



2 February 09

Ref: 09-001

BSS EXAMINER NEWS

Dear Examiner,

Firstly, a happy New Year to you and I hope, a prosperous one...

Will the recession mean less BSS examinations....?

...well possibly, but only if boat owners don't use their boats and don't need to licence them. In fact we've looked closely at the cyclical trends in the numbers of BSS Certificates issued over the last few years and we predict that the numbers of certificates issued this coming year will turn out to be much the same as last year if not slightly better; however, there could be regional differences. Of course you are in the best place to judge, so if you think we are way off or spot on with our prediction please let us know.

The Examiner website is about to be launched

The new BSS Examiner website will be open to all examiners to enter and become familiar with very soon; so stand by for an email from Tracy during February inviting you to 'click on a link'!

Initially the site will be a very limited 'dummy' site intended only to help you become familiar with how the site will look and in particular how you must record BSS examinations from 1st April. To this end, we will be providing a simple tutorial guide to help you navigate your way through and once you are connected to the site you are strongly urged to practice entering examination information using the web forms.

Once you receive the email, to gain access to the site you will need to closely follow the instructions, enter your contact details, choose a password and then enter the site. Providing these details will allow you to enter the site at any time. Remember that all examiners will use the site to re-register from March.

Remember also that until April the site will be a dummy site and so for all of February and March the following will apply:

- you will still need to record all examinations in the normal way using BSS Report Forms or Status Report Forms and you will need to send in monthly returns;
- you will still need to request BSS Certificates or other BSS items in the normal way, preferably by email;

Until further notice Status Report Forms completed for non-privately owned and managed vessels under the 2002 checks must continue to be sent in as hard copy as at present.

After April many more features of the website will start to appear aimed at supporting you in your examiner role. There will be more on this in the next BSS Examiner News.

Also, expect more information soon about the change from 1st April to online reporting of private boat examinations and the need for the online reports to follow shortly after the examination and not to be delayed until the end of the month.

I trust the above is plain and that you are clear that the next step is to wait for an email from Tracy inviting you to follow instructions to gain access to the new BSS Examiner website.

When the time is right to re-register, you will receive another email from Tracy and once again, we will provide a simple guide on how to re-register.

We previously indicated that we would be holding Winter Seminars to introduce the new examiner website however, we have now decided not to hold these but rather we will react to any individual needs for support in other ways. So if having had a go on the site you feel far

from confident about re-registering online from March or about entering examination information from April, then let me know and I'll arrange support for you locally.

Lastly, I would like to express my thanks to the ten volunteer examiners who have been helping develop the examination reporting side of the site. I know a lot of effort has gone into weeding out the glitches and making the reporting efficient, but it all seems to be coming together now.

2008, a safer year for boaters (thank goodness)

Whilst touching wood and recognising that the higher risk winter season is upon us, I'm happy to report that last year involved fewer reported incidents on inland waterways than in 2007, about one third down, and with far less severe outcomes (only one fire death compared to 5 in 2007 and no CO deaths compared to 2 in 2007). I'll report to you in more detail in the new year, however in the meantime be heartened that we continue to have reports where portable fire extinguishers have been deployed and have either put out the fire or reduced the damage and spread.

Update on the BSS Examiner electrical knowledge and understanding assessment

As you know, examiners will attend training and/or assessment on electrical knowledge and understanding the late Autumn of 2009, through to the following Spring. I can update you that the development work is now almost complete and that the first pilot course is to be run in early March. I hope to be in a position to invite you to choose the date and venue of your course/assessment in the early Summer.

Leaving customers with the BSS Report Form

In recent weeks a number of customers have complained to us that examiners have not provided BSS Report Forms following the first examination leaving the customer unsure as to how to proceed and necessitating several return visits by the examiner with the associated extra cost and alleged delays in the issue of a Certificate.

Having spoken with the examiners concerned, I understand that there are always total justifications and good intentions involved in helping the customer to compliance. Nevertheless, the feedback we have is that boat owners expect detailed reports and find the report forms useful.

Please remember that the Report Form must be used to record the status of private boats at the first examination. Whether the boat passes or fails, its use is compulsory so please don't be persuaded to offer some kind of 'pre-examination' and think that the completion of paperwork is avoided - because it is not. Please also think carefully before agreeing to a 'quick look round the boat' because these circumstances have been related to complaints and in the case of a recent one, the complainant's expectation that he should have had full BSS documentation following the examiners visit.

Comment only on BSS technical compliance

I've been asked by the BSS Management Committee to remind BSS Examiners that when conducting BSS examinations on new or nearly new CE-marked boats, to focus purely on BSS compliance and not to comment about any perceived Recreational Craft Directive (RCD) non-compliances. Commenting about the level of RCD compliance, unless it is within your competence and usual aspect of your business, could draw you into any litigation. Any marine surveying, CE marking and RCD related work should always be subject to a separate contract to the BSS Examination so your separate roles are clear to your customer.

Best regards and good luck with the website when it arrives,



Graham Watts, **BSS Manager**