

Boat Safety Scheme
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Revised Examination Checking Procedures being implemented 1 Jan 2013

The various small changes to the Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) Examination Checking Procedures for privately owned and privately managed boats are being implemented on 1 January 2013

The revised BSS Checks are published on www.boatsafetyscheme.org/examination and they form the expected means of compliance with the navigation authorities' legal requirements otherwise known as the BSS General Requirements

A short document summarising the main changes to the 2005 checks that appear in the BSS Essential Guide second edition will also be available on the BSS website.

Most of the changes, about 60 per cent, are editorial in nature, basically tidying up terms and descriptions. The aim being to help see that the checks are applied consistently by BSS examiners, effectively reducing risks and seeing safer boats.

The rest of the changes can be summarised in this way:

- portable fuel tanks will not be allowed in inboard engine spaces to connect to fixed engines;
- five new 'advice' checks concerning a.c. systems concerning ~~and~~ the type and condition of inlet and lead connections, ensuring it is impossible to connect simultaneously more than one power source to the a.c. distribution system and a check that all a.c. electrical circuits pass through a consumer unit;
- a new advice check for cracks and unintended gaps on solid fuel appliances;
- 15 existing checks are amended to introduce an enhanced technical requirement;
(Detail these 15 and summarise the nature of the enhancements)
- 63 changes have been made to the existing checks that reduce or slightly change the technical impact;
- two checks, one about marine fuel filters and the other about a.c. shore connections are being removed.

The BSS is emphasising this further advice.

Examiners will not be disconnecting LPG cylinders so boat owners must ensure the BSS Examiner has full access to be able to carry out careful checking of the LPG cylinder locker for condition, including the removal of all loose portable items, base protection mats, removable false floors and the temporary removal of connected LPG cylinders.

Owners should discuss their LPG cylinder locker arrangements with their BSS Examiner in advance of the examination as this may require the owner's attendance or making prior arrangements involving service agents. LPG lockers not accessible enough to allow an assessment of condition will involve the BSS Examiner having to return to carry out the check with the obstruction removed.

Boaters are asked to help themselves stay safe by making available for examination a.c. shore-power and other power source leads and by providing additional information about the boat's a.c. system. Boaters can also help ensure examiner safety –

- Boat owners should make available the shore-power, battery charging or other power source leads for examination of type and condition;
- Information about the location of the a.c. consumer unit should be made known to the examiner in advance of the BSS examination;
- If practicable and safe to do so, boat owners should disconnect shore-power, battery charging, and other power sources in readiness for the BSS examination.

BSS requirements for hire and other non-private boats are not affected by the current changes.

- ENDS –

NOTES FOR EDITORS

The proposals for change were published in July 2012 on the BSS website at <http://www.boatsafetyscheme.org/about-us/news-from-the-bss/ecp-review-2012> . Those proposal documents contain the rationale supporting each change. This part of the website also includes all of the entries received during six week period public comment period. Alongside each public comment received the BSS response is also provided.

The BSS examination and certificate BSS certificates have a life span of four years. Navigation authorities using the Scheme usually require a valid BSS certificate at the time of licensing, registration, toll renewal or similar. The certificate is issued to boat that is found to be compliant with all the BSS requirements relevant for that boat. These can be found in the BSS Essential Guide which can be freely downloaded or read on www.boatsafetyscheme.org . The compliance check is carried out by an authorized, independent practitioner known as a BSS examiner.

The BSS is a public safety project owned jointly by the Canal & River Trust, registered as a charity with the charity number 1146792, and the Environment Agency. At least 14 other navigation and harbour authorities have also adopted it. The navigation authorities' purposes for the Scheme are to help reduce the risks of fire, explosion and pollution on small craft. This is done by promoting fire safety and pollution avoidance advice to help boat owners keep themselves and their crews' safe as well as regular examination of fuel systems, gas systems, electrical systems and appliances.