



22 February 2010

Ref: 10-002

BSS EXAMINER NEWS

Dear Examiner,

This edition of BSS Examiner News provides important news concerning an increase in the minimum level of PI and PL cover from £1m to £2m

Examiners better protected by increase in PI and PL cover levels

Professional indemnity insurance (PII) provides examiners with protection against potential claims of breach of professional duty. For example, where BSS documentation indicates that a boat is compliant with BSS requirements but that subsequently this was found not to be the case and some loss or injury was attributed to the BSS fault not picked up.

Public liability insurance (PL) provides examiners with protection against awards of damages given to a member of the public because of a personal injury or damage to property caused by the actions or inactions of examiners. For example, where the evidence is that an examiner stood on and fractured a fuel hose, or failed to properly tighten an LPG test-point nipple, and this action led to an incident.

As independent persons examiners are exposed to potential claims in respect of third-party injury, loss or damage arising from their boat examining activity. Enjoying an appropriate level of public liability cover is in an examiner's interest as it may protect them from claims against their personal assets.

Some marinas and boatyards require evidence of PL insurance before allowing examiners on to the site. Introducing compulsory PL insurance will allow access to these marinas and boatyards.

Customers may have an expectation that BSS examiners are covered by PL insurance as this will protect them in the event of damage or loss. Introducing compulsory PL insurance will align with customer expectations.

It is recognised that introducing compulsory PL insurance is an additional cost that may affect the viability of continued registration with the Scheme for some examiners. It is envisaged that a very limited number of examiners may identify the introduction of PL insurance as a reason to not continue their BSS registration.

It is recognised that many professional bodies, such as professional marine surveyor organisations, have required their members to have PII but few require PL insurance. Albeit that PL insurance amongst surveyors is perceived to be quite widely held.

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.

Update of your personal details on the web

Shortly you will be asked to review and update your personal contact details you provide to us and update and/or add extra details to your profile on the 'search for an examiner' listing BSS website. To help you with this task we will provide a short 'How to Guide' and it should not take you more than a couple of minutes online to complete. The task is important because it paves the way for a simple re-registration process. I would be grateful if you could do this within a couple of weeks of receiving the email request because some of the fields are mandatory and delay may affect the smoothness of examiner re-registration.

No increase in registration fees

I can confirm that the BSS examiner registration fee will be held at last year's price of £149.00 (inclusive of VAT).

No need to send Identity Card passport photos this year

Your scanned file photo will be used for 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 3 March.

BSS Block Policy PI and PL insurance cover review

The Professional Indemnity (PI) and Public Liability (PL) levels of cover, both currently set at £1m, are currently under review. At present there is no decision as to whether the levels of cover will need to be raised. I will keep you informed and let you know the outcome soon.

Once the situation is confirmed Michael Hall Associates Ltd will send out the Block Policy renewal information.

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Evidence of independently arranged PI and PL cover

Firstly, if you arrange PI and PL insurance independently please note that any decision to raise the PI and PL levels of cover for the Block Policy may affect you if your levels of cover are below the new minimum.

Please check carefully that the terms of your policies cover your BSS activities, that the policies are current as of 1 April and that the levels of cover are not less than those of the BSS Block Policies.

If you arrange PI and PL insurance independently we need to see evidence of both insurances and for those whose renewals occur after April the evidence can be presented without delay. For those who are renewing cover before April please provide evidence once the renewal is completed, however please ensure the policy documents can satisfy the requirements below.

Evidence should be in the form of the relevant page(s) of the policy documents, certificate or schedule of insurance and must indicate the insurers name and address, the type of insurance cover, the level of cover provided the period the policy is in force. The documents must include your BSS activity in the business description. If there is any doubt about the nature of the evidence supplied, we may consult our insurance advisers.

The electrical knowledge and understanding course and registration

Most examiners have attended the electrical knowledge and understanding course and most of the rest are booked on courses in February and March. Recently trained examiners who have not opted to attend the current round of courses will be contacted later this year to book attendance on additional courses planned for Spring 2011.

Apart from that handful of recent trainees, I can remind you that passing the assessment is linked to re-registration. If you are concerned that somehow, the assessment event has passed you by, please contact me on the office number.

BSS Examiner Code of Conduct and registration

The BSS Examiner Code of Conduct is being revised and improved and the new draft version is scheduled to go to full consultation with all examiners in the early summer. It follows that when you submit your application online you will be accepting the code as it is currently published and which can be viewed and downloaded by following this link:

http://examiner.boatsafetyscheme.com/site/en-GB/Page_13.aspx

Monthly returns must be up to date

We will not re-register examiners whose monthly returns are not up to date to the end of February 2010. 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 2010/11?

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.

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. This means that if you have not registered online (and had confirmation of successful re-registration and not just the receipt of application) by 31 March, you must not issue any certificates and must cancel or postpone any BSS examination bookings you may have until you have that confirmation of your registration. Unauthorized examiners will not be listed on the BSS website until registration is completed.

Any certificate issued whilst an examiner is not registered will be cancelled and the circumstances investigated as a potential breach of the Code of Conduct.

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.

Appeal to boaters concerning a cooker CO poisoning risk

For your information I have provided a link to the urgent appeal to boaters on the home page of the BSS website. This concerns information about the alert from the manufacturers of certain Belling, Flavel, Leisure New World cookers about a CO risk if the grill is used with the grill door closed. For more info follow the link: http://www.boatsafetyscheme.com/site/Home_1.asp

Introducing the BSS Examiner Service Level Agreement

Work on developing a BSS Examiner Service Level Agreement (SLA) is well advanced thanks to some close co-operation between the BSS Office and the Examiner Bodies such as ABSE.

Once fully agreed, the SLA will represent an understanding between the BSS Office and all BSS Examiners in conjunction with the Examiner Bodies aimed at achieving the consistent application of BSS checking requirements and in support of achieving commonly held wider objectives. The SLA will set out the levels of support and service examiners can expect from the BSS Office as well as the standards and behaviours which examiners individually will be encouraged to adopt.

The goal is support and encouragement for examiners from the BSS Office, mirrored by BSS Examiners reviewing their activities continuously, and making any improvements when and where inconsistency appears.

I welcome this initiative because I see it as the best opportunity for us in the BSS Office to support examiners to achieve consistency and help examiners to measure their own performance and introduce changes for the better when required. You will be invited to comment upon the version of the SLA agreed at the BSS Advisory Committee soon.

Examiner website update

The online BSS examination recording facility is coming to the end of its development phase and will be launched to all examiners soon. It is planned for a staged release to examiners in batches, beginning in March.

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

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G.A. Watts". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Graham Watts, **BSS Manager**