



Boat Safety Scheme Limited Set Up – Q&As

What is changing?

Boat Safety Scheme Limited ('BSS Limited') has been set up to take on the functions of the Boat Safety Scheme from 1 April 2024.

Why has BSS Limited been set up?

The existing Boat Safety Scheme was formed via a Memorandum of Understanding between British Waterways and the National Rivers Authority in 1995.

After nearly 30 years, the Scheme has evolved, with new parties and stakeholders and, following a review with principal participating navigation and harbour authorities and AINA, the decision was made to incorporate a new company limited by guarantee, to clarify the relationships and formalise the existing decision-making structures.

Who will run BSS Limited?

The Canal & River Trust has incorporated the new entity and is one of four members of the company, alongside three appointed director members: Tom Deards, Jon Horsfall (both employees of the Trust) and Phil Aspey (an independent director with long experience in the current Boat Safety Scheme).

How will BSS Limited be funded?

BSS Limited will be funded by existing sources, such as BSS Certificate charges and Examiner training and accreditation fees. The company is not for profit, so all income will be used to fund the costs of running and continuously improving the Scheme to reduce safety risks to boaters and others.

How will boat safety standards be set and reviewed?

The participating navigation and harbour authorities set boat safety standards in the context of their statutory boat licensing/registration functions. None of these standards are changing as a result of the incorporation of BSS Limited.

BSS Limited will continue to keep these standards under review, by reference to best practice and technology (via its existing technical and stakeholder consultative forums) and will recommend any changes to the navigation authorities via a newly constituted standards setting forum, who will decide whether to adopt or amend any new standard.

All navigation and harbour authorities are committed to working with BSS Limited to continue to ensure the highest safety standards for boats on their waters.

What impact will this have on boating customers?

Boats will still be subject to the current BSS standards and existing BSS Certificates will continue to be valid until the date of their expiry.

How does this affect BSS Examiners?

BSS Examiners will continue to be trained and accredited to the same high standards as the current scheme under the conditions of registration as issued by BSS Limited from time to time.

Is there any further information?

Further information will follow shortly, and it will be communicated to relevant stakeholders as well as appearing on the BSS website.

Contact

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