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## BSS EXAMINER NEWS

Dear Examiner,

This edition of BSS Examiner News provides an update on online examination reporting, looks at some potential impacts of the Govt's spending review and updates examiners concerning the end-capping FAQ contained in BSS Examiner Technical Newsletter TN 01.10. It also asks for your help on the subject of the effectiveness of petrol filler connections and covers CE marked boats.

### **Online examination reporting - update**

Online BSS examination reporting is being rolled out to all BSS examiners. Nearly half of all examiners are either reporting examinations online or are trying out the facility in the online 'sandbox' practice facility. Around 4000 examinations have so far been entered on to the system by examiners. It is planned that all examiners will be reporting examinations online by the end of the year and so if you have not yet been contacted, expect to be so very soon.

The roll-out is going is going OK and my advice if you are one of the examiners yet to be contacted is not to worry unduly about the shift and, once you are contacted, to follow the guidance about how to report examinations online to the letter. Once you have read the guidance, please make the effort to try inputting some made-up boats in the 'sandbox' and you'll soon become familiar with how to do it. If you get stuck you always have Rob (07710 175478) or Phil (07917 185539) to call upon for support. If you are a member of ABSE then consider giving ABSE Vice-Chair Iain Jones a call.

Once all examiners are reporting online it is planned that Phil and Rob will attend ABSE regional meetings to demonstrate hot tips, advanced features and to help iron-out any difficulties examiners may be having. ABSE and non-ABSE examiners will be invited to come along and share their experiences. So all examiners should stand by for more information on these meetings in the near future.

It is important to emphasise that all future developments such as the replacement for BSS Certificates, Appliance Records and Report Forms are not at this stage being implemented and will wait until everyone is reporting online. So keep using BSS examination report forms, Form Es and completing the BSS Certificates and Appliance Records. The only immediate impact for you when you start reporting online is that you will no longer need to provide monthly returns. All future developments will receive careful consideration and will involve examiner body representatives on the BSS support committees.

### **Updating your own personal details on the BSS website – a facility very soon**

You should receive an email shortly asking you to check your details on Salesforce and update them where necessary or appropriate.

Our reason for asking is to support the next development of the examiner search facility on the BSS general public website. The new version will be extracting details directly out of Salesforce instead of the current manual intervention and thus what you see on the Salesforce current details page will be what the public sees.

Initially the public will only see your name, your home town and your phone numbers, but there will be an option for the searcher to expand the details to all the information you have completed in the 'public information' fields on Salesforce including your membership of bodies.

One of the other requests we have had from boat owners is the request to filter on those examiners who can examine non-private boats. The new search will provide that facility.

## **The BSS Examiner Service Level Agreement launch is welcomed**

BSS Examiner Service Level Agreement (SLA) is now launched following its ratification by the BSS Management Committee. The SLA provides the foundation of a new working relationship between the BSS Office and all BSS Examiners, which is both positive and mutually beneficial.

The SLA sets out the levels of support and service examiners can expect from the BSS Office as well as the standards and behaviours examiners individually will be encouraged to adopt.

The SLA is commended to all examiners. The goal is support and encouragement for examiners from the BSS Office aimed at achieving the consistent application of BSS checking requirements, mirrored by BSS Examiners reviewing their activities continuously, and making any improvements when and where inconsistency appears. The BSS Examiner support website will increasingly become the tool to deliver consistency and the SLA can be viewed on the site by following this link. - [Link to BSS Examiner SLA](#)

The BSS Advisory Committee are tasked with monitoring the impact and success of the SLA and so if you have any comments provide them to your representative on the committee or to the BSS Manager direct in order that he can represent your comments at the committee.

## **Intended change of status for British Waterways, and the Govt 'spending review'**

The Coalition Government has announced its intention to change British Waterways' (BW) from a public corporation into a new civil society, or charitable body. The new body is intended to be up and running by April 2012. Any decisions about the future of Scotland's waterways run by the BW successor will be a separate decision for the Scottish Government.

At this stage it is too early to say if the BSS Office will continue to be administered by the BW successor after 2012 but BSS Examiners should be re-assured that there is no suggestion that the move will affect their role.

We are all likely to know more about any impact on the Environment Agency's (EA) navigations and other Govt. funded navigations, as the impact of the Govt 'spending review' becomes known over the next few weeks. What we now know is that Defra's budget is to be reduced by 30% over the four financial years from 2011/12 to 2014/15, a reduction that will be absorbed by the Department and shared across its arms length bodies such as BW and EA.

The BSS Office anticipates 'business as usual' for the foreseeable future but as with any other department administered by BW, it is certain that the BSS Office will be affected by the Govt. spending review. For example we are already subject to spending restrictions.

BSS Office staff are analysing budgets for additional cost and spend savings and are looking for more efficiencies including talking with examiner and other stakeholder bodies about areas of mutual dealings where things may have to be done differently if we are to fill a potential gap in the provision of safety awareness for boaters.

## **Technical Newsletter TN 01.10, FAQ03 – LPG pipe end-capping decision**

You will recall that Technical Newsletter TN 01.10 was issued to all examiners at the end of May. The form of LPG pipe end capping as described at FAQ03, Fig1 as non-compliant was identified by some examiners as very common practice and requests were received to clarify what examiners should do if such capping arrangements are found.

Members of the BSS Technical Committee looked at the FAQ and examiners were advised in June to consider the FAQ to represent best practice advice and not to record a failure at 7.8.5 if a cap as described at Fig1 is found. It was indicated that the decision on the FAQ would be made known in due course.

