

Introduction of a powerboat instructor skills assessment

The subject of whether we should introduce an assessment process for potential powerboat instructors was discussed at this year's national conference. The overwhelming response was that we should introduce a system similar to that used by the other training disciplines.

As with all changes, there are arguments against. In particular, the introduction of an additional step will mean added time and cost. However, when you balance this against the current level of candidates leaving their instructor course with an action plan to gain more experience before re-taking the course, then the balance tips in favour of the introduction of an assessment.

Interestingly, one of the top three reasons for failing a powerboat instructor course is poor personal

boat handling skills. The aim of the assessment day will be to assess the candidate's personal skills in boat handling, depth of knowledge and experience.

Conducted by a Powerboat Trainer, the format will follow that of a Level 2 powerboat direct assessment. It will include practical boat handling and cover most elements of the Level 2 course. Primarily this is an assessment rather than a coaching session, and candidates should therefore have practiced their skills prior to arrival.

However, it should be noted that the Trainer will give the candidate pointers to improve any weaknesses.

Successful completion of the skills assessment will allow the candidate to attend an instructor course and should help to increase the number of first time passes.

The requirement to attend a skills assessment will be introduced in April 2008, after which candidates will only be accepted for instructor training if they have passed the skills assessment.