

DARWIN SUB-AQUA CLUB

SAFETY MANUAL

& CLUB GUIDE LINES



INTRODUCTION

1. The contents of the Darwin Sub Aqua club safety manual have been derived from research gathered from other SCUBA clubs worldwide including information from the following agencies: DAN, BSAC, NAUI and PADI.
2. The intended purpose of the Darwin Sub Aqua Club safety manual is to set - forth guidelines that promote safe and responsible diving as part of any Darwin Sub Aqua Club (The Club) activity. The Club and the Club committee will take all care to facilitate the safe conduct of any Club dive, but it is the responsibility of each member to read, understand and follow these guidelines and understand the risk associated with SCUBA diving sport prior to undertaking diving activities. Each member and each active diver recognise that diving is a risk-associated sport, and the individual is solely responsible for their own safe conduct.

Michael Henderson
Grant Treloar
March 2026

President
Secretary

DARWIN SUB AQUA CLUB SAFETY MANUAL

This document contains policies that have been presented to and accepted by members of Darwin sub aqua club.

The safety manual is to be considered a "living document". If club members vote on a particular issue that create a new club policy, that policy shall be adopted and added to this manual.

Note that policies are usually written in terms of "should" rather than "must" or "will" or "shall" This is to allow for changing circumstances and to be practical in the face of unforeseen circumstances that may pose danger.

The Secretary should make a note of any additions or changes following meetings and the Safety Manual be updated accordingly.

At the time of last update, the manual has been recorded on a computer using Microsoft "Word". The secretary has the original copy and PDF copy is loaded to the club's web site.

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GENERAL GUIDELINES

Section 1A

ACCESS TO THE DIVE CLUB

1A1 The dive shed is open from 5.30 pm Thursday night for diving and social activities. The shed is also normally open at least 30 minutes prior to dive departures. Access to the club shed at other times may be arranged by contacting a committee member.

Section 1B

USE OF DIVE EQUIPMENT

1B1 Equipment is only available to current financial diving members

Dive fees must be paid before each dive.

TANKS are available for hire for use on club dives by current financial members.

Hire fee is per day see Club fee schedule below

PRE-DIVE CHECK

Equipment must be assembled and checked by your self prior to any dive departure.

All cylinder contents must be checked and the nitrox content recorded in the dive log.

This is when damaged O rings empty tanks etc can be easily rectified.

A tank rack is provided in the boat to accommodate tanks with BCD and regulator fitted.

PROBLEMS

1. Place a note on the white board
2. If appropriate place the tank aside with a note on it
3. Make an entry in the dive log if appropriate
4. Contact the equipment officer
5. Do not repair or modify equipment without informing the equipment officer

It is the responsibility of the hirer to ensure that the equipment is serviceable at hire and on return. If any problems are encountered or anticipated, please contact the Equipment officer.

Section 1C

USE OF COMPRESSOR AND AIR BANKS

1C1 The compressor may be used if you have been shown the correct operating procedure and you have approval from the equipment officer ear protection must be worn and all start up and filling instructions followed.

1C2 The air banks at the club may be used if you have been shown the correct operating procedure and you have approval from the equipment officer; all filling instructions must be followed. The Equipment officer will ensure the compressor/Air bank is maintained

Section 1D

USE OF CLUB BOAT

1D1 Darwin Harbour limits a line between Charles Point and Lee Point defines the seaward limits of the harbour.

1D2 Operating the boat you do not require a licence to operate pleasure craft in the Northern Territory. All safety equipment and procedures must comply with the [NT MARINE ACT](#)

Additional equipment (such as Oxygen, Radio, Epirb, Dive flag and floating line) are to be carried for diver safety.

Safety equipment check list is provided on the club dive log so that you do not forget anything that is required. *The safety Equipment check list and dive log (listing members who are on the dive boat) **MUST BE COMPLETED AND UPLOADED INTO WHAT'S APP BEFORE DEPARTING THE DIVE SHED***

The Master of the vessel must be fully competent in the safe use and operation of the boat and all safety equipment carried on board. Local knowledge of the areas being traversed, the weather conditions and tides are essential.

There are several sandbars, reefs, and other hazards that the operator should be aware of.

1D3 Damage to the boat and equipment *any person involved in an incident which causes damage to the boat or equipment are expected to attend the next committee meeting and provide an explanation of the incident.*

The committee will decide, based on the facts, how much should be contributed (if any) towards the cost of repairs by the members involved. This policy has been adopted in the interests of ensuring that members do appreciate the value of the Club's property and how all members benefit from having this property available for their use.

