



*Welcome to*

# *Seadragons*

*Dive Group*

## *Member Handbook*

*Seadragons is a Tasmanian scuba diving group based in Hobart, but diving around the State. Sea Dragons are about fostering scuba diving in a safe, inclusive, educational and fun environment. It is run by volunteers and is structured to provide accessible diving for people from all walks of life including young, old, male, female and families. We hope you enjoy being part of it.*

[www.marinelife.org.au](http://www.marinelife.org.au); [marinelifetassie@gmail.com](mailto:marinelifetassie@gmail.com)

Also like us on Facebook



## Why network with a dive group like Seadragons?

### **1. Meet other divers**

Most dives are relatively short, the real fun is in getting to know new people and who share your passions. Done properly, scuba diving shouldn't just create short-term recreation, but also lifelong friendships. We value inclusiveness and the Seadragons ethos is to be welcoming and respectful to men and women, young divers, new divers, old divers and families. You will always have a Seadragons pal to dive with, even if your old high school mates move interstate, or get in to hang gliding instead.

### **2. Continue improving your experience and skills**

Especially if you have recently finished a course, you will benefit from taking the time to come to grips with your gear and new skills. Seadragons has an active mentoring program to ensure that everyone can grow their skills in a learning-friendly environment. We have a program of dives measured to meet, and improve on, your current skills.

### **3. Discover local dive sites**

The dive resorts are fun, but an annual holiday won't keep you fit, or up-to-date with your skills. Tasmania's temperate waters have hundreds of special sites to explore. We can take you there, show you where to dive, chat, help identify the creatures, let you have a go of a borrowed camera, and anything else that sounds like fun. We also regularly go to several sites, we don't dive the same spot all the time.





A diver in a black wetsuit and scuba gear is swimming over a vibrant coral reef. The water is clear and blue. Several large, silver-grey fish with orange spots near their eyes are swimming in the foreground. The diver is positioned on the left side of the frame, looking towards the right.

#### ***4. Enjoy some dive travel***

At least once or twice a year we plan to organise mainland and overseas trips, not just to the usual places you have already heard about, but to some Australian and lesser know travel locations too. Recently members have been to Lord Howe Island and Bali. Next year we will may try the Philippines or the Great Barrier Reef.

#### ***5. Get access to useful information***

From reviewing the latest in equipment, updating dive safety standards, understanding local environmental issues, to accessible dive insurance, Seadragons focusses on being a hub for the latest information on a variety of diving issues. You will automatically get a subscription to Marine Life Magazine, an eco-friendly colour electronic magazine on Australian marine news and issues that happens to be produced by one of our members.

#### ***6. Share your knowledge***

Learning never ends, even for the most accomplished divers. Whether you have a knowledge of dive sites, sea creatures, underwater photography or shipwrecks, we emphasise the importance or learning, then sharing, skills and information. Make friends, earn the respect of your peers, and pass on your knowledge by being a Seadragons Mentor.



### **7. Access to Gear**

Because of the generosity of members we can offer access to some boats and other gear.

### **8. Discover new activities**

Tired of just looking around? Our members can get you started on underwater photography dives, marine science dives, maritime heritage diving, lake diving, muck diving, night diving and probably anything else we can think of.

