE: 2008

**Guardian Fire Limited** announced that its range of portable fire extinguishers have now been granted full EN3 by LPCB in a move which brings the Guardian and Vanguard brands of fire extinguishers into new markets.

The LPCB mark can be found on the back face of the units, see the copy of the screen-print opposite.

The fire ratings are 5A / 34B for the 1.0kg ABC unit, and 8A / 55B for the 2.0kg ABC.

Guardian / Vanguard extinguishers can be purchased at Halfords, Blacks/Milletts Stores, Wilco and other car accessory stores.

Note that some other Guardian and Vanguard models displaying the LPCB mark are rated for 'B' class fires only (flammable liquids), and such units are not compliant with BSS requirements which call for an 'A' rating as well as a 'B'..