



Press release

National Beach Safety Council calls for clarity on Beach Safety Responsibility

The National Beach Safety Council (NBSC), the UK's leading authority on beach safety, and advisory group to the National Water Safety Forum (NWSF), is calling on the Government to determine who is responsible for safety on British beaches.

At a time when more and more people are visiting beaches to swim and to participate in sports such as surfing, windsurfing and kitesurfing, some local authorities are cutting vital lifesaving services.

A number of local authorities have either withdrawn lifeguards this summer to save money or are planning to withdraw lifeguards on privately-owned beaches despite having lifeguarded them for many years.

Budgetary constraints and the possibility of having to raise council tax to cover lifeguard costs, plus the lack of a statutory requirement to provide a beach safety service, are cited as valid reasons for withdrawing lifeguards, although Tony Jones, Chairman of the National Beach Safety Council says:

“Surely we owe it to the British public, and visitors, bringing revenue, to our wonderful country, to make their visit to the beach safe and enjoyable?”

There are 11,232 miles of coastline around the whole of the UK with over 552 official bathing sites listed. Lifeguards rescue 2500 people, saving at least 200 lives annually* but still over 100 people die on or near the coast each year**.

*Source: NBSC survey 2004. ** Source: Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

Notes to Editors

- The National Beach Safety Council is the advisory group on beach safety to the National Water Safety Forum. The aim of the Council is to provide a unified approach to the overall management of Beach Safety.
- It is a voluntary association of organisations selected to represent the interests of beach operators and other agencies that have a beach safety remit
- NBSC members include Local Authorities, RoSPA, RNLI, RLSS UK, and the SLSA of GB

For more information about beach safety, or to arrange interviews please telephone the National Water Safety Forum Information Officer on 0121 248 2020

NWSF Secretariat
RoSPA
RoSPA House, Edgebaston Park
Bristol Road
Birmingham B5 7ST
Tel 0121 248 2020
Fax 0870 777 2199

NBSC Secretariat
RNLI
West Quay Road,
Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ
Tel 01202 663553
Fax 01202 663550