

● Hints and tips for dive trip coordinators.

○ *Dive Planning*

Dive planning sessions should

- be held the evening before the dive.
- be conducted in a polite and cordial fashion.
- be at a convenient time that has been notified in advance to everyone on the trip
- be as short as possible, less than an hour, preferably only 10-15 minutes.
- be conducted by the trip coordinator or their delegate
- concentrate on the first one or two runs for the next day, as later plans often change. The first dive is typically deeper than following dives.
- include a short dive brief for people unfamiliar with the site

The Dive Brief should

- be sufficient to enable people to make a decision as to whether they want to go on the dive.
- be given by someone with suitable knowledge of the intended site.
- include depth, expected difficulty & conditions (currents, visibility, navigation, marks, anchoring), points of interest.
- be brief. Detailed information is often best conveyed at the site, just before the dive. Who will do this should be decided at dive planning.
- be summarised on the white board.

White Board Details

- Boat
- Destination
- ETD, ETA
- Divers
 - licensed driver(s) (L)
 - site experience (E)
 - who gives extra brief (B)
- Expected features of the planned site (depth, vis, current)
- Weather forecast

Weather

- Delegate someone with a suitable mobile to track weather reports if possible, especially on long weekends.
- Compensate them for data charges (say \$2-\$5/trip).

Changes to dive plans

- Inform the trip coordinator or their delegate of changes before the dive.
- Notify major changes in dive location en-route by radio or mobile phone (including an extra dive or snorkel on the way back at a separate location).

Responsibility

- Each diver is responsible for determining which dives they are capable of doing.
- The club does not provide instructors or dive master services, even if some members have these qualifications.

Preference in dive planning is given to

- people with full tanks
 - full tanks includes access to club spare tanks.
 - tell new members that they need to organise their own air fills.
- towers over non towers on the first dive.
- people with air who have had less dives this trip than others.
- people who have qualifications that are required for the particular dive (eg. licensed boat drivers, knowledge of site, experience when there are lots of new divers).

Club spare tanks

- need to be clearly identified
- are available for ALL club members.
- ensure that club members who only have a single club tank don't miss out on dives because some members possess many tanks of their own.

People absent from dive planning

- should inform the coordinator of their preferences beforehand.

Oversubscribed dives

- If no easy solution is quickly found, planning should move on to the next dive
- Leave the planning for the oversubscribed dive till last.

New and Rusties Dive Planning

Additional considerations apply to trips advertised as "New and Rusties" trips (although most club trips include 'new and rusty' divers).

- The dive location (e.g. JB, Eden) should be one where a lot of club members are familiar with many dive sites.
- The ratio of new:experienced divers should be 1:1, for the first couple of dives either as a
 - buddy pair of one new diver with an experienced diver;
 - group of an experienced diver with an inexperienced buddy pair;
 - foursome of a buddy pair of new divers plus a buddy pair of experienced divers.
- On boat dives at least 2 people on each boat should be familiar with the site and its marks, how to navigate to the site, how to anchor, and how to navigate below water.
- The first dive can be an easy shore dive to re-familiarise people with gear, and to check buoyancy.
- During the first shore dive, other experienced divers can check out boat dive sites to re-familiarise themselves with the site and to assess the prevailing conditions for safety.
- "Shore dive" is not synonymous with "easy dive".
Some shore dives are usually easy (e.g. Murray's beach east of the boat ramp) but access at other sites depends on prevailing conditions (e.g. Bawley Point, Kianinny Bay and Tathra Wharf where rock entrances and exits are required).
- Dive sites should be easy and safe:
 - not too deep
 - have easy entry and exit
 - free of current, waves and surge in the prevailing conditions.
- Do not assume that new divers have training in rock entrances and exits (although this is a valid exercise under suitable conditions).

O *Welcoming and Retaining New Members*

The first trip with the Club can be an intimidating experience. To minimise this, the trip coordinator should:

- Never convey the attitude that 'this is not a trip for Newbies'. New and Rusty divers should be always welcome – even though not every dive may be suitable for them. Our Club trip website says 'all members are welcome on virtually all trips'. Almost all dive destinations have some sites that are suitable for all levels of diver.
- Put new members in a car with experienced club members when organising lifts/transport to and from the trip where possible.
- Impress the need to make new members feel welcome on all experienced club members - be more inclusive and less cliquy.
- Welcome new members into social/non-diving aspects of a dive trip (e.g. trips to town for food/tank fills)
- Encourage experienced buddy pairs to dive with new member buddy pairs as a team to demonstrate concern for their safety and assess their capability.
- Encourage a more experienced diver to buddy with a new member that does not have a buddy.

Boat Use

- All boat trips must have a licensed boat driver on board who is experienced, competent and comfortable with driving that club boat.
- All boat dive trips must have at least two people on the boat.
- The trip coordinator (or delegate) has the final say on whether a dive goes ahead, and who goes on the dive. However, they should not cancel a dive without good reason.
- Those taking the boat for a dive need to consider what to do with the boat after the dive. They should confirm whether there are other people scheduled to take the boat for another dive, or that the boat can be put back on its trailer at the end of the dive.
- Boat drivers should take into consideration the safety and comfort of the passengers and drive accordingly.
- The boats should only take 6 divers and their gear (the rating comes from the hull capacity if a pontoon fails).

Towers

The Club relies on the goodwill of our towers. They should be adequately compensated for additional fuel and wear and tear on their cars. Towing rates and distances on the club website are just a guideline. Some cars will use more or less petrol when towing. Many additional kilometres may also accrue taking the boat(s) to and from the boat ramp. Washing boats at a car wash costs money. Find out from the towers what their additional costs really are and reimburse them the real costs.

Things to help towers:

- Ensure that the boats are fully prepared during gear issue so that they are ready to just 'tow away'.
- Solo towers who offer to take passengers get preference for passengers over non-towers.
- Ensure that the final run of the day does not delay the planned departure time of the tower.
- Take a hose to flush the motors and wash the boats at the coast (avoids water restrictions in Canberra).
- All trip participants should stay until they have helped to clean and prepare the boats for towing back to Canberra.