

Boat Safety Scheme
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A consultation on proposed BSS requirements for carbon monoxide alarms on boats opens

A public consultation on a proposal to introduce mandatory new Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) Requirements for carbon monoxide (CO) alarms on boats opens today Friday 17 August and will run to Friday 9 November 2018.

The suggested change sees a fundamental shift recognising that CO poisoning, a silent unseen killer, could affect boat owners and crews from sources of CO generated outside of the boat by others e.g. the use of engines and appliances on adjacent boats.

The BSS stakeholder and management committees took account of evidence from the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) findings published in May 2017 following the 'Love For Lydia' double-fatal tragedy, starkly describing the potential risk posed to other boat users by carbon monoxide-rich engine emissions.

The BSS has launched the consultation to keep people in and around boats safe when the results of further recent testing it had sponsored, reinforced findings of the MAIB.

The proposed mandatory new BSS Requirements will see checks introduced for suitable CO alarms in good condition and in suitable locations on all classes of boat with accommodation spaces.

The additional recognised benefit is the anticipated effectiveness of CO alarms in preventing death or injury to boat owners placed at risk in their own boats from running the boat's engines or appliances.

Alarms can also serve to alert craft occupants to moderate levels of CO which can be a long-term threat to health if left undetected.

Comments can be made in the next twelve weeks using the consultation form on the BSS website, the deadline is 16.30 on Friday 9 November 2018. For more information on the proposals and to make comments, go to www.boatsafetyscheme.org/alarmconsultation2018

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Graham Watts, BSS manager said:

I encourage all who may be affected to consider the Scheme's proposals and comment.

It's encouraging that so many boat owners already enjoy the protection of CO alarms, however if you haven't yet got one and we have persuaded you to act now, please take a look at a list of CO alarms recommended as suitable for boats by the manufacturers' body, [here](#).

Follow fitting instructions supplied with the alarm, but if these are difficult to meet fully on a boat, then best practice placement guidance can be found in the CO Safety on Boats leaflet. The online version is available [here](#).

The BSS will produce a summary of the views expressed in the consultation and the BSS responses, by Friday 21 December 2018. The summary will be published on the BSS website www.boatsafetyscheme.org

It is intended that a communications campaign will promote the final agreed changes in very early 2019.

The mandatory new BSS Requirements are intended to come into effect from January 2019 and implemented as BSS Checks on 1 April 2019.

More information about staying safe from CO on boats is available at www.boatsafetyscheme.org/co

– Ends –

The **Boat Safety Scheme**, or BSS, is a public safety initiative owned by the Canal & River Trust and the Environment Agency. Its purpose is to help minimise the risk of boat fires, explosions, or pollution from boats harming visitors to the inland waterways, the waterways' workforce and any other people on or near the waterway. Journalists seeking further information about the BSS should contact communications manager, Rob McLean at robert.m@boatsafetyscheme.org

The **Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB)**, is a branch of the United Kingdom Department for Transport, which can investigate any vessel related accident occurring in UK waters and accidents involving UK registered ships worldwide. Investigations are strictly limited to establishing cause, promoting awareness of risks and preventing recurrence. The reports do not apportion blame and do not establish liability. This link takes you to the report www.gov.uk/government/news/love-for-lydia-report-published

Note that the MAIB Recommendation, published in May 2017, concerning the LOVE FOR LYDIA double CO fatality incident in June 2016 included the following recommendation: **Recommendation – “the BSS make the installation of carbon monoxide alarms a requirement for recreational craft participating in the Boat Safety Scheme.”**

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