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**Circular NI OSR 2018-01**  
**May 2018**

**To all NI accredited oil spill response training providers**

- 1. Use of agents to deliver accredited courses**
- 2. Marketing methodology**

**Dear Provider,**

The purpose of this circular is to provide clarity regarding the use of third party agents for delivery of courses and the use of marketing materials by third parties.

Training providers will be aware that the Accreditation Standard grants approval on the basis of facilities inspected and instructors identified and that forms part of the application for approval. The Accreditation is not transferrable to third parties.

This will be made clearer in the next update of the Scheme Policy Documents.

Any provider who is unclear about these requirements must advise the NI in writing by 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018

**Background**

**Use of Agents**

It is the clear intent of the Schemes that quality training is maintained and delivered by accredited training providers for the benefit of their customers. The Accreditation assures the client that a duty of care has been undertaken by The Nautical Institute in granting Accreditation.

There have been occasions where it has come to the attention of the Institute that some accredited companies are using agents / agencies to deliver their accredited courses. Some accredited companies have large networks of agents who are, or who could potentially, deliver the “parent “ material. These agencies are not accredited entities in their own right and are not eligible to deliver the courses indicating approval by The Nautical Institute.

**Marketing**

Furthermore, it has come to the attention of the NI that some accredited companies are advertising their services via the marketing portals of others in similar business who are not accredited, creating some confusion with clients.

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## Rules

In order to address these issues, the following application of the rules are clarified with immediate effect:-

### Agents

1. The use of Accredited Companies agents (or other third parties) to deliver NI Accredited courses is not permitted without the prior written approval of the NI. The NI will seek to obtain the nature of the agreement between the “parent company “and the Agency and to assure itself that the delivery by the Agency will reflect the standards and competency expected of the parent organisation.
  - a. The NI maintains the right to inspect and validate the Agency. This may require inspection and visit to validate and will be subject to costs for the conduct of such work.
  - b. Delivery must be by persons included in the list of trainers approved and submitted to the NI as part of the parent company’s accreditation.
  - c. The Certificates must be in the name of the “parent company” provider and the template submitted the NI for approval.
  - d. If this model is used the control measures are to be written into the policies of the accredited parent company
  - e. The NI will charge an Accreditation fee for the approval and Accreditation of such providers

Failure to obtain such permission and agreement may result in the withdrawal of the parent company’s accreditation and notification to relevant authorities that such training has been delivered by unauthorised institutions.

Certificates carrying the logo of The Nautical Institute will not be validated as compliant when issued under these circumstances.

### Marketing

2. The use of third parties to advertise NI accredited providers courses is not permitted without prior approval from the NI. The NI will consider the following before considering any approval: -
  - a. Marketing material via a third party / agency portal must make it clear that the course is delivered by the NI accredited provider and that is it not the third party that is NI accredited.
  - b. The use of the NI logo by the non-accredited third party / agency is correctly annotated with the name of the accredited entity so it is clear to the client / reader who is delivering the courses.

The NI will first seek to resolve any issue with an accredited provider. If issues cannot be resolved the NI reserves the right to remove the accreditation of the provider and / or to take action against the third party for incorrect use of the NI logo.

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It is intended that these measures will protect accredited companies from any dilution of standards by inappropriate use of agents or marketing methodology

For further information or queries please contact Bernie Bennett, OSR Accrediation Scheme Manager at [bernie.bennett@nautinst.org](mailto:bernie.bennett@nautinst.org)



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