

## COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CAVING CLUBS TRAINING PROGRAMME

1. **Introduction.** This document lays out a proposed six-month programme for caving training within the Council of Southern Caving Clubs (CSCC). The programme is subject to change, and at this stage should be viewed as a proposal for training, with a request for suitably experienced individuals to deliver individual sessions. This allows for further comments or refinement before delivery.
2. **Intent.** The intent is to deliver voluntary supplementary training to enhance cavers own skills and abilities within caving. The intent is not to create any progressive training programme, provide assessment, or issue qualifications, and any concerns that this is happening must be addressed, and measures put in place to ensure this does not happen.
3. **COVID-19.** As the ongoing COVID-19 situation remains fluid, it is accepted that dates may change at short notice, in response to UK Government guidance. The safety of participants and instructors remains the highest priority.
4. **Delivering Training Sessions.** All training sessions can be run by a suitably experienced person, with the intention being that the individual attending picks what they feel is most useful for them. Training session overviews have been deliberately left vague, to give the person running the session the freedom to create a session that they feel is an appropriate method to deliver the objectives. CSCC Training Officer should be consulted on the session plans, in order to ensure that the correct support (in terms of venue, funding and equipment) can be provided, **not** to dictate exactly how sessions should be run.
5. **Beginner Training Sessions.**
  - a. **Intro to Caving.** A session to introduce participants to Caving as a sport. The session has the following objectives and is aimed at a caver who is new to caving, and has been on very few, if any, trips.
    - i. Participants will be able to complete a caving trip.
    - ii. Participants are aware of ladder and lifeline techniques.
    - iii. Participants understand the hazards within caves.
    - iv. Participants understand cave conservation principles.
    - v. Participants are aware of clubs and sources of information relating to caving in the area.
  - b. **Introduction to SRT.** A session to introduce participants to SRT and cover simple techniques is aimed at a caver who is new to caving, and has been on very few, if any, trips.
    - i. Participants understand what makes up an SRT kit and can inspect their own equipment to check it is safe to use.
    - ii. Participants can act safely on and around a pitch head, and understand the hazards present at a pitch head.
    - iii. Participants can competently ascend and descend a single pitch.
    - iv. Participants can carry out a changeover.
  - c. **SRT Part Two.** A session to build on more complicated individual SRT techniques. The session has the following objectives is aimed at a caver who is new to caving, and has been on very few, if any, trips.
    - i. Refresher on the objectives of Introduction to SRT.

- ii. Participants can pass a rebelay on the ascent and descent.
- iii. Participants can pass a deviation on the ascent and descent.

## 6. **Intermediate skills Training Sessions.**

a. **Caving First Aid.** This session is realistically aimed at both beginner and more experienced cavers. The session has the following objectives:

- i. Participants understand the call out process, how to contact cave rescue, and what information is required in case of an emergency.
- ii. Participants have an idea of possible contents for a caving first aid kit.
- iii. Participants understand the symptoms and effects of exposure, and how to counter those effects.
- iv. Participants can provide an initial triage of a casualty, and basic assistance to the casualty.

b. **Ladder and Lifeline Techniques.** Participants can safely set up a ladder and lifeline, lead a group over the pitch, and deal with minor issues. The session has the following objectives and is aimed at competent cavers wishing to either start leading trips or refine their existing abilities.

- i. Participants can safely rig a ladder and lifeline.
- ii. Participants can manage a group of cavers passing a ladder using life lining techniques.
- iii. Participants can deal with minor issues which may occur during the group passing the ladder.

c. **Rigging for SRT.** Participants understand some of the techniques used when rigging and can rig safely. The session has the following objectives and is aimed at competent cavers wishing to either start leading trips or refine their existing abilities.

- i. Participants understand and can tie a variety of knots and understand scenarios when each one could be used.
- ii. Participants can rig a traverse line.
- iii. Participants can rig a Y hang.
- iv. Participants can rig a rebelay.
- v. Participants can rig a deviation.
- vi. Participants understand how different rigging techniques may be appropriate for different scenarios.

d. **Leadership While Caving.** Participants understand some of the considerations and factors affecting groups when leading in caves and understand how to deal with more common issues. The session has the following objectives and is aimed at competent cavers wishing to either start leading trips or refine their existing abilities.

- i. Participants feel confident leading a group in caves.
- ii. Participants are aware of the symptoms and effects of fatigue.
- iii. Participants understand the principles of group management.
- iv. Participants can identify early warning signs of issues developing within a group and treat effectively.

e. **Navigation in Caves.** Participants feel comfortable navigating within caves. The session has the following objectives and is aimed at competent cavers wishing to either start leading trips or refine their existing abilities.

- i. Participants can read and use surveys.
- ii. Participants can read and use descriptions.

iii. Participants know where to find surveys and descriptions for caves.

7. **Bespoke Caving Sessions.** As the author does not feel qualified to write objectives for these bespoke caving sessions, this section is left deliberately blank and comments for objectives or additional sessions are welcomed. Proposed sessions are:

- a. Surveying.
- b. Cave Photography.
- c. Rescue within Caves.
- d. Expedition Caving (likely to be a separate mini programme).

8. **Programme.** Due to CoVID-19 restrictions and based on forecasts that we will expect to see restrictions lifting in Spring/Summer 2021, the proposed timeline for this training sees the first events starting in May. These dates can be changed, as the situation changes and depending on other forecasts and session leads availability. The programme with proposed dates is attached in Annex A.

9. **Bids Process.** While we are hoping to get volunteers to run these sessions, it is accepted in some cases that instructors may need to be hired to deliver training, namely those holding BCA qualifications. To make the process for selection of session leads as fair as possible, anyone who is interested in running a session is invited to submit a proposal to run to training by 14 Mar 2021, covering:

- a. Proposed training dates.
- b. Training to be delivered.
- c. Summary of training offer (equipment provided, suggested venues, suggested plan).
- d. Assistance required (venues, equipment)
- e. Cost.

Interested parties who are not able to cover any of the below sessions are also invited to submit an expression of future interest, to ensure they are not missed during future tender rounds.

Selection will then take place, with each submission being judged against the following criteria:

- a. Adherence to the aims of the training.
- b. Additional resources/value provided.
- c. Ability of the session lead (experience and qualifications, if any).
- d. Cost.

Selection will be carried out by the CSCC Training Officer, with the rationale and scoring recorded and submitted to the CSCC Committee for review. Once this selection has been done and approved, training events will be evenly distributed between all interested parties. Interested parties will then be notified, and the event publicised.

Individuals and clubs interested in running training events on a voluntary basis are not required to go through the selection process for beginner training events. This is aimed primarily at clubs or individuals who are looking for CSCC assistance in running their own events.

10. **Proposed Changes to BCA Training.** There is currently a proposal being debated reference changes to the BCA Training Committee, this is likely to affect funding of these events, and is the reason for the bids process. CSCC Training Officer to keep all interested parties updated on any changes.

11. **Summary.** This document lays out a proposal for the first six months of a training programme for the CSCC and invites comments and feedback to further refine this caving. The training is intended to compliment the skills cavers learn within their existing clubs and should be used in conjunction with trips run by the clubs. The training is aimed across the spectrum of

abilities, and it is expected that this will be refined and evolve further over time, as the needs of cavers in the region and appetite for training is more fully understood.

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