

Navigation Committee

13 January 2022

Agenda item number 11

AINA Code for the design, construction and operation of hire boats

Report by Head of Safety Management

Purpose

The report informs the committee of the mandatory implementation of the Hire Boat Code for the safe operation of all types of powered craft hired to members of the public within the navigational areas of the Broads.

Broads Plan context

This review contributes to objective 4.3 to promote and monitor safe navigation and boating.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Hire Boat Code outlines the standards for boats let for hire on inland waterways and carrying 12 people or less. The Hire Boat Code has been produced jointly by the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities and British Marine with support from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. It provides the framework for continued safe business operations of hire boats on inland waterways, and clarifies the responsibilities of operators, navigation authorities and users. It also helps businesses by the consistent application of licensing and registration requirements in inland waterways in the UK.
- 1.2. The latest Hire Boat Code publication had been delayed to allow findings from the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB), investigation into the tragic event on the Diamond Emblem 1.
- 1.3. The Hire Boat Code was first published in 2009, with the latest version including a range of improvements with a new stability requirement, and improved handover procedures for the hired vessel's helm before the hirer takes control of the vessel.

2. Implementation

- 2.1. The Hire Boat Code will come into effect from 1 January 2022, and the adoption of the Hire Boat Code requirements will be through current licensing conditions made under the Broads Authority Act 2009 and associated legislation.

- 2.2. The Hire Boat Code is mandatory for those Navigation Authorities that have the necessary legal powers. This includes waters managed by the Canal and River Trust, the Broads Authority and the Environment Agency.
- 2.3. The Broads Authority as the Licensing Authority, will engage with the Hire Boat Operators to inform and assist them on how the revised Code needs to be implemented within the Broads navigational waterways.
- 2.4. As the Licensing Authority, we will require self-declaration that Hire Boat Operators agree to comply with the requirements of the Hire Boat Code through the annual toll application process.
- 2.5. We shall continue to check compliance with the Hire Boat Licensing Conditions and adopt and implement the Hire Boat Code through the licensing conditions. Under the review of hire boat licensing, we shall introduce a risk-based approach using a traffic light system to help Hire Boat Operators comply with the requirements and take appropriate action in cases of non-compliance.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1. Hire Boat Licensing has recently been reviewed by this committee and following the recommendation, the Broads Authority agreed to increase the Hire Boat Licensing Officer's hours from 1 day a week to 3 days, by applying a revised Hire Boat Licensing charge (£25 Hire Boat Licensing Charge and £17 per vessel within the scheme).

4. Conclusion

- 4.1. The Hire Code of Practice sets down the basic principles of safe operation for all types of craft hired to members of the public and makes clear the responsibilities of each of the parties involved. Hire operators and licensing authorities must be able to provide evidence of compliance with the Code.

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Date of report: 13 December 2021

[Broads Plan](#) strategic actions: 4.3

Appendix 1 – [Code for the Design, Construction and Operation of Hire Boats](#)