



## BSS Advisory Committee – Confirmed Notes

### BSSAC #74, 23 NOVEMBER 2010, BW OFFICES, HATTON

#### Present:

Chair  
IMarEST  
ABSE  
EA  
TBA  
IIMS  
RBOA  
NABO  
BMF3 - Canal-based Comm. Interests  
IWA  
RYA2 Yacht Clubs and Users  
BW  
Broads Authority  
AWCC  
YDSA

#### Co-opted & Others:

BSS Manager  
BSS Quality & Technical Manager

#### Apologies:

MCA  
BMF1 - Executive Interests  
BSSTC Chair  
RYA1 Executive Interests  
YDSA  
BMF2 – River-based Comm Interests  
AINA

#### Not Present:

**74.1 Apologies** – Apologies were noted as listed above.

Members welcomed \_\_\_\_\_ attending on behalf \_\_\_\_\_ for YDSA.

**74.2 Accuracy of the reports in lieu of BSSAC meeting #73** – Accuracy was accepted.

#### **Matters arising from the reports [Not covered on the agenda]**

74.2.1 *BSSAC Efficiency Improvements* – The Chair said that there are no plans to change the make-up of the committee subject to continued monitoring of the impact of the introduction of the Examiner representative on BSSMC and the commitment from BSSAC examiner reps to focus on committee tasks.

74.2.2 The following matters arising were reported by the BSS Manager:

- *LPG gas locker check 7.2.1 [72.2.2]* — no further movement at this time.
- *HHO generators [72.5]* - BSSMC agreed the paper, the press release is drafted and the examiner's and NAs papers are being developed.
- *SLA agreement [72.6]* - BSSMC agreed the BSS Office/Examiner Service Level Agreement (SLA), the SLA is now on the BSS Examiner website.
- *Electrical hazards [72.9.3]* – key awareness messages are drafted and will go next to BSSTC and BMEA.
- *PI/PL examiner insurance cover level increase* – the increase was successfully implemented with only one examiner temporarily suspended for failure to arrange the cover. The BSS Office are anticipating some unsettled examiners on this subject when the next year's annual premium notices fall through the letter boxes in late Jan early Feb. Concerning the block policy, the annual premium amount is certain to appear much larger than previously. Block policy providers Michael Hall Associates (MHA) are working on achieving the best quote possible and it may mean changing insurance companies for the second time in two years.

**74.3 To note actions arising from the last BSSMC meeting #70**

74.3.1 *70.3.2 Scrutiny & spending restrictions* – The BSS Manager emphasised that committee discussed the BSS actions so far and that the discussion at BSSMC and agenda item 6 of today's meeting, does not take account of the impact of the Govt. spending review on the Navigation Authorities, this impact is still to be felt.

The first announcement of a Navigation Authority cut is from the Broads Authority reporting the 30% cut in its national park grant and announcing that a quarter of the 168 strong workforce are to go and some visitor centres are to close.

There is no news on the impacts of the Govt. spending review on EA or BW because they are both taking stock and planning future structures, etc.

74.3.2 *70.3.3 BSS requirements and the RCD* – in the absence of BMF reps the Chair limited the discussion, emphasising the importance of ensuring a process is employed to resolve any outstanding technical and policy issues. This should ensure that the subject of the potential conflict between BSS and RCD requirements can be resolved once and for all.

#### **74.4 Update on the review of the CoC and investigation procedure**

74.4.1 *Support papers – None verbal report only*

74.4.2 *Context – the introduction of the BSS Examiner SLA opens up the opportunity for the language of BSS Examiner Code of Conduct to change. The investigation procedure is also to be reviewed and simplified.*

74.4.3 The ABSE rep reported that the BSS Manager and an ABSE representative are working closely together on revised versions of both documents. The BSS Manager reported that the draft of the revised Conditions of Registration (CoR) is in an advanced state and will be available for wider scrutiny in the next few weeks. A high level document setting out the objectives of the review is attached to these notes.

BSS  
Secretariat

This task to review the investigation procedure is far more complex and will take until into the first quarter of the New Year to complete to the stage where it can be open to wider scrutiny.

