

**Adventure Activities Licensing Authority
Management Board Meeting
4 March 2014**

General Update for Members

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(Cleared by: Alistair McNab)

Revocations and Refusals

4 applications or renewals considered for refusal or revocation since the last meeting. In 2 cases the licence has been refused, 1 still in process, 1 granted.

Recurring reasons:

- As before, it's a common theme of not being able to demonstrate what is being done rather than not doing things properly.

Adventure Activities Network

The community web site has been running well. All of the information material that was marked for transfer to the community was successfully moved over. The community is kept up to date with new material being added from time to time. It is used to promote items and topics of general interest and as a way of promoting important issues from accidents or incidents.

The visitor statistics for the community for the last quarter are;

Month	Visitors	Visits	Page Requests
Jan 14	583	640	4224
Dec 13	427	469	2882
Nov 13	659	760	4511

These figures are genuine visits as they exclude visits from HSE staff and the site manager.

The database proved more problematical. Despite considerable work by both TQS and HSE staff with input from the community developers, it proved impossible to reliably import all the data from the TQS database to the community database. This was recognised as a risk at the recent internal audit of the licensing service. Reluctantly the decision was taken to shelve this work at the moment. This addressed the issue from the audit.

The HSE web site template is in the process of being updated to ensure continued compliance with web accessibility standards and this will be applied to the licence database pages that are hosted by TQS' web hosts. This will improve the presentation of the register to users.

The issue of importing data will be revisited once the update of the HSE Office suite is completed to see if this provides a solution.

The AALA web pages on the main HSE web site were all reviewed and updated as necessary. The web pages and the community pages are linked together so users can move easily from one to another.

Enforcement Action

A number of incidents remain under investigation with AALS assistance to the investigators where needed. None of these currently involve licensable activities.

One incident involves a licence holder but not a licensable activity. This is being investigated by an EHO and is close to conclusion.

One incident where a party from a school (not licensable) became stuck on Snowdon with a leader has been investigated by HSE. An Improvement Notice was served on the school. The investigating inspector decided not to take prosecution action. The leader has been sanctioned by their professional association. It has been agreed with the inspector that a key weakness in the safety system was a lack of monitoring of the leader by their employer. This will be the topic for a "Lessons Learned" piece for Horizons and will be raised by the inspection team at inspections this year. The relevant information on the community site has been updated and promoted.

Other items of interest

Zip wires – there has been some progress in this area since the last meeting. Two meetings have been held with various interested parties around the tables. Marcus has attended both. The current position is that a document will be produced by LEEA (Lifting Equipment Engineers' Association) for their members who may inspect zip wires. This document will be technical in nature covering the hardware issues, standards and legislation.

The recent accidents have not been as a result of equipment failure but are rooted in human factors and or systems issues (the "software"). Some systems may be too complex, not be properly understood by users (including operators, owners etc) or they may be the wrong sort of equipment. These issues will be addressed in a separate document lead authored by Marcus Bailie drawing significantly on material already prepared for AALS use. The European Ropes Courses Association is also participating. It is hoped that this may ultimately become an annex to the EN standard.

Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee (AAIAC) – at its last meeting AAIAC considered its future as they have no clear funding after their meeting in May 2014. They resolved to produce a new business plan with the aim of securing future funding. Although it would be unfortunate if AAIAC did cease to operate, there are other sector bodies that we already work with so the loss of AAIAC would not present a situation we could not cope with.