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BSS EXAMINER NEWS

Dear Examiner,

This edition of BSS Examiner News provides an update on the examiner web developments; it asks for your help in providing full information if you contact the BSS Office with a fuel hose query and provides guidance on the maximum time period between examinations of a boat.

1. Examiner website update

At present the examiner website can be used to register and order materials. It has also been used to record responses to the portable fire extinguisher survey and book and view places on the examiner electrical knowledge course.

Shortly, you will be asked to check the personal details you initially provided for the BSS public website and a How to Guide will explain how to change existing information or add extra details to your profile on salesforce and the search for an examiner listing.

Within the next month or so the online examination recording facility will be launched and with this in mind I thought it was timely to explain what is happening in the background and when it is likely to be launched.

At present 15 examiners are helping the development of the facility in a 'test group' and they have input details from nearly 900 'real' boat examinations. Suggestions for improvements from test-group members have been used to refine the facility and this process is coming to an end.

Our commitment is to launch the online examination recording facility to all examiners as soon as the development stage is complete and this may be as soon as January and as late as March. It is planned for a staged release to examiners in batches.

From the examiners point of view the impact at launch will be to end the need for Monthly Returns and may aid the construction of reports to customers.

For us at the BSS Office it will mean we no longer need to manually record certificate details against boat details; it will help us control the issue of certificates; record and analyse examination failure points and confirm certificate information to any Navigation Authority.

At a future stage of the development the Appliance Record information and other of specific 'risk data' will be added to the feature. This stage can only happen once the Navigation Authorities have determined what information would help them manage this area of risk and their deliberations on this will commence in April.

I think it is timely to say that we must all keep at the forefront of our minds that the online examination recording initiative supports the Navigation Authorities' interests to introduce online licensing and increase the effectiveness of the BSS 'risk-management' role. On this last point, remember that by recording failure points online examiners will play key role in identifying risk trends.

It is fully appreciated that at the same time the interests of examiners will be taken account of, including minimising the administration burden where possible and recording the appliance status of boats to help answer any subsequent enquiry on this subject.

We plan to release the facility to a batch of around 40 examiners in January and presuming all goes well it is hoped to complete the launch to all examiners by the end of March.

Other eagerly awaited website features such as technical information, answering queries and policies and practices supporting the examiner role will start to appear in the Spring.

2. Examiner queries about fuel hoses

The BSS technical team quite often receive enquiries from examiners concerning the equivalence and suitability of fuel hose types. The enquiries are invariably in circumstances where the markings on the hose are not listed as acceptable in the BSS Examination Checking Procedures (ECPs). If you ever have the need to make such an enquiry it is important to provide full and precise details of the hose markings as this will help ensure the answer is swiftly and correctly returned.

When making a hose suitability enquiry please provide:

- a) a description of the hose function, e.g. fuel filler, vent or fuel supply or spill line;
- b) confirmation of fuel type, petrol or diesel;
- c) a general description of the hose e.g. hose colour, diameter, construction type;
- d) a precise description of the hose markings including manufacturer's name or logo, any numbers on the hose, any indication of certification body marks.

Any hose types found to be equivalent will be made known to all examiners and the hose check updated accordingly.

3. The maximum time period between your initial examination and re-examinations

The following is provided as policy guidance to examiners and follows deliberations at the BSS Management Committee about the maximum time period between your initial examination and associated re-examinations. Usually when re-examining a vessel which has had faults corrected after failing, examiners may just re-examine those items which were failed at the previous examination. This is provided that any re-examination is carried out within three calendar months and provided that the conditions listed below are applied and met. Re-examinations conducted more than three months after your previous full examination must be full examinations.

The BSS advice to boat owners is to address any non-compliance(s) as soon as possible and arrange re-examinations. The policy to allow a maximum three month period between your previous full examination and associated re-examinations, during which an examiner may just re-examine those items which were failed, helps strike a reasonable balance between protecting examiners in the event of any subsequent enquiry and allowing an owner a reasonable period to make the boat compliant.

