



19 February 09

Ref: 09-002

BSS EXAMINER NEWS

Dear Examiner,

This edition of BSS Examiner News asks you to prepare for an email inviting you to renew your examiner registration, informs you of the changes made that may affect your decision to re-register and outlines other factors you may need to address to ensure a smooth process.

Online registration

BSS Examiners can only apply to register online from this year and in very early March you will receive emails from Tracy setting up a link to the new examiner website and providing a simple guide on how to register. Once you have the registration page displayed you simply provide your contact details, but be careful to enter them correctly as the personal details you enter will appear on the public facing BSS website. You will also confirm your PI and PL insurance and your acceptance of the BSS Examiner Code of Conduct. Please take great care to enter accurately and fully the information required. Successful applications will be acknowledged by email but note also that registration won't be possible if you haven't entered all of the required details. Please register as soon as possible and before the end of March as late registration has serious implications. More information on how to ensure a smooth registration follows.

Examiner website update

In BSS Examiner News 09-001 I said that the new BSS Examiner website would soon be open to all examiners to view and become familiar with how to report examinations and order Certificates and report forms, etc.

As with all such projects our approach remains fluid and although we are in a position to open other parts of the website to you, we have taken advice from examiners close to the project and decided that a staged implementation would be better as it would permit examiners to gain familiarity and confidence with one part of the system before moving on to the next stage.

When you register online the system will be live, but at each stage after registration examiners will receive a simple set of step-by-step instructions on how to access each particular function and practice using it in the 'sandpit' area to try it out before the function goes live. As announced above, from early March examiners will be invited to use the registration function; from mid-April material ordering can be practiced with the intention of going live on 1st May. From mid-May examination reporting sandpit will open and this is intended to go live on 1st June, from which date all examination returns must be made online. It follows that examiners will continue to complete and return Report Forms and Monthly Returns until the end of May.

Other eagerly awaited website features such as technical and policy guidance material supporting the examiner role will be available on the examiner website when it is formally launched and will be added to and developed further over the coming months.

Small increase in registration fees

I can confirm that the BSS examiner registration fee will rise by £1.50 from £147.50 to £149.00 (inclusive of VAT). This rise takes account of inflationary costs at around 3% and the decrease in the VAT rate to 15%.

Once you have successfully registered you will be sent an invoice which should be settled in the normal way. For those with BW moorings or other accounts, please do not pay your annual registration by BACS transfer as it is very difficult to re-direct the funds to our account.

No need to send Identity Card passport photos this year

Your file photo will be scanned onto your new identity card. So there is no need to send us passport photos this year, unless you are contacted by Tracy because, for some reason, we cannot use your current photo in our records.

If you wish to change your photo, you need to send in a clear digital photo file of not less than 200kb size of your head and shoulders only, by Wednesday 4 March.

BSS Block Policy PI and PL insurance cover

Michael Hall Associates Ltd will very shortly be sending out the block-policy renewal information. I understand that professional indemnity (PI) and public liability (PL) premiums will likely be similar to last year's.

For any enquiries on the block policies please call Michael Hall Associates Ltd direct. Contact details are as follows; Stuart Clark, Michael Hall Associates Limited, Mason Chambers, Manchester Road, Haslingden, Rossendale BB4 5SL. Tel: 01706 836160, Fax: 01706 217177, Email, Stuart.Clark@michaelhallassociates.ltd.uk.

BSS Examiner electrical knowledge and understanding assessment

As mentioned in previous editions of BSS Examiner News, all examiners are to attend an assessment and optional training on electrical knowledge and understanding between late Autumn 2009 and the end of March 2010. Successfully passing the assessment is a pre-requisite of re-registering from April 2010.

We remain committed to minimizing the cost of training to examiners and at this stage we are looking at a 2-day course, comprising of 1½ day training and ½ day assessment. Our current expectation is that the 2-day course will cost between £150 and £200.

Examiners can elect to attend the full 2-day course or opt for the ½ day assessment without training at a reduced cost. If you feel your electrical knowledge and your application of BSS Part 3 and 4 checks is good then you may choose only to attend the assessment. In order to help you make this decision I will shortly be sending all examiners a self assessment question paper, if after viewing this list of questions you are not confident about answering them then you should elect to go on the training in advance of the assessment.

It is intended that the courses will be available within a reasonable driving distance from where you live however if you unfortunately can't make the date of the course nearest to you, you will be expected to travel further to attend an alternative course. If you elect to attend the assessment alone and you don't successfully pass it, your continued examiner authorisation will be at risk and you will be expected to attend a subsequent course to achieve a pass.

Late examiner registrations

Remember, if you are not re-registered by 1 April, you are not authorized to carry out BSS examinations, or to issue certificates. It follows that if you have not successfully registered online by 31 March, you must not issue any certificates and must cancel or postpone any BSS examination bookings you may have until you have confirmation of your registration.

Applications that are successfully completed after 1 April will be subject to an additional administration fee of £50 taking account of the additional costs of late registration.

Unauthorized examiners will not be listed on the BSS website until registration is completed.

Revised BSS Examiner Code of Conduct

Further to the BSS Examiner News 08-006 the BSS Examiner Code of Conduct has been revised and the 2009/10 version will be sent to you by email shortly and will be placed on the BSS website.

