

BSS OFFICE & EXAMINER SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

SLA Reference	
	<p>SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT</p> <p>Between</p> <p>The Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) Office</p> <p>And</p> <p>All BSS Examiners</p> <p>In conjunction with</p> <p>The BSS Examiner Bodies listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Association of Boat Safety Scheme Examiners (ABSE)• Yacht Designers and Surveyors Association (YDSA) <p>in respect of the</p> <p>BOAT SAFETY SCHEME</p>

1. INTRODUCTION	
a. Description	<p>This Service Level Agreement (SLA) sets out an agreement between the BSS Office and all BSS Examiners in conjunction with those BSS Examiner Bodies listed above.</p> <p>This SLA represents a commitment between the aforementioned parties and the contents are subject to annual review through the BSS Advisory Committee.</p> <p>This SLA is an informal agreement and nothing in the document shall be construed as creating any contractual obligations between the parties referred to herein.</p>
b. SLA aims	<p>This SLA supports jointly agreed aims and specifically covers the levels of service examiners can expect from the BSS Office and the standards and behaviours' which examiners individually will be encouraged to adopt.</p> <p>The agreed aim of compliant boats will be met through the success in achieving the common objectives. The SLA seeks to record the mutually beneficial relationship between the BSS Office and BSS Examiners that will help ensure the common objectives are met through a unity of purpose and direction and by working jointly to achieve them.</p> <p>It recognises the importance of examiners in ensuring compliant boats and so helping create a safe environment to help keep people on or near the waterways safe.</p> <p>The common objectives will be achieved through a culture of 'mutual respect', whereby encouragement and support from the BSS Office is mirrored by BSS Examiners reviewing their activities continuously, and making any improvements to their performance where inconsistency appears.</p>
c. Common objectives	<p>The common objectives are:</p> <p>(i) <u>the consistent application of BSS requirements</u></p> <p>The overriding objectives of this SLA are the consistent application of BSS requirements by examiners and an effective level of support from the BSS Office to help achieve this.</p> <p>The BSS examination and the subsequent certification of the boat are the 'products' of the examining process.</p> <p>The consistent application of BSS requirements by examiners provides the necessary assurance to the Navigation Authorities that certified boats have been verified as meeting their minimum safety requirements.</p>

	<p>(ii) <u>risk awareness for examiners</u></p> <p>Examiners who are better aware of the reasons behind the checks and the main risks affecting boaters will be better informed and so better able to support of the aim for compliant boats.</p> <p>(iii) <u>enhancement of confidence in the BSS</u></p> <p>Working together to ensure consistent examinations and good customer service will lead to an enhancement of the reputation and level of public confidence in BSS Examiners and the values of the BSS.</p> <p>(iv) <u>continuous review</u></p> <p>There is always room for improvement or to introduce further efficiencies. This objective filters through each of the core elements of the SLA outlined below.</p> <p>(v) <u>a realistic pricing structure</u></p> <p>The BSS Office is subject to occasional reviews to assure the Navigation Authorities that its tasks could not be done for less by some other body and that the cost of BSS examinations should present excellent value for money for boaters.</p> <p>(vi) <u>positive dialogue between BSS Examiners and the BSS Office</u></p> <p>Positive dialogue in support of the common objectives will help inform and motivate BSS Examiners and BSS Office staff to achieve them.</p>
<p>d. Core elements</p>	<p>All of the core elements listed in section 2 are relevant to the successful achievement of the common objectives. This SLA covers the following core elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documentation • quality assurance • customer service • two-way communication (including via the BSS Examiner web-support facility) • examiner administration facility (including BSS Examiner Registration and Material Ordering) • SLA review

<p>e. Performance criteria</p>	<p>Performance against the common objectives and the measures of success associated with each of the core elements will be monitored and measured by all parties through the BSS Advisory Committee and will be reported upon by that committee to the BSS Management Committee at least annually.</p> <p>Agreed “Measures of Success” relevant to the core elements are attributed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSS Office • BSS Examiners • BSS Examiner Bodies
<p>f. SLA change process</p>	<p>The BSS Office and the BSS Examiner Bodies agree to make any change recommendations regarding this SLA through the BSS Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Individual examiners may make recommendations for change through their Examiner Body or directly to the BSS Advisory Committee.</p>
<p>2. THE CORE ELEMENTS OF THE SLA</p>	
<p>a. Documentation</p>	<p>All parties agree that the effective nature and consistent and effective use of the BSS Examination Checking Procedures (ECPs) and BSS examination documentation is essential to satisfy the aim of consistent application of BSS requirements by examiners.</p> <p>Measures of Success</p> <p>The BSS Office will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide clear, concise, current BSS ECP’s and supporting documentation • provide and maintain up-to-date, controlled, BSS ECP’s and supporting documentation • provide simple examination documentation (web-forms and/or printed) • provide effective examiner technical support in respect of the ECP’s <p>BSS Examiners will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carry out consistent BSS examinations in accordance with the BSS ECPs • provide clear and complete examination documentation to customers

