



17 December 2010

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BSS EXAMINER NEWS

Dear Examiner,

This edition of BSS Examiner News has several news items with strict time limits, so please read it carefully and act swiftly.

First there is an update on online examination reporting and we give you advance notice of an ABSE 'roadshow' with guest appearances from Rob and Phil, your Salesforce 'doctors' from the BSS Office.

We look at the impact of the government increase in VAT from 4 January and provide news of anticipated increases in demand for BSS examinations. We are also offering boxes of BSS Essential Guides to examiners for free, you just pay the price of postage.

By the way, the Office is shutting on Christmas Eve **so the last orders for paperwork are by 2pm, Thursday 23 Dec.** Again if really severe weather strikes the Watford area next week, it may mean that no one can get in to service the orders or the postal service may not operate. Courier services could also be affected locally if there is snow of the levels recently seen in Scotland. Weather permitting the BSS Office will re-open on Tuesday 4 Jan.

Online examination reporting - update

By the time you receive this newsletter all BSS examiners will be either reporting BSS examinations online or will be practicing in the 'sandbox'. Right now nearly 100 examiners are reporting online covering around 70% of all examinations. It's now time for all examiners to join the 'online' club.

If you are currently one of the examiners who are yet to accept their invitation to the sandbox, please take an early opportunity to give it a try. Phil will give you a call once you have had sufficient practice and he has taken a look at what you have done. Then, subject to mutual agreement, you will be made 'live' on the system and from that point you will be reporting all examinations online with no more posting in returns.

The quiet times during the Christmas break may be an ideal time to practice and with that in mind, Phil and Rob will be available at certain times between Christmas and New Year to support those who need help with online examination reporting. So if you need help here's what to do. It's best to email Salesforce@boatsafetyscheme.com and outline your need and let us know when is a good time to call when you will be next to your computer. You should then anticipate a call, but please try to provide a number of date/time options.

Urgent technical calls will be supported the same way, email the Salesforce address, let us know your need, and one of us will call you back when we can.

ABSE 'Roadshow' (with Phil and Rob) helping online examination reporting

ABSE is inviting all examiners to attend one of a series of regional meetings around the country early in the New Year. The meetings have one aim, to offer the opportunity for examiners to share their experiences of online examination reporting and come away with a better understanding of what the facility can offer.

Either Phil or Rob from the BSS Office will attend each meeting to demonstrate a few tips, answer any questions and take away for appreciation, any suggestions you have. It has already been trialled at the ABSE SE group where, despite the snow and ice, a really useful event took place for all concerned.

You will need to book your place at one of these meetings with the local ABSE representative listed below, don't delay, places may be limited.

<p>Anglia Hotel Wroxham, Wroxham Date 12 January 2011 Contact: Patrick Curtis pat_curtis@btinternet.com</p>	<p>East Midlands School Room, The Waterways Museum, Stoke Bruerne Date T.B.C. Contact - David Tucker dt_boats@hotmail.com</p>
<p>North West Runcorn Boat Club, Runcorn Date 16 February 2011 Contact - Brian Hayes brianhayes.exbt@btopenworld.com</p>	<p>North East BW offices in Leeds Date T.B.C. Contact - John Bromilow jbconsultants@mail.com</p>
<p>Scotland (TBC with BSS Office) Contact - Phil or Rob salesforce@boatsafetyscheme.com</p>	<p>South East (TBC with BSS Office) Contact - Phil or Rob salesforce@boatsafetyscheme.com</p>
<p>South West BW boardroom in Gloucester Date T.B.C. Contact - Bob Coldwell bob.coldwell@btinternet.com</p>	<p>West Midlands Stafford Boat Club, Stafford Date 2 February 2011 Contact: Iain Jones jones.iain@btinternet.com</p>

Please urgently review your personal details made public on the BSS website

A new search page on the BSS website is going live very soon and so it is important that your personal details made available to the public, as entered on the Salesforce site. Check that they are accurate and appropriate because these are extracted directly to the BSS website.

