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## BSS EXAMINER NEWS

Dear Examiner

### **BSS Examination COVID-19 Suspension Lifted**

Further to news from the Prime Minister on Sunday and his government's follow-up guidance of yesterday and today, this newsletter focuses on the staged lifting of the COVID-19 lockdown and opens the door to the immediate, but qualified and cautious return to BSS Examinations when safe to do so.

It places Examiners and boat owners front and centre of decisions about the feasibility and timing of BSS examinations and points to the attached pdf document where you will find our initial guidance in the form of a list of 'must-do's', some example scenarios that may guide you as to the approach to take, and many helpful hints and tips as drawn from government websites and your survey inputs and contributions of other stakeholders.

We hope to replicate the advice, hints and tips on the BSS Professionals website by tomorrow with similar boat-owner focussed information and advice about BSS Examinations in the Time of COVID-19 here <https://www.boatsafetyscheme.org/boat-examination-and-certification/arranging-the-examination/preparing-for-examination>

### **Recent Government and Navigation Authority announcements**

On Sunday the Government announced a carefully planned staged timetable for lifting restrictions including a return for work for all except those who work in hospitality and nonessential retail.

Last week, in anticipation of the Government announcement, the navigation authorities signalled the firm intention to re-start BSS Examinations, following a period of close working with stakeholders on a plan to support the re-start.

As of Wednesday 13 May, the restrictions concerning carrying out BSS examinations and issuing BSS certifications are lifted and it is now for individual BSS Examiners and their customers to understand and put in place practical considerations to ensure any examinations are safely carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Note that for Examiners operating in Wales or Scotland, both work and travel restrictions still apply and so if this affect you, please seek out the information on the relevant devolved Government website.

### **Working together, sharing information and staying safe**

As we know from our recent survey, many Examiners have real concerns about their safety, the safety of those close to them and that of their customers, especially those most vulnerable. Clearly, we are entering new territory and this next phase will again test and challenge us all.

This crisis will not be over any time soon and there is no easy fix and no set of prescriptive instructions could fully manage this risk. The way forward concerning re-starting BSS examinations is to adopt a stepped process, update your Risk Assessment and Safe Working Practice documentation, familiarise yourself with and act upon the Government guidance & consider using the BSS hints and tips.

Paramount will be the continued close engagement between the BSS office, Examiners and all stakeholders to ensure the approach that best protects and supports Examiners, boat owners and others affected by examinations such as those working in marinas.

For all BSS Examiners it is critical to be led by good principles, for example, stay updated with and follow the latest Government guidance and consider how it can be applied to your work.

Secondly, adopt the helpful hints and tips available from the link below. The hints and tips have been developed as a result of the recent engagement with Examiners and stakeholders. They are a useful initial guide and will invariably be improved or even amended, if for example the Government announces new guidelines.

For our part, the BSS office will continue to be transparent and promote open dialogue with Examiners and stakeholders about COVID 19 developments and how they may be considered. We will also continue to guide Examiners and boat owners concerning appropriate actions and behaviours. We will routinely engage directly with all BSS Examiners sometimes by way of snap surveys, watch out for the next one focused upon PPE.

Good planning principles starts with Examiners updating their Risk Assessment and Safe Working Practice but be mindful that there is no one size fits all. Always consider the circumstances presented by your customer at the time of your initial conversation and before you agree the commission. It will be essential to continually apply judgement ~~and~~ & tolerance and to put back or even cancel arrangements for BSS examinations if the circumstances and discussions with customers lead you to that decision.

While we build the webpage please read the pdf of helpful hints and tips referred to above.

Finally, please do not forget that if the situation worsens, possibly in a specific hotspot, the Government is likely to re-introduce a lockdown and we must react immediately and appropriately if it does. Please keep abreast of the news, nationally and in your area.

Best regards and keep safe,

**Kevin Tyson**

**BSS Manager**