#### **74.5 The Low Sulphur Fuel Directive – introduction and potential implications**

74.5.1 *Support papers – None – a brief presentation only*

74.5.2 *Context – according to UK regulations, from January 2011 all non-road machinery and inland waterway boats will have to switch to ultra-low sulphur diesel. To conform with the regulations UK some fuel suppliers were making clear their intention to switch the existing red diesel supply to the present road vehicle diesel with a red dye in it. This formulation does contain a bio content (FAME – Fatty Acid Methyl Esters) of up to 7%, with the associated enhanced risk of micro-biological contamination.*

74.5.3 At the request of BSSMC member \_\_\_\_\_ and in order to ensure potential implications are widely shared with user groups, members received a brief presentation on the changes to red-diesel from January 2011 and the associated potential for micro-biological contamination should the supply having increased bio-fuel content.

74.5.4 The following précis covers aspects of the presentation. These comments are not represented as authoritative from the BSS; they cover potential issues:

- It is reported that FAME content in fuel can attack existing seal materials and newer materials have had to be designed by seal manufacturers to cope with the aggressive chemical attack. On older engines this may be a problem.

- 74.5.5
- The nature of FAME in fuel is that it is highly hygroscopic and will absorb water content quite readily. In the past this has not been so much of a problem with the older mineral diesels but with bio-fuel added to red diesel the water can react with the bio content and the fatty acids can multiply quickly in a bacteriological reaction to form a bio mass sludge in the fuel tanks. It is understood that low fuel-use, and large storage tanks with slow replenishment, make ideal conditions for micro-biological contamination.
  - The bio mass product can itself damage steel fuel tanks and copper fuel lines from the corrosive nature of the chemicals to be found in it.
  - It is understood that additional fuel filters are of little use and in fact present an increased surface area for the bacteriological growth to continue.
  - Biocides put in the tank can clear one problem but create other problems.
  - The disposal of the sludge is a problem and the dumping of contaminated fuel must be avoided. Contaminated fuel tanks and fuel lines will likely need proper professional cleaning to remove all the contaminated fuel and sterilise the tank and fuel system.

74.5.6 It is understood that, dependent upon the outcome of the lobbying to Department for Transport (DfT), BMF are to come up with industry advice as to best practice use of FAME (bio-fuel) content gas oil including advice on maintaining fuel systems. In the meantime user group representatives took note of the recommendation for users to contact to seek an assurance from fuel suppliers that FAME-free red diesel will be available from January; an assurance apparently sought of the fuel supply industry by DfT.

74.5.7 Members were interested in the presentation and user group representatives requested a copy of the PowerPoint, which was duly provided.

The RYA2 rep said that low sulphur diesel is already supplied in at least one Thames-based marina and had not presented issues to his knowledge. It was generally agreed that suppliers cannot always provide an assurance of the type of red diesel supplied or its bio-content. The NABO rep was keen that owners did not become unnecessarily fixated on this issue without good cause.

The BSS Manager agreed to provide members with any update from DfT and BMF as soon as he became aware of any news.

BSS  
Manager

## 74.6 The Govt. spending review and possible risk impacts

74.6.1 *Support papers – The Govt. spending review and possible risk impacts [Doc E1, BSSAC #74]*

74.6.2 *Context - It is clear that the wider impact of the Govt. spending cuts will affect Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) partners helping deliver boat safety. The Govt. Fire Futures review is ongoing and nothing is certain or set but members are encouraged to consider the possible impacts of both the Govt. cuts and the Fire Futures review on boat fire safety on the inland waterways. During their last meeting the challenge that was set by BSSMC was to fill any gaps in fire risk management that may appear.*

74.6.3 The Chair emphasised that the item is concerned with fire service cutbacks and not BSS cuts.

Members discussed BSS Office concerns about the potential impact of Govt. cuts and the 'Fire Futures' initiative on boat-focused fire service fire prevention and protection initiatives. Members' agreed that the loss of such support, including the known and likely impacts on the co-ordinating body 'Fire Kills' campaign office should be lobbied against if possible.