The decision is that, insomuch as the use of plumbing fittings for end caps is concerned, it was agreed that FAQ03 should be withdrawn; and for the purposes of the BSS examination it was decided that provided the LPG tightness test was passed, then for the time being, this would be acceptable.

## **BSS course intended on 2002 Checks including Part 10 - interested?**

If you are a 'new' examiner not yet authorized to examine non-private boats or as a refresher for 'older' hands we hope to run at least one examiner training/assessment event next Spring to the 2002 Examination Checking Procedures (ECPs).

Before we move to develop this course I need to know the level of interest in attending and so if you are interested please contact the BSS Office and before the end of November.

The course will take two days and will be open to all examiners. If enough people want to do it, we would hope to run it in February 2011. While we will keep costs as low as possible, the final price will depend on the number of participants. The course will focus on the 2002 ECP's and how they differ from the 2005 ECPs, namely:

- differences in checking methodologies including the focus on standards rather than the risk-approach adopted for the 2005 ECPs;
- all advisory checks to be applied to non-private craft, Parts 2 to 9;
- the additional requirements (a small number);
- Part 10 section specific to non-private craft;
- exemptions based upon date of manufacture;
- the different examination reporting procedure.

Please remember, this course must be considered as interim because when the MCA/BMF/ AINA Hire Boat Code is implemented, there may be a need to re-train/assess interested examiners to the new requirements. For example, the current indications are that British Waterways will implement provisions from the Hire Boat Code in 2012. If you are interested, please contact us.

## **Petrol risks and petrol filler hose connections – share your experiences**

In recent months the BSS Office has been active in promoting safety awareness to boat owners concerning petrol fuelled boats. Key messages include owner's routine self-checking of petrol system components from filling point to carburettor or fuel injectors and specific advice to check for leaks at fuel pipes, joints, hoses, fuel tank connections, and other fuel components every time the boat is used. More information is to be found in our March 2010 media release. See also the release about petrol generator use, etc.

[http://www.boatsafetyScheme.com/site/current\\_208.asp](http://www.boatsafetyScheme.com/site/current_208.asp)

As part of our ongoing review of petrol system hazards the BSS is currently looking at some potential risks associated with poor petrol filler hose connections at the deck plate and tank spigot. It is essential that we take account of the experience and knowledge of BSS Examiners if the conclusions we draw are to be accurate and supportable.

According to one hose manufacturer and one major hose supplier, particular issues to look out for are the method of clamping new or replacement 're-inforced' filler hoses and the propensity for filler hose as it ages to loosen its adhesion to the fuel tank and deck plate spigots especially when the hose is in contact with an aggressive fuel such as petrol.

It follows that for owners who may decide to opt for low-cost clamps or even to re-use existing clamps on a replacement re-inforced filler hose, the use of standard 'jubilee' clamps is unlikely to form an effective seal. Bolt clamps of the 'Mikalor' type, or maybe 'Hi-torque' clamps, having a wide band width and raised edge to protect the hose is what is being recommended. The use of double clamps on a filling hose used for petrol is also recommended.

You can help by applying check 2.2.1 diligently, including at any re-examination and letting us know if you have come across circumstances that could have resulted in a petrol fuel or vapour escape from an ineffective filler hose connection.

The information we collect from examiners will be used to help keep people safe.

## **CE marked boats – new BSS compliance solutions and support for Trading Standards**

New BSS compliance solutions: The relationship of the BSS with the Recreational Craft Directive has come under the spotlight recently and a change has been agreed that affects your BSS examining role.

The BSS Office is becoming lighter on its feet concerning in handling the potential conflicts with CE marking and our need is to intercept any potentially new or innovative methods of BSS compliance presented to examiners during examinations in order that they can be assessed in short order.

At present the instruction to examiners is to contact the BSS Office when any items on a newly examined CE marked boat are found to be apparently non-compliant; and, the owner expresses an intention to contest the fault on the grounds of the items were in place at the time the builder CE marked the vessel.

This guidance continues to be in force, but there is now an additional instruction. You must let us know if you find an installation practice, or a piece of equipment that does not appear to align with the BSS Examination Checking Procedures, but may, on the face of it, present a novel way of meeting a BSS General Requirement.

Relax, this doesn't mean ringing the office every time a fault is found on a CE marked boat as it is recognised that a significant proportion of CE marked boats having BSS faults may never have been RCD compliant, or they may have been altered in the intervening 4 years or less.

This simply means we are striving at an early opportunity to identify new ways of meeting BSS compliance. The aim remains to ensure safety on the waterways without unnecessarily affecting the owner's ability to licence and use his/her boat, and the fast-track review supports that. Any accepted new installation methods or new bits of kit can then become compliance options for other boat owners.

BSS to support Trading Standards role: At a recent meeting with Trading Standards a request was made to the BSS Office to support its RCD enforcement role, which the BSS Management Committee agreed to. It is intended to share trend data from BSS examinations that has only been made possible with the introduction of online examination reporting.

The common aim in so doing is to help Trading Standards identify any trends in respect of apparent construction and installation misalignments with the standards to which the builder has declared. In support of this decision, the only onus on examiners remains to accurately record and report any faults found at an initial BSS examination.

The BSS Office has also committed to provide a central contact at Trading Standards relevant information concerning CE marked boats from BSS incident data or known compliance shortfalls presenting a significant and immediate safety risk.

Best regards,



Graham Watts, **BSS Manager**