The policy also takes into account such matters as winter lock closures and other stoppages preventing the movement of boats to boatyards, or an owner's personal circumstances such as long-term sickness, or working abroad.

This BSS policy is not intended to cut across the Navigation Authority's licensing interests concerning specific boats. For example, if a boat is on a waterway and requiring registration or a license which is dependent on a new BSS Certificate being issued, it is the Navigation Authority that must set the terms it sees fit to continue to allow the boat to use that waterway. This is not a BSS matter.

Applying this policy - In applying the policy, examiners must be mindful that by issuing the BSS Certificate they are certifying that at the date of the certificate issue, the boat was *found to comply with the navigation authorities' minimum safety requirements*.

The following conditions apply:

- in the event of a change of ownership of the boat between the your previous full examination and any associated re-examination, a full examination must be carried out;
- prior to any re-examination, you should enquire of the owner (or owner's representative) if any general works to the vessel or modifications to the boat systems, including any additions or deletions, have been made since your previous examination and record the answer;
- where subsequent general works to the vessel may have affected/disturbed previously compliant items, or if modifications to the boat systems are made known by the owner or the owner's representative, or if modifications are identified during the re-examination, then an examination of the complete system modified (i.e. gas*, electric), must be carried out irrespective of the interval since your initial examination;

- if when carrying out the re-examination it is obvious that non-compliance(s) have been introduced to items previously passed at an examination, then an examination of the complete system (i.e. gas*, electric) made non-compliant, must be carried out irrespective of the interval since your previous full examination;
**if there have been any modifications, additions or remedial works to the gas system made since an examination, a gas tightness test must be carried out upon re-examination, irrespective of the interval since the previous examination. The Appliance Record must reflect the latest tightness test and the appliances present at the time of the certificate issue.*
- where the faults found during your previous full examination were extensive, a full re-examination of the vessel must be carried out irrespective of the interval since your initial full examination. If in doubt about specific circumstances, seek guidance from the BSS Office.

I hope the policy guidance is clear, if not please let me know. Please apply the guidance from this point forward.

4. BSS Examiner electrical knowledge course

Around half of all examiners have attended the electrical knowledge course and the feedback from attendees indicates it's well worth attending with 83% giving it a mark out of 5 of either 4 (good) or 5 (very good).

As a reminder, the course is intended to help examiners identify, the range of electrical components likely to be encountered and apply the electrical BSS Examination Checking Procedures in a consistent way; *and*, to help ensure that examiners are able to identify, key electrical dangers especially those associated with marine AC electrical systems, in order to stay safe.

At the recent courses there was speculation about the possibility of new BSS checks being introduced following in the near future. I can inform you that a review of the fire and electrocution hazards presented by poorly installed or maintained 230 volt systems is with the BSS Technical Committee at the moment and if I were to use my crystal ball I predict that the BSS will introduce some additional checks concerning 230 volt systems in the next year or so. The course will stand you in good stead if, as and when those changes are introduced.

For those yet to attend I encourage you to view the joining instructions and extra details about the courses on the website. Also listed are those BSS Examiners attending each course, so take a look and see if car sharing is an option for you.

View the information by following the link: <http://application.boatsafetyscheme.com>. The username and password are case sensitive. The username is: **BSSExaminer** and the password is: **Brightspark**.


One or two examiners have queried the VAT element on the electrical course invoices recently sent out because 'vocational training' can in certain circumstances be VAT exempt. We've double checked this and confirm that VAT is chargeable and must be paid to comply with the law. It is only colleges and schools and other such 'eligible bodies' that need not charge VAT for vocational training.

I do apologise however, for not making it clear in earlier newsletters that VAT would be chargeable on the invoice and I commit to including this when outlining any future training course costs.

5. Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year

From all of us at the BSS Office, Merry Christmas to you and yours. And, in what is lining up to be another year of changes, have a prosperous New Year.

Best regards,



Graham Watts, **BSS Manager**