

Boat Safety Scheme
c/o Canal & River Trust Registered office:
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BSS Examiner News

Dear Examiner

Thank you – a year of hard work and change

I would like to begin with a huge thank you for the sustained and arduous work by all over the past 12 months.

A reminder is hardly necessary, but there are 16 navigation and harbour authorities with 80,000+ boat owners relying upon the awesome joint endeavours of Scheme, including Examiners, committee members, consultants, and BSS Office team to help deliver safer boats and therefore reduce risks for those authorities' staff, volunteers, visitors, and neighbours.

BSS Examiners have done an amazing job this year and this was also recognised by the BSS Management Committee when the Chair expressed these sentiments about your work at December's committee meeting.

The BSS team have worked hard this year to support you, despite the leaving of our valued colleague Peter to another job in April.

The new recruitment process took a while to get there, but we can advise you that we have a new person and new role of Salesforce Administrator joining us in February, albeit they will also be involved in data analysis. We will make a full introduction when they arrive.

It was also agreed by the BSS Management Committee Executive that the Scheme could recruit extra communications support in early 2024. You can expect an update on this early next year.

BSS Office at Christmas and New Year

The BSS Office is now closed and will reopen on 2 January 2024.

The phone cover (no emails) will be provided by: -

Dave – 27 Wednesday Dec – 07766 774727

Graham – 28 Thursday Dec – 07768 486189

Rob – 29 Friday Dec – 07710 175478

New Year Sales Tech – Be alert to unbranded alarms

In early Autumn, the Which consumer organisation published that it had found more than 1,000 unbranded ineffective carbon monoxide alarms listed by scores of online sellers on marketplaces including eBay, Amazon, AliExpress and Wish.

This is the time of year that bargain hunters are scouring such outlets and we may see an uptick in the wrong sort of alarms bought for boats.

So, please be alert because it is your robust checking against 6.4.3R that could save lives. Be certain that any unit has accredited third-party certification to BS EN 50291 (and is in date).

If you spot non-compliant units, you can promote your customers to choose known leading brands like BRK, Dicon, Ei Electronics, Fire Angel, FireHawk Alarms, First Alert, Honeywell, Kidde and Nest. After all, the sales are on, so there's no excuse for not choosing wisely.

New Examiner survey – instantaneous water heaters

With our Boat Safety Scheme Delivery Executive leaving (above) we had to delay the launch of a new Examiner survey related to non-room-sealed instantaneous water heaters (IWHs) mentioned in the last Technical Newsletter.

We now plan to launch the voluntary survey questionnaire on before week commencing 8 January on the Examination records on the BSS Database (just like the immensely valuable 12-month Sept 2021-22 [‘Smoke Alarm Survey’](#)).

Your support for this project will help the Scheme and its committees to establish whether the number of open-flued and unflued IWHs installed in boats is increasing, and what proportion of IWHs are of the budget, far-eastern type.

With enough data, the patterns of IWH use can be established and any associated risks assessed. Your data inputs can make a tangible difference to boaters' safety, and we thank you in advance if you can join in with this.

Look out for the new section at the bottom of the Examination report page. You can load in results as soon as it appears.

Lithium-ion battery safety initiative 2024

We have been doing intense work on considering the risks linked to emerging technologies. lithium-ion batteries are raising concerns with fire and rescue services as they attend increasing numbers of ferocious fires caused by damaged or failing lithium-ion batteries on e-bikes and e-scooters.

When appropriately used, lithium-ion batteries on small portable items such as phones, laptops, toothbrushes, watches, cameras and powerpacks are free of fire risks, however they can present a fire risk when over-charged, short-circuited, subject to heat, submerged in water or if they are damaged.

We are working with some of the UK's leading experts on this topic, and we are planning to survey boat owners about their current and planned use of lithium-ion powered equipment in 2024.

However, you with your ear to the towpath can help. If you hear about, or witness any close shaves, melted battery casings, overheated chargers, or even fires involving lithium-ion powered equipment, big or small, please email bss.office@boatsafetyscheme.org or WhatsApp Dave Washer on 07766 774727 with details.

Finally

We hope you have great festive season, and we wish you best for the New Year.

Best regards and keep safe,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Tyson', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kevin Tyson

BSS Manager