1D4 Boat Capacity the boat must not be overloaded

Maximum on boat 10 In Harbour

Maximum on boat 8 Out of Harbour

1D5 Towing the boat do not tow the boat unless you and your vehicle are capable of safely launching and retrieving the boat.

The trailer road worthiness is regularly checked by the boat officer however *the person towing the boat is totally responsible for the boat while they have it attached to their vehicle*, this includes parking or traffic fines incurred.

There is a discount for towing the Club boat see Club Fees.

1D6 Private hire the boat is available to financial club members for private fishing or cruising when not required for club events.

The members must comply with the prerequisites listed as well as obtaining authorisation from the Boat officer.

Regulations regarding safety equipment must be observed this includes log book entries

The boat officer must be advised of, and approve a booking before intended departure.

The boat officer will fuel the boat before and check the boat after its return.

Boat must be washed and the motor flushed after every trip

PRIVATE HIRE FEES

See Club fees

Section 2 A

GENERAL DIVING SAFETY POLICY

All divers participating on Club diving activities should dive within their scope of training, personal limitations and be responsible for their own safety and well being.

The event organiser's role is to co-ordinate locations, times and participants. The event organiser will NOT undertake the role of event Divemaster. It is the responsibility and decision of each diver, as to whether the conditions are safe for diving at a Club diving event.

A first aid kit and a suitable oxygen supply **shall** be available on all club diving activities.

All divers **should** limit themselves to the maximum depth in accordance with their training and qualifications.

The Metric Recreational Dive Planner (R.D.P.) or other recognised dive table **should** be used for planning all club diving activities.

Dive Computers should be used responsibly and conservatively, especially on Multi-level dives. Club divers should avoid reverse dive profiles.

When repetitive diving, the surface interval **should** be of sufficient duration to ensure all additional- dives are within limits

The deepest dive **should** be made first.

Repetitive dives **should** be made to progressively shallower depths. When undertaking

All divers **should** have regular diving Medicals.

* Medicals should also be sought after a temporary illness, injury, period of "unfitness" or reasonable absence from diving.

Decompression illness

The club has a duty of care to the diver and other members to take reasonable precautions to reduce the risks of decompression illness and manage any chance of reoccurrence.

Regarding the return to diving after DCI, advice varies greatly and depends upon the specific symptoms a diver experiences. Only 70 percent of injured divers experience an immediate and complete recovery; 30 percent will continue to experience either partial or temporary relief, from a few days to several weeks after treatment.

Divers who have been subject to decompression illness and have spent any time in the recompression chamber must produce a medical certificate from a dive physician (not a GP) that they are medically fit to dive. This must be provided to the club before diving with the club recommences.

Club divers **should** have the diving equipment they use serviced annually by a qualified service technician.

No spearguns, hand spears or Hawaiian Slings are to be used on club diving activities.

No alcoholic beverages **shall** be consumed during surface intervals and **should not be consumed** within a reasonable period of the last dive of the day.

Club divers **should** drink plenty of water before and after a dive to avoid dehydration.

The club should own and maintain the following safety and other equipment for use on **Club diving activities**.

- A. A Dive Flag, conforming to international code flag "A"
- B. First Aid kit.
- C. Spare Parts kit.

- D. Oxy-viva or similar equipment to administer oxygen in a medical emergency.
- E. Strobes and/or other light sources suitable for use on night boat diving activities.
- F. Lights, suitable shore markers for night, shore-based diving activities.

Mandatory all divers **must** have a visible pressure gauge (it can be wireless or fixed SPG) divers must be able to show other divers/ buddy the contents of his or her dive cylinder

Divers participating on club dives **should** test the operation of their buoyancy compensation device, alternate air source. eg "octopus" and their submersible pressure gauge before leaving the dive shed.

Divers participating on club dives **must have no less than 50 bar in his/her tank at the end of every dive.**

All divers **should** maintain a logbook as a record of their diving experience.

All divers participating in club diving activities **should** be certified for that activity.

All divers participating in Club diving activities **should** ensure that all ascents are made no faster than 18 metres per minute and **should** complete a safety stop (delay in ascent at 5 metres for 3 to 5 minutes) at the end of any dive deeper than 10 metres. **The only exception being a life-threatening situation.**

All dives **shall** carry or have attached to his/her BCD a whistle and it is a **requirement** all divers **must** carry a safety sausage (SMB).

All Club organised dives **Must** be NO-DECOMPRESSION dives.

