



## **Explanatory note on the governance arrangements from April 2024**

**The Canal & River Trust, Environment Agency, Broads Authority, and the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities announced some governance changes to the Boat Safety Scheme that saw it become a public safety initiative run as a not-for-profit company from 1 April 2024.**

As a company limited by guarantee, Boat Safety Scheme Limited has been incorporated to take on the work of the original Boat Safety Scheme.

The Scheme's structure and intent remains unchanged, with all income returned into the running costs and continuing the safety improvements brought about by the Scheme since its inception in 1995.

Boating customers of the various navigation and harbour authorities won't see any change to their existing BSS Certification or boat licence/registration processes because of these changes. The current Boat Safety Standards will continue to apply in the same form - with current BSS Certificates remaining valid until their existing renewal date.

Boat Safety Scheme Limited will also continue to regulate the training and accreditation of BSS Examiners in the same way as the original Scheme.

The governance change brings greater transparency on decision-making and clarity to the relationships between the existing stakeholders.

### **Questions and answers**

#### **What is changed?**

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 runs 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 Boat Safety Scheme up to March 2024).

## **How will BSS Limited be funded?**

BSS Limited will be funded by existing sources, such as BSS Certification charges and Examiner training and accreditation fees. The company is a not-for-profit public safety initiative, so all income will be used to fund the costs of running and continuously improving the Scheme to reduce risks to the safety of boaters and other people on and near the waterways.

## **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 changed because 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 Boat Safety Standards Setting Forum, which decides whether to adopt any new standard or amend or withdraw an existing 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, and they continue to retain their authorisation to act as BSS Examiners under the Conditions of Registration as issued from time to time by BSS Limited.

## **Is there any further information?**

Further information on our governance framework and stakeholder inputs appear on the BSS website.

## **Contact**

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