The revisions include the new 'behavioural' clause and are otherwise of a minor nature, adding clarity or further protecting examiners' interests. During the consultation period, we received comments from three examiners on the suggested changes.

All changes to the code are outlined in the annex to this BSS Examiner News and a copy of the comments received plus the BSS Office recommendations and comments specific to each is available upon request.

Please note that by clicking your acceptance of the code on the online registration application page you agree to be bound by the terms of the Code. The procedure for investigating complaints BSSQA006, has now been separated from the Code of Conduct and is to be reviewed in advance of the May meeting of the BSS Advisory Committee.

Other factors essential to ensure your registration

Evidence of Suitable PI & PL Insurances –

BSS Block Policy Insurance Cover – If you are on the Block Policy anticipate cover renewal information very shortly. All enquiries concerning the block policies must be directed to Michael Hall Associates Ltd (MHA) direct, contact details are included on page 2 above. Please send the completed PI &/or PL insurance proposal forms back to MHA as soon as possible. MHA will confirm your cover to us automatically.

Independently Arranged Insurance Cover – If you arrange either or both PI and PL insurance cover independently you must carefully check that the terms and the level of current cover is not less than the BSS Block Policies (currently £1m for both PI & PL) and that the policy is current as of 1st April. You must declare that these conditions of examiner registration are met and are correct when you register online. We may request that you send in copies of policy documents to permit us to verify the accuracy of examiner online declarations.

Please note that Employers Liability insurance is not the same as PI or PL insurance, it is a legal requirement on employers to cover against bodily injury, illness or disease sustained in the course of employment.

Monthly returns must be up to date – We will not be processing registration online applications from examiners whose monthly returns are not up to date and no further BSS certificates are being sent to those examiners now behind.

Outstanding returns cause problems for the navigation authorities; it makes efficient working very difficult for us and can cause problems for boat owners keen to renew their licence online, perhaps to enjoy early payment discounts. If you are behind, please ensure that your returns are up to date as soon as possible.

Not re-registering for 2009/10?

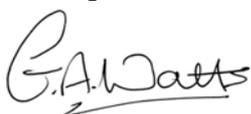
I am aware that some examiners may not intend to re-register this April. May I request that if you have decided not to register please confirm this in writing to Tracy as soon as possible. I would also be interested to learn of the reasons for your decision.

The Admin Team may need your help

As part of the move to the new way of collecting examination information our current certificate issue information must be moved from our old database to the new one. This sounds simple but for the new system to work smoothly the information transferred must be accurate and this means that Tracy and Kerry are engaged in a massive task to 'clean' the information and fill in any gaps in the data. As part of this task you may be contacted to provide certificate issue details from your records. If you are contacted please help by returning the information as soon as possible.

I look forward to a successful BSS Examiner registration process. If you have any questions or problems concerning your renewal please give Tracy a call at the BSS Office on 01923 201278.

Best regards,



Graham Watts, **BSS Manager**

Changes to the BSS Examiner Code of Conduct included in the 2009/10 version

The table below includes the changes to the BSS Examiner Code of Conduct. Amendments and additions are in bold dark blue font and deletions are in bold red and crossed through.

 - shading in the Ref. column indicates the item was included (as written) in the consultation documents to all examiners

 – shading in the in the Ref. column indicates the item has been included or amended as a result of the consultation.

Ref.	The nature of the change
General 	Replace ' Scheme ', with ' BSS ' throughout the document. <i>Comment from BW legal department for added clarity and consistency.</i>
1.1 	1.1 This version of the Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) Examiner Code of Conduct replaces that dated April 2008 2007 and all previous editions. <i>The amendment is essential as part of an annual update.</i>
3.3 	3.3 Examiners in their activities connected with the BSS shall treat all persons with respect, and must should ensure that they exercise the utmost care and sensitivity in all dealings with their customers. <i>New 'behavioural' clause reflecting the current absence of such a clause covering examiner conduct or customer service and the fact that an increasing proportion of formal complaints received by the BSS Office are about examiner behaviour. Consultation comments incorporated.</i>
6.4 	6.4 Examiners shall keep records of BSS examinations as required from by the BSS, including records of the issue of published safety related guidance to the owners of vessels. <i>Typo identified by an examiner during formal consultation.</i>
11.2 	11.2 Examiners are responsible for the safe custody of the items referred to under clause 11.1 of these loan items and any loss must immediately be reported to the BSS Manager. Any loss of blank BSSCs, Authentication Stamps or Examiner Identification Cards shall be reported to the appropriate police force. <i>Comment from BW legal department for added clarity and to ensure clause stands alone.</i>
11.3 	11.3 Examiners shall return all BSS items, including any unused BSSCs, documentation, Authentication Stamp, Examiner Identification Card and loaned equipment, within fourteen days of ceasing to participate in the Scheme or if requested to do so by the BSS Manager. The cost of the returned unused BSSCs will be refunded to the Examiner subject to this and other conditions under this Code. Where an Examiner fails to return items the BSS may take all reasonable steps to recover the items. The Examiner shall co-operate with any such recovery action and pay the costs. <i>The amendment reflects existing practice and commits the BSS Office to refunds in appropriate circumstances.</i>