To review them log into your pages on Salesforce (not the sandbox) and review your '*Public Details*' on the '*current details*' tab. Examiners can easily change their '*Public Details*' on the BSS website directly. Just click on the grey '**Edit**' button in the middle of the top red rail. Make the changes you wish and click '**Save**'. That's it, the update will happen automatically on the public website within 24 hours.

From now on all information apart from the ID card photo will be self-administered, and that includes the information that you keep private between the Scheme and yourselves such as the insurance information and postal addresses and contact details.

The publically available information such as contact details for customers, your websites, your membership bodies and any Gas Safe registration will now be handled by you. If your Gas Safe registration lapses or ends, please do not forget to amend your details on Salesforce or you will be misrepresenting yourself on a public website and the Gas Safe Register may not take kindly to that.

You must enter a value in the town field, if you don't it will appear blank on the customer's search site and our research tells us that boat owners choose firstly by personal recommendation and secondly by the nearest town.

If you wish to change your photo on your ID card and thus on the website too, this can be done at re-registration time for free. At any other time when we have to order a replacement card, there will be a charge of £7.75 which reflects the costs of the new card from the agency and the extra administration and postage. You can send an email with the new photo and we can take the matter forward from there.

The BSS Office will no longer be aware if your public address or phone numbers, etc changes. We will only be alerted if amendments to your private information fields are made.

If for any reason you do not wish to appear on the public search site, even temporarily, please email us and we can keep you registered, but pull you off the search facility.

The new search page on the public website will go live in seven days, so if you are not content with your public details, don't delay making the changes.

VAT on BSS Certificates set to increase

As you probably know already, in the last budget, the Chancellor announced a rise in VAT from 17.5 per cent to 20 per cent to take effect on 4 January 2011.

The implications are that any orders for BSS Certificates received on or after 4 January 2011, will be subject to the VAT rate of 20%. The VAT increase raises the price of certificates from £34.08 to £34.80, i.e. the VAT will be £5.80 per certificate, up from £5.08.

We are anticipating increased orders and what with the Christmas post and bad weather forecast, it may be that receipt of your order is delayed, but don't worry, so long as your order is received before midnight on 3 January you will be charged VAT at the old rate. If your need for certificates is desperate and you need to receive them between now and the New Year, please give Kerry a call [01923 201278] to let her know and she will do her best to get them to you without undue delay.

An increase in demand for BSS examinations on the River Thames anticipated

The law governing boat registration and related conditions for Environment Agency boat owners on the River Thames is changing. Following the introduction of the Environment Agency (Inland Waterways) Order 2010, all boats kept on the river must be registered from 1 January 2011.

Previously EA Thames licensing was linked to the owner 'using' the boat but now even for boats kept at the end of gardens, in backwaters and marinas, registration will be necessary.

The extra demand for BSS examinations is anticipated because the EA is also insisting that powered boats comply with their construction and equipment standards at all times – and owners must have either a valid Boat Safety Scheme Certificate or, for boats up to 4 years old, a valid Declaration of Conformity under the Recreational Craft Directive when owners apply to register for 2011.

The EA is offering an introductory period until 1 April 2011 to give owners the opportunity to register their boats or remove them from river before considering enforcement action and so any extra demand may take a while to filter through.

Bulk Copies of the BSS Essential Guide now available to BSS Examiners

The BSS Office is making available copies of the BSS Essential Guide inserts i.e. all the pages packages in cellophane without the plastic covers for all examiners. These are available on request subject to payment of the shipping charge.

Guides will be shipped by the box and each box contains 38 guide inserts. The cost of shipping is £7.80 per box, which will be invoiced in the normal way. **This is a limited offer for one month only** so if you would like a box of guides please let Kerry or Tracy know by email by Friday 21 January 2011.

Best regards and best wishes for you and yours for Christmas and the New Year,



Graham Watts, **BSS Manager**