74.6.3 Cont/ Members also considered the challenge presented by BSSMC to consider how the potential void can be filled. It was accepted that neither the BSS nor the NAs will have the resource to increase risk-avoidance activity, however several suggestions were recorded for further consideration, including:

- the user groups continuing to support and develop risk avoidance information and initiatives, this could include distributing leaflets,
- perhaps more emphasis on boat clubs as the vehicle for safety messages to reach boaters in marinas and club moorings,
- the use of 'shock' tactics highlighting the causes and impact of fires rather than sole reliance upon awareness/education,
- calling upon the goodwill of examiners to leave targeted risk-avoidance information,
- call upon 'volunteers' to distribute safety leaflets,
- developing the BSS website to be the centre of safety guidance, as agreed in partnership,
- increased use of BSS media releases.

74.6.4 The subject of making smoke alarms mandatory was discussed with a fairly evenly split view for and against the idea. Some concerns were expressed by Navigation Authority reps that smoke alarms are not effective in all circumstances.

The Broads Authority rep said that a recent review of safety hazards on the Broads had not identified fire as a problem area and that any response to cuts must be proportionate and measured.

## **74.7 Report from BSSTC Chair**

74.7.1 *Support paper – Report from BSSTC Chair for BSSAC [Doc F1, BSSAC #74]*

74.7.2 *Context – standing item – a report of BSSTC*

74.7.3 Members had no comment on the report distributed prior to the meeting.

## **74.8 Efficiency - Update on the progress of the BSS IT project**

74.8.1 *Support papers*

*Efficiency - Update on the progress of the BSS IT project [Doc G1, BSSAC #74]*

74.8.2 *Context – standing item – a report by the BSS Quality and Technical Manager*

74.8.3 The BSS Quality and Technical Manager reported that 84 examiners are now reporting examinations online, representing 65% of all examinations carried out.

74.8.4 The Chair referred to the Navigation Authority target for examiners to report examinations within 48 hours. It was confirmed that the driver is the need to support customers choosing online licensing and the ABSE rep confirmed that the target was the view of the Broads Authority BSSMC rep. It was recognised that the target may be reduced further over time.

The IIMS rep said that the two-system approach between private and hire craft should be recognised. The BSS Quality and Technical Manager said that hire craft examinations will shortly be reported via Salesforce, and all affected examiners will be contacted when this facility is ready.

## **74.9 BSS Quality Management Report**

74.9.1 *Support papers - The BSS Quality Management Report. [Doc D1, BSSAC # 74]*

74.9.2 *Context – standing item*

- 74.9.3 The BSS Quality and Technical Manager invited comments on the report provided in advance of the meeting.
- The BMF3 rep said that the change to the BSS Examiner Technical Update concerning end-capping of LPG pipes should have been announced in a further Technical Update rather than in BSS Examiner News. This was agreed and the outcome will be added to the next update.

#### 74.10 Report from the BSS Manager

74.10.1 *Supporting Document, Report of incidents and accidents recorded 1 Jan to 12 Nov 2010 [Doc H1, BSSAC #74]*

74.10.2 *Context – standing item*

74.10.3 The BSS Manager introduced *Doc H1* and drew members attention to the fact that there is another increase in incident reports this year to date compared to last year. The RBOA rep said that increase is worrying but members can't draw definite conclusions without seeing the full data. The Chair said that it is not possible to judge because the level of reporting or under-reporting is not known. The BSS Manager predicted, because of the increasing ability to find incidents, a gradual increase in numbers until the Home Office figures of 350 annual fire service attendances to boats is reached.

The BW rep drew members' attention to table A7 and said the figures appeared skewed against BW or BWML and that the numbers of boats per navigation authority should be included. The NABO rep agreed that the tables had no meaning unless the reporting base is included.

The BSS Manager said that there is a commitment to improve the way the incident data is represented over time, however at the moment it is the incidents themselves and the established known causes that lead BSS risk avoidance activity and this activity is agreed by BSSAC at the beginning of each year.

74.10.4 The BW rep said that the terms used in the report must be clearly defined in an index; he referred to 'intensive' use of boats. The BSS Manager agreed this could be added.