	<p><i>BSS Examiner Bodies will, through involvement at BSSAC:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help develop, review and refine the ECPs <p><i>Joint Aspirations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure high quality, consistent BSS Examinations • enhance the reputation and level of public confidence in the BSS
<p>b. Quality Assurance</p>	<p>All parties agree that it is essential that the BSS has effective quality assurance measures to help meet the goal of the consistent application of the BSS requirements. Both the BSS Office and the BSS Examiner Bodies are committed to ensuring the delivery of consistently high quality BSS examinations.</p> <p>It is agreed that BSS quality assurance measures will generally be used to support and encourage examiners to achieve the highest levels of performance at all times.</p> <p><i>Measures of Success</i></p> <p><i>The BSS Office will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitor and report on the effectiveness of its activities and act on any need to improve BSS guidance, information, online improvement and presentation opportunities or examiner training, as identified • operate and maintain a robust Quality Management System (subject to periodic review through the BSS Advisory Committee) • apply quality assurance measures consistently and in accordance with the published BSS procedures • provide clear, concise, current BSS ECPs and supporting documentation • provide trained and competent quality assurance assessors • continuously review the effectiveness of examiner training • endorse and assist the Examiner Bodies in the provision of training <p><i>BSS Examiners will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accept a continuous self-improvement role aimed at the consistent application of BSS ECPs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-operate with quality assurance measures <p><i>BSS Examiner Bodies will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage their members in respect of their individual continuous self-improvement role • through the BSS Advisory Committee, help develop, review and refine the BSS Quality Management System • through their communication processes, support and distribute to their members any relevant information for improving the consistency of examinations and customer service standards • offer support to members subject to specific quality assurance measures <p><i>Joint Aspirations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure high quality, consistent BSS Examinations • enhance the reputation and level of public confidence in the BSS • continuously monitor the impact of the quality assurance procedures • through joint working, reduce risks • aim to make compliance easier, fostering a culture whereby an examiner can be encouraged to proactively use the BSS Examiner web-support facility or seek advice on examination procedures and requirements • aim to resolve queries, issues and complaints as near to the source as possible, only escalating where necessary • explore the opportunities for enhancing examiner self-improvement
<p>c. Customer Service</p>	<p>All parties agree that good customer service ensures ‘customer’ understanding, develops customer confidence and ensures customer expectations are met. ‘Customers’ can be any individual or group that is the ‘intended ultimate beneficiary’ of the service provided.</p> <p>Good customer service from BSS examiners to boat owners has many benefits but, for the purposes of the this SLA, the primary importance is that it impacts upon the attitude of boaters to their specific examiner, examiners in general, the BSS in general, Navigation Authority regulations and ultimately on customer attitudes to safety. Therefore good customer service is crucial in delivering boater respect for examiners, endorses the reasons behind the checks and fosters an enhanced safety awareness culture.</p> <p>It is understood that in the context of this SLA, the Examiner is a customer of the BSS Office.</p>

Measures of Success

The BSS Office will strive to deliver the following customer service performance standards:

- review, maintain, develop and continuously improve the BSS Examiner web-support facility
- *maintain technical telephone support for examiners between 8.30am and 5.00pm during the working week.*
- *provide a voicemail message service 24 / 7. Messages left on the voicemail messaging service will be acknowledged within a working day.*
- *reply to e-mails within five working days (with the aim of same day turn-around, making allowance for weekends and Bank Holidays).*
- *reply to postal enquiries within five working days. If the solution requires involvement of third party or BSS committees, then the enquirer will be notified and will be updated with periodic progress reports.*
- acknowledge and/or answer general technical enquires within one working day and if no full answer is immediately available, provide guidance to enable any examination to be completed. If the solution requires involvement of third party or BSS committees, then the enquirer will be notified and will be updated with periodic progress reports
- provide and maintain an up-to-date knowledge-base of technical enquiries and associated actions.
- *meet online requests for BSS examination materials within four working days of receiving the request, (with the aim of same day turn-around, making allowance for weekends and Bank Holidays).*
- publish technical updates/newsletters to examiners via the BSS Examiner web-support facility on a routine basis
- action reports of dangerous boats within a working day
- *contact the examiners regarding specific quality assurance measures (field assessments, 'mystery shopper' examinations) within 14 days of receiving report from a field assessor / 'mystery shopper' contractor.*
- provide a clear route for examiners to complain about any failure of the BSS Office to deliver examiner service standards

In addition, BSS Office will:

- deliver a professional service in an open, considerate and respectful way
- actively support any agreed customer service protocols for examiners, promoted by Examiner Bodies