### **9. Be safe**

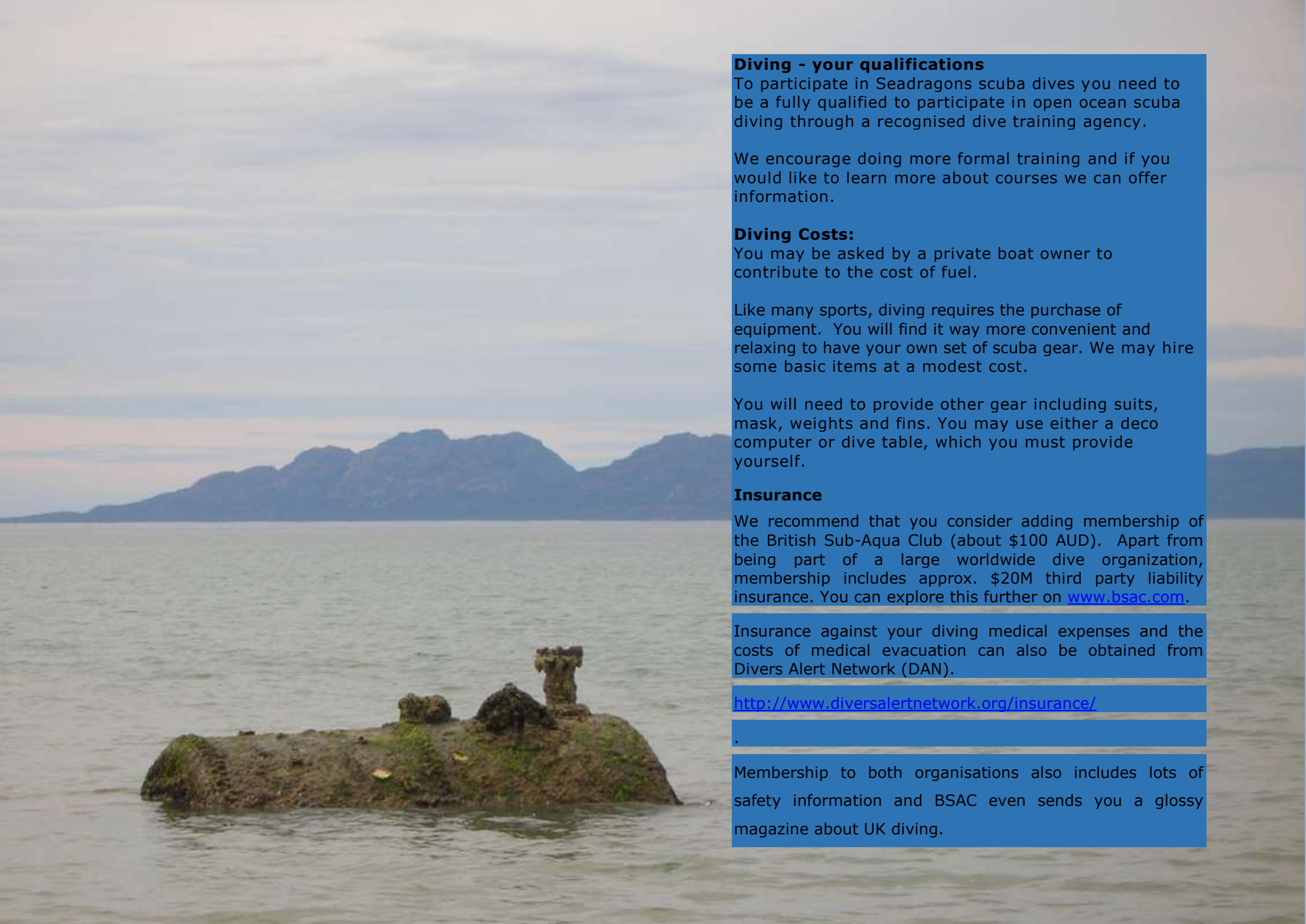
No-one can make diving completely safe, but Seadragons diving practices are designed to create a positive safety culture where each diver looks out for the well-being of others. We adopt standard BSAC dive safety rules, that are similar to what you already know, but are specifically tailored for temperate water recreational diving.

### **10. It's hassle free**

There is a focus on diving rather than rituals. We don't have meetings with minutes and points of order, our non-diving communication will be electronic, so you can be involved in Tasmania, or while in Timbuctoo. You can decide how much you want to get involved, and we offer free introductory dives, and allow people to join just to receive the information.

You will note the emphasis on giving and sharing. This isn't a commercial charter service or 'do you own thing' private dive. This is a volunteer-run fun activity open to everyone. We have to have consistent diving rules to keep people safe, and can't always guarantee we will be back at lunchtime. Someone has to do tasks like pull the anchor and wait while we wash out the boat. You will expect the Seadragons to be patient, welcoming and organised, so you need to be ready to help us get there, even if that is only a small helping hand from time to time.





### **Diving - your qualifications**

To participate in Seadragons scuba dives you need to be a fully qualified to participate in open ocean scuba diving through a recognised dive training agency.

We encourage doing more formal training and if you would like to learn more about courses we can offer information.

### **Diving Costs:**

You may be asked by a private boat owner to contribute to the cost of fuel.

Like many sports, diving requires the purchase of equipment. You will find it way more convenient and relaxing to have your own set of scuba gear. We may hire some basic items at a modest cost.

