



Maritime & Coastguard Agency

Bay 3/13
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel:
E-mail:



Siân Jones
Partner, BDB Pitmans LLP
50 Broadway
London
SW1H 0BL

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Our ref: CE 30/2018

25 February 2019

Dear Ms Jones

Thank you for your letter of 19 December, enclosing the Chief Coroner's Regulation 28 report to prevent further deaths, following the Westminster terror attack on 22 March 2017.

Following the inquest into the death of Andreea Cristea, which concluded in October 2018, HH Judge Mark Lucraft QC recommended that the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) considers whether it or some other body could provide guidance on the removal of unconscious persons or bodies from the water to those operating on navigable rivers and canals.

The MCA has considered this matter in depth and has had discussions with a number of interested parties including the RNLI, the RYA, the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities (AINA) and our partner emergency service providers. This is a complex matter and we have considered whether any potential guidance would be for professional crews or for members of the public operating pleasure craft on navigable waterways, taking account of the suitability of equipment on the many vessel types that operate on navigable waterways.

It has become clear through our research that there is a need to balance encouragement to take quick and decisive action, against the very real risk that such action might do more harm than good and may also endanger those attempting an impromptu rescue. Thankfully, the scenario highlighted by the coroner is a very rare occurrence, but in these situations our advice is always to call the emergency services who have the specialist equipment and trained crew.

The RNLI advise that removing unconscious persons or bodies from the water can be hazardous, it is a specialist task which requires specialist equipment and knowledge to minimise the risks of harm/injury to the crew. Appropriate training is also required to ensure the casualty is treated in the most effective way to ensure the best possible



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chances of survival. The training methods for RNLI lifeboat crew for both unconscious and conscious casualties are the same and they advise that no set method applies as it is dependent on the geography, local conditions, and environmental factors at the time of each incident.

The RYA provide advice on their training courses about recovering unconscious persons from the water and do not differentiate methods of recovery between inland and coastal waters.

Taking the points above into consideration, we believe that sufficient guidance already exists in the public domain for those operating commercial vessels on navigable rivers and canals through the Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code, which is published by AINA¹, and available on gov.uk². For leisure boat users, training that covers emergency situations is available from the RYA³ and the Canals and Rivers Trust provides information for boaters to keep safe⁴.

Yours sincerely



Brian Johnson
Chief Executive

¹ <https://www.aina.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/SPBC-1.pdf>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inland-waters-small-passenger-boat-code>

³ <https://www.rya.org.uk/courses-training/courses/inland-waterways/Pages/hub.aspx>

⁴ <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/safety-on-our-waterways/water-safety-tips-for-boaters>