

Adventure Activities Licensing Authority Board Meeting
3rd March 2015

Adventure Activities Licensing Service Operations Report
October 2014 – January 2015

1. Number of Licence Holders

At 31st January 2015 this stood at 1242

Previous figures at the end of:	December 2014	1241
	November 2014	1236
	October 2014	1238

2. Relevant Action

During the reporting period, two providers were issued with a notice that we were considering refusing their licence renewal application. They both provided the required information and their licences were renewed. Two providers were issued with a notice that we were considering revoking their licence. One provider did not provide the required information and their licence was revoked. One is still in progress.

See Appendix 1 for more detail.

3. Recorded Accidents and Incidents

3.1 Summary.

During the reporting period 11 accidents/incidents were entered on the Licensing Service's database, 6 of which occurred during the reporting period and 5 prior to the reporting period.

Of the 11 cases, 4 involved fatalities of adults. 3 incidents took place in the UK (one of which resulted in 3 adult fatalities) and 1 in the United States of America (USA). No fatalities of young people were recorded during the reporting period.

In May 2014 a 34 year old male drowned in Lake Bala when the inflatable kayak he was on with a friend and the friend's son capsized in a gust of wind. A verdict of accidental death was returned at the inquest.

In October 2014 a 68 year old female died after falling from cliffs along the Purbeck coast path whilst on a walking holiday with HF Holidays (a licensed provider). Police said that there were no suspicious circumstances. Purbeck Council requested copies of AALS' most recent reports for the provider. Reports were sent and our assistance offered for their investigation.

In October 2014 3 adults died after getting into difficulty in the sea off Mawgan Porth Beach near Newquay. They were believed to have been caught in a rip tide whilst surfing.

The incident in the USA took place in Orlando, Florida in December 2014 and resulted in the death of an adult male when he fell 30' from a high ropes course being operated in a shopping mall.

A further 3 accidents/incidents which have been reported previously were updated as more information became known. In all cases the update related to legal action.

4. RYA On Board pilot for dual inspections.

We are now in a position to request approval from the AALA to go ahead with a pilot of Dual RYA/AALS inspections. I have worked closely with Amanda van Santen, RYA Chief Instructor for Dinghy Sailing and Windsurfing, and our Senior Inspectors have worked closely with key RYA Regional Officers.

The pilot will apply to RYA On Board providers who only offer RYA activities. That is, they will not apply to multi-activity providers.

Through the 2015 season RYA inspectors will be inducted to the stage where they can write a Licensing report and an RYA report following a visit to an RYA On Board provider that is also Licensed. There will be no additional cost to AALS for this. A series of training and induction joint visits has been identified.

RYA and Licensing inspections are, as one would expect, very similar. The main difference is in the reports. RYA reports are summary in nature whilst Licensing reports need to be legally rigorous.

If approval for the pilot is given, RYA inspectors should be inspecting on their own by the end of the 2015 season.

Inspections will be allocated by AALS Senior Inspectors who will also review, and if need be, revise the reports (as with other Free-Lance Inspectors).

The RYA will continue to pay their inspectors at their normal rates. We will pay the RYA inspector an additional fee for the Licensing report. This is likely to be £75 although this may be revised if necessary.

The RYA have confirmed that they will remain responsible for their inspector, and the inspection, and that their insurance will apply.

Since we do not receive a licence fee from these On Board providers, but we have to inspect them, this arrangement may result in financial saving if fully implemented.

Marcus Bailie
Head of Inspection
17 February 2015

Appendix 1 – Relevant Action

1. Action Taken: Minded to Revoke licence; Revoked

Following receipt of a complaint, an inspector carried out an unannounced visit to a charity event being run by the provider on 27th September 2014. The inspector identified unsafe practice regarding the use of kill cords.

As a result a Notice that we were considering revoking their licence was sent to the provider on 2nd October 2014. The provider did not provide us with the required information and their licence was subsequently revoked on 3rd November 2014.

2. Action Taken: Minded to Refuse licence; Rescinded

Following receipt of a renewal application, an inspection was carried out on 18th November 2014. The inspector identified failures in the following areas:

- Inadequate or incomplete evidence of the competence of instructors who are deployed to lead activities.
- Inadequate or multiple versions of operating procedures.

As a result a Notice that we were considering refusing their renewal application was sent to the provider on 26th November 2014. The provider subsequently provided information that satisfied our concerns and their licence was renewed.

3. Action Taken: Minded to Refuse licence; Rescinded

Following receipt of a renewal application, an inspection was carried out on 17th December 2014. The inspector identified failures in the following areas:

- Failure to carry out a review of risk assessments for gorge scrambling activities.
- Failure to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced technical advisor for kayaking and canoeing activities.

As a result a Notice that we were considering refusing their renewal application was sent to the provider on 5th January 2015. The provider subsequently provided information that satisfied our concerns and their licence was renewed.

4. Action Taken: Minded to Revoke licence; In Progress

Following notification of management changes at the centre, an inspector visited the provider on 8th January 2015. The inspector was informed by the outgoing manager that, as from 15th January 2015, the provision would be without a manager/chief instructor and qualified staff for most of the activities.

As a result a Notice that we were considering revoking their licence was sent to the provider on 14th January 2015.

No contact has yet been made by the provider.