You will need to provide other gear including suits, mask, weights and fins. You may use either a deco computer or dive table, which you must provide yourself.

### **Insurance**

We recommend that you consider adding membership of the British Sub-Aqua Club (about \$100 AUD). Apart from being part of a large worldwide dive organization, membership includes approx. \$20M third party liability insurance. You can explore this further on [www.bsac.com](http://www.bsac.com).

Insurance against your diving medical expenses and the costs of medical evacuation can also be obtained from Divers Alert Network (DAN).

<http://www.diversalertnetwork.org/insurance/>

Membership to both organisations also includes lots of safety information and BSAC even sends you a glossy magazine about UK diving.

## Our Safety Standards - some highlights

To avoid arguments over who has the right standards, we have incorporated the BSAC standards. They will be similar to what you were taught but are further developed for temperate water recreational diving.

### **Buddy Pairs**

All divers should train to be self-sufficient; however, it is important for safe diving that divers are formed into appropriate buddy pairs. Buddy diving means a pair of divers operating as a unit, each taking some responsibility for the safety of the other.

### **Buddy Checks**

A full buddy check should be carried out prior to entering the water.

### **Build up experience**

Newly qualified divers undertake a structured series of dives to progressively build their experience.

### **Building up to a big dive**

When a diver has had a lay-off from diving for a period of time, or is planning a dive to a depth significantly deeper than that to which they have recently dived, a planned program of dives progressively building up to the target depth is recommended.

### **Buoyancy**

Buoyancy is one of the key issues involved in decompression illness incidents. All divers should ensure that they:

- Have sufficient buoyancy to be supported on the surface.
- Are practiced and confident at performing decompression stops within +/- 0.5m.
- Are able to maintain neutral buoyancy and maintain a depth level at all stages of the planned dive.
- Are able to control their ascent rates within recommendations.
- Are proficient in managing emergency buoyancy control scenarios,

### **Decompression**

All dives must be planned using a decompression tool the diver has been trained to use.

### **Dive discipline**

It is a rule of that the Dive leader has the authority to suspend a member from diving if instructions are not obeyed.

### **Fitness to dive**

Diving uses as much energy as moderate to heavy work. Before resuming diving, after a lay off, you are advised to regain physical fitness, practice basic underwater skills in the pool or sheltered water training area and complete a series of 'work up' dives before diving to depth. Ensure all divers are both physically and psychologically fit for the dives they plan to undertake.

### **Skills practice**

The essence of safe diving lays in the skill and competence of the diver; the more complex a dive the more important this is. A good level of skills can only be maintained and improved with constant practice.

### **Separated divers**

If divers become separated underwater, a brief attempt (approx. 30 seconds) to re-locate should be made, after which the divers should surface. If the dive is subsequently re-commenced appropriate decompression planning must first be carried out.

## **Policies**

### **Environmental**

To make a sustained and positive impact to the freshwater and marine environment. We respect fishing laws.

### **Respect our wrecks**

Do not dive on a designated protected site, and do not lift anything that appears to be of historical interest.

### **Safeguarding**

We protect juvenile and vulnerable members.

***See our Members Dive Guide for more information***



## Your Officials

### President, Michael Jacques



Author of "Dive Tasmania", a guide to Tasmanian dive sites, and editor of "Marine Life Magazine". Michael has also conducted research monitoring of rare red handfish. He is keen on underwater photography, wrecks and marine ecology. Michael does all the administrative work for Seadragons

and is supposed to do all the 'strategic thinking' stuff. He doesn't have a favourite dive site, every place has something special to offer if you look hard enough.

### Dive Officer, Richard Mason

Trained in the U.K. where he experienced freezing quarries before deciding to move to an area with better diving. Richard has an interest in safety and new diving techniques. He is committed to the mentoring of new divers. Richard is in charge of our diving program. His favourite things are dive gadgets and a particular brand of English pork pie.



### Executive Officer, David Byrne



David was formerly the Executive Officer on board Navy submarines and patrol boats. He dabbles in photography, dive travel but will have a go at anything. Dave is our professional people manager and is always willing to help out. He is our 'go to guy' for a fun idea for a social event, or if you are having an issue with anything and would like a friendly chat.

## Contact Us

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