

JOINT NAUTICAL ARCHAEOLOGY POLICY COMMITTEE

Submission to the All-Party Parliamentary Archaeology Group

The JNAPC believes that it is necessary to raise the awareness of the importance of Britain's underwater heritage with divers, seabed operators and the general public, and to persuade government that underwater sites of historical significance should receive no less protection than those on land.

1. The National Heritage Bill should be supported and enacted in Parliament to enable English Heritage to operate below mean low water mark, and administrative functions for nautical archaeology should be transferred from DCMS to English Heritage as soon as possible.
2. English Heritage and the devolved administrations should receive sufficient funding in order to investigate the full extent of the UK's underwater historic environment, prepare proper management plans for this resource, and then be responsible for implementing appropriate actions to protect this country's underwater heritage.
3. In line with DCMS's recommendations in section 4.38 of *The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future* an examination of the marine archaeology legislation is urgently required. The JNAPC has already submitted its initial proposals to DCMS in June 2001 in *Heritage Law at Sea*.
4. Management and resources should be made available for the education of divers and seabed users to improve the voluntary protection of the underwater heritage.
5. Underwater heritage management cuts across a number of government departments particularly DCMS, DTLR, MoD, FCO and DEFRA. Improved liaison between government departments ("joined up government") is required for the future implementation of the 1973 Protection of Wrecks Act, the 1986 Protection of Military Remains Act, the 1995 Merchant Shipping Act, the Valetta Convention, and for determining the UK's approach to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

15th January 2002