Club divers using dive computers **should** avoid diving to the limits of their dive computer.

BOOKING DIVES

Dives may be booked on Thursday nights. If you are unable to attend the club personally, please contact another member or utilise the what's app group chat.

The club has a closed what's app group set up for members who cannot attend the club so they can also participate in dives

A Dive leader and someone capable of towing/driving the boat must be part of any dive trip being arranged.

If you must withdraw from a booked dive, you must give as much notice as possible preferably 12 hours give others time to fill vacant slots. ***NO SHOW DIVES MUST BE PAID FOR if your name is on list, you may be preventing others from attending.***

You may front up for a dive you have not booked for, but there is a risk that you may not have a place, or that the dive may have been rescheduled it is advisable keep up to date via the what's app group chat.

The Names of participating divers shall be entered in the Club dive logbook prior to departure from the club. Each diver is responsible to make sure his/her details and their emergency contact details have been entered in the dive log.

The DIVE LEADER MUST CHECK THE LOGBOOK PRIOR TO DEPARTURE AND UPLOAD COMPLETED SHEET INTO WHATS APP GROUP CHAT ensure all names are on the dive log and the engine checklist has been completed. Divers, please add comments to the log when we return to the shed.

Section 2B

BOAT DIVING POLICY

This Section of "Boat Diving Policy" is to be read in conjunction with section 1A "General Diving Policy"

1B1 Club boat charters **shall** only be conducted from vessels holding all safety equipment as specified by relevant local authority.

1B2 A mermaid line shall be deployed from the stern of the vessel, and a descent line shall be used on all boat dives. (anchor line with detachable buoy).

1B3 All vessels used by the club during diving **shall** display a "diver below" flag in accordance with internationally recognised **Diving Flag**

1B4 Any boat with divers operating from it must always display signals by day or night to inform other boat users. The daytime signal for divers is an International Code Flag "A". The flag must be at least 750mm long and 600mm wide.

1B4 All boats must keep at least 50 metres clear of boats, buoys or areas showing diving signals

1B5 Unattended Boats

The practice of divers leaving vessels unattended is illegal under current legislation and very dangerous. The potential for disaster is real a responsible person must always stay onboard your boat whenever divers are below. This designated person may be required to raise an alarm if the diver is overdue to surface, to attend to the vessel should it start drifting or to assist divers back onboard after the dive.

Section 2C

SHORE DIVING POLICY

2C1 This Section of "Shore Diving Policy" is to be read in conjunction with Section 2A "General Diving Policy".

2C2 A dive flag, conforming to international code flag "A" recommendations, rigged on a float suitable for shore diving activities **should** be displayed when practical.

Divers operating **without a vessel**, for example from a jetty, must display the international code flag "A".

Section 2D

NIGHT DIVING POLICY

This Section of "Night Diving Policy" is to be read in conjunction with Section 1A "General Diving Policy" and Section 1B "Boat Diving Policy" and Section 1C "Shore Diving Policy" as appropriate.

2D1 When night diving from a boat the vessel **must** show the international signal for a 'vessel restricted in its ability to manoeuvre'. These are three lights in a vertical line, top and bottom are red and the middle one is white. The diver's boat should also show other appropriate lights such as an anchor light.

A suitable marker light source **should** be attached to the anchor line or suspended below the vessel to assist divers relocate the vessel.

2D2 All divers **shall** have a suitable personal identification light source in addition to their main light, eg a "cyalume" stick or strobe, back up underwater light and a whistle.

2D3 All divers **should** have a personal main and back up underwater light and not share a light source with another diver.

2D4 People involved in night diving **without a vessel** are now required to display a yellow (orange) flashing light that can be seen from a minimum distance of 200 metres.

Section 2E

CLUB DIVING & DIVEMASTER POLICY

Although some members do hold DM certification it is recommended that they have suitable indemnity insurance if exercising the role.

Section 3A

EMERGENCY PROCEEDURES

In the event of a diving emergency utilise best contact method available, normally mobile phone call 000 Tell the operator what you need- police Fire Ambulance if you are calling from a mobile phone, you need to tell the operator the town and state you are calling from Wait to be connected.

Royal Darwin Hospital Emergency 8922-8888

If required Hyperbaric Units outside of Darwin, DAN Australia 1800-088 200

International + 61-3-9886 9166

In the event of a diving incident a DAN ([Diving incident report](#)) should be filled out and sent to diving incident monitoring.

The DSAC safety committee encourages all DSAC members to join [DAN](#) its considered essential for overseas trips.

