

Guidelines for those intending to organise club dives.

The following set of guidelines have been drawn up by the Diving Officer in consultation with the committee. They are not all encompassing but indicate the sort of aspects that should be considered by anyone organising a club dive. You need to have sufficient training to understand how various aspects such as the tides, weather, dive site etc affect safe and enjoyable diving if you are intending to organise a dive. If any further information or assistance is required, please talk to the Diving Officer.

The Club will reimburse any advance payments or deposits for dives that are part of the Club's planned diving operations for the year and for which an SVSAC Dive Proposal Form has been signed by The Diving Officer, but will expect this money to be returned to Club funds once the dive has been paid for by those taking part. Organisers will be expected to make appropriate attempts to fill boats that are paid for from Club funds and the club will only make good any shortfall if this set of guidelines are adhered to.

- 1 Discuss the proposed dive and date with the DO to see if it fits in with the club's diving program for the year.
- 2 If boat diving is involved, find out as much information as you can, for example:
Hard boat or RIB
Facilities on board (toilets, food, dry area)
Reputation of the boat/skipper (you can usually get this from others that have used the boat and the DO may have such contacts)
It is also useful to ask about cancellation conditions eg if weather is the cause, will money be refunded or a different date be offered (which may not suit some of the divers). Does the whole boat have to be paid for or can it be on a 'number of divers' basis, eg can the dive operator provide numbers to fill unused places.
- 3 Find out or decide upon the proposed dive site(s), in particular the max depth at these sites and how difficult the dive is likely to be eg strong currents expected, drift dive, entry/exit procedures, decompression. Any dives outside of the usual club activities or, for instance, deep dives or ones that may require decompression considerations must be very carefully considered to see if there will be enough members of sufficient ability or interest to take part.
- 4 Consider the level of experience/ability and qualification required of divers to carry out the dive safely. The DO/TO should be able to help with this.
- 5 Submit an SVSAC Dive Proposal Form to the Diving Officer for authorisation of the dive as a club dive.
- 6 Produce a flier to advertise the dive and include a list for names of those wanting to take part. Include as much detail as you can about the dive, including the level of qualification and experience required to take part. This list should have a column for divers to put their name, diving qualification and contact number and any other info you need from them such as whether any training is desired (if appropriate for the dive) or whether they are instructors offering to train. Bear in mind that qualification does not necessarily mean ability up to the qualification level. For instance, if the diver has not dived for a long time, are they able to carry out this dive safely. Or will they be using a dry suit for the first time? Do they have experience of the type of diving planned. These factors may make this diver unsuited for this particular dive and it is important to know this before they are confirmed for the dive.
- 7 The flier should also indicate the cost of the dive and give details of when payment will be required. For most dives the whole of the fee should ideally be paid when divers add their name to the list. For the more costly dives such as live-aboards some phasing of payments might be more appropriate. There should be a cut-off date by which all money will be collected to allow sufficient time to find replacements or cancel an undersubscribed dive. This will depend on the conditions of the company providing the boat. It should be made clear that a name added to the list is a firm commitment. Payments are non-refundable and it will be up to the diver to find a replacement if they drop out, not the dive organiser! While the dive organiser may try and find replacements, we must make it clear that it is the divers responsibility.
- 8 There are generally sufficient divers in the club to fill a boat for dives that are the usual type of club dive. If you have more divers than will fill a boat, put these on a reserve list in case someone drops out. The more divers on a reserve list the better as a reserve diver has made no commitment and will not necessarily be available when needed to fill a place. If you have enough reserve divers to fill a second boat then consider organising one. However, you should only do so in consultation with the DO/TO as a carefully balanced judgement or further canvassing may be required to ensure the boat will get filled, and any shortfall will cost the club. Also, you will be losing your

reserve list, so anyone dropping out from the dive will create an unfilled space that may still need to be paid for. Any changes to a dive which the DO has authorised will require a further agreement signature from the DO.

- 9 Any money paid towards the hiring of a boat should be claimed back as soon as possible from the club. This will ensure that the Treasurer can keep track of money that will be committed from club funds.
- 10 Try to organise help with some of the tasks associated with the dive. For instance, finding accommodation, transport arrangements (sharing cars etc), oxygen/first aid considerations (make sure that someone offering to deal with oxygen has oxygen admin qualification), training that will be carried out during the dive. You will usually find divers in the list very willing to help. The dive organiser need not be the dive marshal. This position can also be delegated if there is someone suitably qualified.
- 11 Any problems, such as insufficient numbers to fill the boat, insufficient ratio of experienced to less experienced divers, should be flagged up to the DO or other Officer of the Club as appropriate as early as possible, particularly if there is a risk that the club will be committed to making up a shortfall in the costs.
- 12 The club will not pay for accommodation. This is the responsibility of individuals and you should get firm commitments from those requiring accommodation. I would recommend that you get payment from individuals well before the due date to ensure you do not have to pay and then chase individuals for their money. Of course accommodation will be required for dives of more than 1 days duration and divers will drop out if suitable accommodation cannot be found. So this needs to be considered and organised early in the dive planning process.
- 13 Before a club dive can take place it must receive final approval from the DO by a signature on the dive proposal form. A risk assessment must have been carried out and provided for inspection with the form. If you need any help with the risk assessment talk to other experienced members of the club or consult the DO/TO as appropriate.

Prepared October 2004,
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