

**Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA)  
Minutes of the 18<sup>th</sup> Management Board Meeting  
Held on 1 October 2015 at 11am  
at HSE Offices,  
Redgrave Court Bootle Liverpool L20 7HS**

**Those Present:**

David Snowball – Chair  
Rob Vondy - HSE  
Alistair McNab - HSE  
Gavin Howat - HSE  
John Paul Lawrence - Local Authorities  
Colonel Robert Cosgrove - MOD  
Anna Bliss - DWP by phone  
John Walsh Heron - TQS  
Sir Brooke Boothby - TQS  
Marcus Bailie - TQS  
Brian Chapman - Independent Member  
Ian McMorris - Independent Member  
Jill Worrall - HSE (note taker)

**Apologies Received From:**

Scottish Government  
Welsh Government  
Dept' for Education

**1 Welcome & Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and apologies were noted.

**2 Minutes and Actions from the Previous Meeting**

The minutes from the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting were accepted as a true record. All actions were discharged.

**3 Progress Report on the Cabinet Office Review of AALA and the Scottish Government request for transfer of powers.**

Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) are in touch with Cabinet Office regarding the future sponsorship of AALA. DWP are aware of HSE's concern regarding the timescale involved for the retendering of the AALS contract.

Gavin Howat will meet the new Scottish Government representative with responsibility for adventure activities later this month.

#### **4 AALS Update**

This pilot exercise continues. The first of the RYA inspectors is now fully trained and ready to undertake solo inspections.

Gavin Howat & Anne Salisbury are due to attend the launch event for the Mountain Training Association accreditation scheme in November.

#### **5 HSE Update**

The number of hits on the HSE Adventure Activities web pages continues to rise as does the membership of the Adventure Activities Community.

There are several incidents currently under investigation by HSE or Local Authorities and the AALS.

The AAAC has now reformed and has a new council and committee. The first new committee meeting will be held in November 2015. Gavin Howat and Marcus Bailie will attend.

The issue of Sportivate was discussed. Seemingly, under the Sportivate scheme cash has been made available from Sport England to support and encourage sporting activity and this can include sports in scope of licensing. These activities are currently being offered by providers for up to five days at a time. Under the licensing regulations, activities may be tried by young people in return for payment for a maximum of three days. Legal advice is that even if the payment is made by a third party, this still means the regulations apply. Should the activity last for longer than three days then the provider must obtain a licence. Some of the centres offering this service are licensed already and therefore there is no issue with those providers. However there is with those who are unlicensed and offering in scope activities.

##### **Action HSE:**

Gavin Howat will contact Sport England and offer to work with them to find a solution to this problem.

Rob Vondy thanked John Walsh-Heron for providing information to HSE with regard to the retendering process. HSE are holding this information whilst awaiting a decision from Ministers regarding the sponsorship of AALA.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is engaged with AALA and TQS to provide an inspection service that is in line with licensing for its

Adventure Training centres. In the first instance this will be aimed at AT centres dealing with cadets. Pilot visits should commence late 2015.

## **6 TQS Reports:**

Finance & Staffing

TQS had already supplied their end of year accounts to HSE.

Everything is in order.

Two senior inspectors are leaving TQS shortly. They have responsibility for Scotland & Wales respectively. They have given long and distinguished service. The Chair will write to thank them. John Walsh-Heron will provide a short background note providing details to assist the Chair.

### **Action HSE & TQS:**

Chair – write to two retiring senior inspectors.

John Walsh Heron – provide background note for the Chair's letters of thanks.

Head of Inspection Report

As usual this report was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Marcus Bailie gave the meeting a brief narrative on any points of special importance and interest.

Marcus explained to the meeting that he is currently concerned about the dangers of open water swimming and the lack of guidance on this topic. He is working with RoSPA in an effort to secure guidance for centres that offer this activity.

Electronic Licences – The current hard copy licences are the size of three sheets of A4 folded to the size of one sheet of A4. They include a standard conditions section which needs to be read in conjunction with L77. Should there be a move to electronic licences a link will be required which clicks through to a summary of the conditions. This summary needs to be agreed by Marcus Bailie and Gavin Howat and then cleared by HSE's Legal Advisor. Also for legal reasons, particular attention should be paid to ensuring that the correct legal entity is cited on licences.

### **Action HSE & TQS:**

Gavin Howat and Marcus Bailie to agree questions regarding electronic licences for HSE's Legal Advisor.

A question was raised with regard to applications to renew licences where an inspection showed that matters of concern on previous inspections had not been addressed. Marcus Bailie confirmed that should this situation arise, licenses would not be renewed unless the outstanding problems were addressed.

## **7 Reports From:**

- DWP – please see item three above.
- DfE – no representative present, apologies received.
- Devolved administrations – apologies received from both Wales & Scotland.
- Local Authorities – nothing to report.

## **8 Update on Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres.**

Ian McMorris reported that he had recently renewed contact with this organisation.

## **9 Membership of AALA Management Board**

Gavin Howat passed out hard copies of a revised draft on the Roles & Responsibilities of Independent Board Members. The main proposed change is the introduction of a term period of tenure of three years.

### **Action: All Members:**

All members to send their comments on the draft to Jill Worrall by 15 December 2015.

## **10 Any Other Business**

None

## **11 Date & Time of Next Meeting**

Provisionally – Wednesday 2 March 2016 – to be confirmed.