BSS  
Manager

74.10.5 The RYA2 rep said that the incidents represent a tip of an iceberg making other measures such as navigation authority spot-checking necessary.

The Broads Authority rep said that the risks of fire and CO must be compared with other risks to boaters. Another member commented that if poor levels of reporting is an issue then compelling owners to report may be the only solution.

74.10.6 The BSS Manager drew members attention to the seven fatalities listed under man-overboard, capsized. He outlined the known breakdown of the separate incident as follows:

An eighth MOB/Capsized fatality was received 13 November – up from 7 fatalities on the BSSAC report. Further analysis revealed one was not on inland waters and so has been removed. A second fatality has recently been confirmed as not connected with the boat (fell from the bank) and so has been removed.

Of the 6 MOB/Capsized fatalities this year to date there is no trend other than people doing something at night alone. Concerning 4 of the fatalities – 1 involved operating a mud weight, 1 x getting on to a narrowboat, 1 x preparing a mooring line to land, 1 x gone outside for a cigarette.

Boat location 1 on Broads, 3 on BW, 2 on EA Anglian

Boat type 3 x narrowboat, 1 x inflatable dinghy, 2 x cruiser,

Time of day - 3 x night (1 x also raining), 2 x day, 1 x unknown,

Boat orientation - Moored x 2, not-moored (being navigated in some way) x 3, unknown x 1

Deceased profile - Over 60 years old x 2, 40-60 years old x 3, 20 -40 years old x 1,

Alcohol factor – Only confirmed in 1, but suspected in at least 2 others.

74.10.6 Cont/ Members agreed that the BSS incident report should continue to cover such incidents with a view that trends concerning the construction and equipping of boats may become apparent. . The BSS Manager encouraged user group reps to use the findings.

**74.11 Left intentionally blank due to an error on the agenda numbering.**

**74.12 Items for next BSSMC #71, 14 December 2010**

74.12.1 No items were recorded.

**74.13 Dates of BSSAC meetings, all Tuesday's at BW Offices Hatton**

74.13.1 The dates of next year's meeting are as follows:

22 February, 7 June, 13 September (changed from 6/9/10) 29 November.

The Broads Authority rep expressed disappointment with the venue location being so difficult and without public transport and said that this would continue to restrict the number of times he could attend.

**74.14 Any other business [AOB]**

74.14.1 *Environment Agency's Inland Waterways Order 2010* - Members received a report from the EA rep announcing the impact of the Environment Agency's Inland Waterways Order 2010, that will harmonise the approach of the three EA regions having navigation responsibilities. He said that one impact will likely see an increase in the issue of BSS Certificates on the River Thames as boat owners who keep their boats unused in marinas and at the end of their gardens are compelled to register them and have a supporting certificate. Also introduced is the need for boat owners to have third-party insurance.

For more information click on the link below:

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/recreation/boating/31609.aspx>

The EA rep also said that boaters on the EA's River Medway will be subject to the BSS from April 2012.

74.14.2 *BSS Examiner 5-yearly gas assessments* - The IIMS rep referred to the fact that the 5-yearly gas assessments for BSS Examiners were due and asked if following industry pattern was to continue. The BSS Manager reported that the Gas Safe Register's competence review is underway and that he is to attend a workshop in early December. Representatives from UKLPG are apparently having some success convincing GSR that LPG industry should be treated differently to the natural gas industry. This may open the door to industry equivalent qualifications and additional categories of GSR operatives.

The BSS Manager said that he considered it best to await the general direction of the GSR competence review before arranging all examiners to attend their 5-yearly BSS LPG re-assessment. Members agreed the suggestion but with a one year time limit.

74.14.3 *Locked escape routes from vessels* - The TBA rep responding to a BSS request for information, said that around 10 TBA and various boat club members responded my his question asking if they knew of any cruisers which secured forward hatches from the outside. No such practice was found but the exercise did bring to the attention of one boat owner and hence others that he did at times sleep on board with a canvas cover over his forward hatch. That will be something TBA will circulate amongst members.

Ends