Travel safety information and warnings can also be obtained from www.dfat.gov.au

Section 3B

THE COMMITTEE and their roles (brief descriptions)

President is the principal leader and has overall responsibility for the club's administration.

Secretary is the chief administration officer of the organisation. This person provides the coordinating link between members, the management committee and outside agencies.

Treasurer is the financial management officer for the club.

2x Committee members are an important part of the management committee. The following officers make up our committee

The committee should be responsible for maintaining and updating the club safety manual however valuable input from club members should also be discussed and included.

The Darwin Sub Aqua Club committee **should** have at the club house the following:

1. The Club Constitution and Safety Manual/Guidelines.
2. Associations Act 2003 with amendments.
3. Membership Register.
4. Membership Application
5. Dive log
6. Boat pre dive check list

Section 3C

INCENTIVE SCHEME

The aim of the incentive scheme is to encourage members to participate in Club diving activities. The club log book. **shall** be used to award a club member with the greatest number of "Dives" for the diving year a perpetual trophy.

If any a diver has won this trophy a total of 3 times he becomes a club diving ledged and becomes ineligible. The trophy then goes to the next eligible diver.

Section 3D

FINANCIAL MATTERS

3D1 Membership

Only financial members may use the club's diving facilities. Interstate/visiting divers may use the facilities after joining normal club dive fees apply.

ALL DIVERS MUST BE FINANCIAL MEMBERS BEFORE ANY DIVING IS DONE

Fees are due 1st April each year and should be paid within 30 days.

Membership forms accepted most Thursday dependant on committee member availability (EFT is only option)

All new members must fill in a membership form.

1. Fill out membership form (all new members)
2. Check potential members dive qualifications, recommend all divers be advanced eg able to dive to 18 m or greater due to our dive sites check of log book indicating dives in the last few months and dive card Cards must be sighted and recorded on membership form.
3. Transfer of fees is done By EFT. Membership forms go to secretary.

3D2 Payments and expenses

All dive equipment leaving the shed must be marked in the dive log

If you have incurred any expenses on behalf of the club it must be approved by the majority of the committee and a receipt must be provided to the treasurer before the reimbursement can be made.

DIVE MONEY

Work out what you owe for your dive plus Nitrox and any tank hire fees

1. Record your Name and equipment and amount in the dive log
2. Transfer the fees directly into our account with description (dive, air, tank hire etc)

All Payments are by EFT its easier for everyone.

The club operates on an honesty system and we want to keep it that way so please pay for what you use

3D3Overseas Trips

The organiser of the Darwin Sub-Aqua Club overseas trips shall seek the best price for the members from registered travel agents. If enough participate on a trip and any free of charge (FOC) seats are provided (e.g. 10th airfare free, or free dives etc) The organiser must pay the same costs as any other member and any funds gained from FOC must be paid into the club.

Section 3E

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

3E1 The Club **should** publicise coming events or other matters of importance to members by posting a letter or “flyer” and by sending a broadcast e-mail or what’s app or conveyed on Thursday night social meetings.

2E2 The Club **should** maintain a website/what’s app group to enhance communications between members and attract new club members. The platforms should contain the following in addition to members contributions:

1. Calendar of Club Events
2. Members' Services
3. Club Constitution and Club safety manual (Download Versions)
4. Meet us (Meetings) and contact us
5. Club History.

Currently DSAC has exposure on the following web sites:

- a. www.dsac.com.au

Section 3F

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER BODIES

3F1 The club **shall** not recommend any particular diving educational agency. It does however recommend that members seeking advice ask other members for their opinion.

SECTION 4

GOALS AND AIMS

1. The Club's main goals are considered to be:

- A. Safe diving,
- B. Conservation of the marine environment/wreck history
- C. Social interaction.

Issues related to these goals are:

- A. Equipment owned by the club.
- B. Organising trips/dives.
- C. Community awareness.
- D. Lobby groups on related issues.
- E. Participation in activities that will benefit the marine environment. eg Clean up Australia.
- F. Community education.
- G. Organising events.
- H. Fund raising.
- I. Foster unity, club morale, camaraderie.

Aim of the club - To be an environmental conscious club that promotes safe diving and fosters social interaction.

A Dive Convenor usually the boat Captain shall have the right to refuse to allow a DSAC member or guest to dive if their equipment, training or health does not appear to be appropriate for the dive, in the interests of the safety of all divers in the dive group.