	<p>BSS Examiners will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice good customer service standards with boat owners in all written, verbal and face-to-face dealings • in the event where a technical enquiry cannot be immediately answered by the BSS Office, provide as much detail as possible to the boat owner together with an anticipated timescale/appropriate answer, as guided by the BSS Office <p>BSS Examiner Bodies will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the importance of good customer service standards <p>Joint Aspirations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deliver customer service standards that engender a culture of compliant boats and encourages positive boater attitudes and behaviours • provide an accessible, open, considerate, respectful, timely and professional service • provide a clear explanation of the requirements • ensure the delivery of decisions that are proportionate, appropriate, fair and shared by all • provide an environment without fear of retribution when decisions are challenged • provide clear guidance on how concerns can be elevated to the next level
<p>d. Two-way communication via the BSS Examiner web-support facility</p>	<p>All parties agree that the BSS Examiner web-support facility will be the primary means of communication between the BSS Office and BSS Examiners and vice versa.</p> <p>It is agreed that the material provided on the BSS Examiner web-support facility and the routine use of the facility is essential to the aim of the consistent application by examiners of BSS requirements. The need for specific and timely communications to examiners and for examiners to act upon said communications is equally accepted.</p> <p>The ease of interpretation of the BSS requirements and the timely dissemination of information supporting this is agreed as fundamental to creating an examiner conformance culture. We jointly aim to make conformance easier than non-conformance, by working together to establish a clear and coherent interpretation of BSS requirements</p> <p>In support of the aim for compliant boats, it is agreed that the web-support facility will also be used to inform examiners of the key BSS safety awareness messages for examiners and recent incident data. It is equally agreed that examiners will help inform future BSS awareness information by contributing to occasional surveys of examiner knowledge.</p>

Measures of success

The BSS Office will:

- provide technical and policy guidance online
- provide BSS examination documentation online
- provide a facility to order examination materials online
- ensure website material is up-to-date and alert examiners of all essential changes, e.g. ECP changes
- provide routine technical updates and news articles of interest
- provide a web 'clinic' facility and publish Examiner FAQs and the answers
- upload 'black museum' photos
- publish in one place all guidance relevant to the provisions of the conditions of examiner registration
- provide formal consultations on any proposed changes to the conditions of examiner registration online
- upload occasional simple survey web-pages for completion by examiners
- provide a facility to view and book training courses
- inform examiners of key BSS safety awareness messages affecting them and recent incident data
- provide a facility to make a complaint about the level of service provided by the BSS Office
- continuously review the effectiveness of the web-based support facility for examiners

BSS Examiners will:

- visit the BSS Examiner web-support facility on a routine basis
- respond constructively to requests for input/information/participation in BSS surveys and consultation exercises
- participate constructively to online improvement and presentation opportunities
- use the material ordering facility in a timely and effective way
- suggest improvement to the BSS Examiner web-support facility

	<p><i>BSS Examiner Bodies will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage their members in respect of the 5 items listed above • accept a role in owning and communicating processes, initiatives, and interpretation decisions • through involvement at BSS Advisory Committee, help develop, review and refine BSS Examiner web-support facility <p><i>Joint Aspiration:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to develop a professional quality BSS Examiner web-support facility which will encourage and enable BSS Examiners to operate safely and efficiently, and in full conformity with BSS requirements.
<p>e. Examiner Registration, BSS Examination Recording and Material Ordering</p>	<p>All parties agree that there is a need for an efficient registration process. It is also agreed that BSS examination material ordering and examination recording online, is a means to provide an efficient and reliable process.</p> <p>BSS Examiners should expect an inherently reliable online administration facility and it is accepted by all parties that failures of this system could have a detrimental impact on examiner customer service</p> <p><i>Measures of Success</i></p> <p><i>The BSS Office will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a timely and effective system for processing applications for BSS examiner registration and authorisation • provide clear details of the criteria for registration (i.e. annual registration fees, conditions of examiner registration, etc.) at least one month prior to the re-registration date • provide an effective online system for BSS Examiners to order BSS examination materials • provide an effective online system for BSS Examiners to enter details of BSS examinations carried out <p><i>BSS Examiners will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply for registration online in a timely, accurate and complete manner • submit online orders for BSS examination materials in an accurate and timely manner • enter online details of BSS examinations as soon as practicable after the examination has taken place and in a manner compatible with the needs of the Navigation Authority.

	<p>BSS Examiner Bodies will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support members to fully and accurately complete online and on time, BSS Examiner registration • support members to complete online orders for BSS examination materials in a timely manner • support members to enter details of BSS examinations carried out as soon as practicable after the examination has taken place <p>Joint Aspiration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • optimize the BSS online system to achieve jointly beneficial cost-saving measures
<p>f. Improving the SLA</p>	<p>It is agreed that performance against the common objectives and the measures of success associated with each of the core elements will be monitored and measured by all parties through the BSS Advisory Committee and will be reported upon by the committee to the BSS Management Committee at least annually.</p> <p>The BSS Office and the BSS Examiner Bodies agree to make any recommendations to revise the terms of this SLA through the BSS Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Individual examiners may make recommendations for change through their Examiner Body or directly to the BSS Advisory Committee.</p> <p>The BSS Advisory Committee can make recommendations concerning any conflicting revision suggestions to the BSS Management Committee.</p> <p>Joint Aspiration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • this SLA will be continuously improved in support of the agreed common objectives
	<p>This SLA is supported by the following bodies:</p>
	<p>Signed and Dated:</p> <p>Signed Date: for the Association of Boat Safety Scheme Examiners (ABSE)</p>

Signed Date: for the Yacht Designers and Surveyors Association (YDSA)

Signed Date: for the Boat Safety Scheme Office