A diver, by signing the DSAC membership form (new member or anyone that has renewed membership), shall take full moral and legal responsibility for his or her own diving safety and agrees to dive in a manner that does not compromise the safety of others.

DARWIN SHIPWRECKS

The following shipwrecks are located near Darwin and are protected under either the [Underwater cultural heritage act 2018](#) or under the Northern Territory's [Heritage Act 2011](#).

Several sites in NT are protected and have exclusion Zones in place No access

The Japanese Imperial Navy submarine *I-124* where entry to the protected zone around the site is prohibited (Japanese war grave),

The last of the Catalina flying boats number 6 has a protection zone in place.

The Booya has a permit system in place which the club has access too. divers are encouraged to visit with the club and enjoy the experience of diving on some of the best-known wreck sites in the Northern Territory.

The public/Members are reminded that it is illegal to interfere in anyway or remove anything from these legally protected historic sites. They are fragile reminders of our

maritime past and can not be replaced. The only things visitors can take away are photographs, memories of their experience and recommendations for others to follow.

Severe penalties apply for any breach of the heritage Act 2011

Any DSAC member found removing anything from wrecks sites will be suspended from diving with the club and the heritage branch informed of any suspected breach of the heritage act 2011. (With the exception of fishing boat anchors and fishing tackle)

The club can not risk any breach of the above act as it would see the end of DAWIN SUB-AQUA CLUB Its your club so please abide by these guidelines.

Below are the current protected wrecks sites but nothing should be removed from any wreck site

*Booya
SS Brisbane
British Motorist
Don Isidroo
Florence D
Kelat
I-124
Mauna Loa
USAT Meigs
Neptuna
SS Ellengowan
USS Peary
Zealandia
Catalina's
DC3*

SECTION 5

How to Treat DCI

IN ANY DIVING INCIDENT **ASSUME DECOMPRESSION ILLNESS (DCI)**
UNTIL TOLD OTHERWISE

CONTACT THE EMERGENCY SERVICES AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY

Prolonging the time between the onset of the symptoms and the commencement of treatment may increase the chances of permanent damage to the body. Whilst waiting for the emergency services, damage to the diver can be minimised by following the procedure outlined below.

MONITOR AIRWAY, BREATHING AND CIRCULATION. RESUSCITATE IF NECESSARY. Supporting life must take priority over all the other first aid procedures.

LAY THE CASUALTY FLAT

ADMINISTER 100 % OXYGEN IMMEDIATELY (First 15 mins is critical)

- Record the time that the patient received oxygen and their response, as this information will be needed by the hyperbaric chamber team.

Allow the patient to breathe air for 15 mins if they react badly to the oxygen, before the oxygen is tried again.
TREAT FOR SHOCK - Keep the diver warm, although do not rewarm too rapidly as this can encourage bubble formation. - Keep the diver quiet and still. - Reassure the diver at all times.
CONTACT EMERGENCY SERVICES (AUSTRALIA) - Shore Dive – DIAL 8922-888 Royal Darwin Hospital OR 000. - Boat Dive – PAN PAN MEDICO on Channel 16. - DES 1800-088 200 - Be ready to give the emergency services the following information: - Age of Diver - Condition - Improving/ Stable/ Worsening/ No problems - Muscle Weakness - Can the diver stand/ walk, are their arms weak
ENCOURAGE A CONSCIOUS AND STABLE PATIENT TO DRINK NON-ALCOHOLIC FLUIDS Monitor quantities taken.
COMPLETE A DAN <u>DIVE ACCIDENT REPORT FORM</u>

SECTION 6

Fees

Current fees are on the web site under club info and printed/laminated and posted at several locations at the club house.

SECTION 7

Version history

Issue no	Date	Nature of amendment
1	September 2004	Original document
2	5/11/2009	Added club guidelines & section on member's responsibilities at historic wreck sites.
3	11/2/2010	Removed reference to hire gear (regs, BCD)
4	19/6/2011	Changed fees to dive cost and include Air fill of \$5.00 for any tank used
5	24/11/2011	Mandatory All divers must have a visible pressure gauge (can be wireless or fixed) updated fees
6	29/9/2012	all new members must be advanced Qualified, and membership is only accepted on last Thursday of every month

7	29/3/2013	Removed free table added notes to say updated fees are located on web and at club house removed reference to temp members
8	14/7/18	Committee members updated, updated fuel car details to puma,
9	6/3/23	Updated front cover minor changes to wording added section on restrictions to divers after being admitted to decompression chamber
10	13/3/26	Minor spelling and removed all reference to cash payments