



Seadragons

Members Diving Guide

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SAFE DIVING

Recreational diving is considered to be a reasonably safe activity, provided that divers are properly trained, equipped and observe safe diving practices.

Diving is unique in being the only activity undertaken in such a hostile environment, requiring continuous life support. When things go wrong this may result in serious, or even fatal consequences.

In order to dive safely, divers must firstly comply with the safety practices that they were trained to follow. They must then keep this information up-to-date with additional courses and reading.

Seadragons adopts the BSAC Safety Guidelines and they should also be referred to.

The safety equipment and practices detailed below are strongly recommended as an additional safeguard and may also serve to help clarify some of the detail specific to our locality and the Seadragons expectations of a dive.

Who Monitors the Standards?

It is up to YOU to be safe. You also have to encourage others to be safe by setting a good example, and to speak up bravely about safety.

The officers of Seadragons are volunteers helping out a non-profit SCUBA diving group, not a police force or instruction agency. Compliance remains the responsibility of individual divers.

While we may well have something to say about an unsafe practice, you cannot assume that every dive is closely monitored by the Seadragons office bearers, or Dive Leaders. If you see a problem, especially if the cause is the President or Dive Leader, we want you to openly discuss it and try to rectify the issue.

Most Dive Leaders are not professionally qualified in this field and all members should understand that the Seadragons may not always be able to provide the same level of management experience and safety/first aid expertise backup which may be expected of a professional operator.

Equipment Requirements:

There are some generally accepted minimum requirements that you need to comply with to SCUBA dive with Seadragons. These are the equipment requirements:

- Mask, and fins

- Wetsuit (at least 7mm is recommended), or drysuit. This must be a design appropriate for the expected water temperature. For Tasmanian diving a hood is essential. You will also be uncomfortable without gloves and boots.
- Bouyancy vest (BCD) with sufficient lift for your weight and gear
- Tank meeting Australian standards for diving (in test), a conventional size is (12 litres, 88cuft)
- weight belt/pocket with dumpable weight, enough to be neutrally buoyant at 5M depth.
- SCUBA Regulator, air pressure gauge, depth gauge,
- An alternate air source (octopus or integrated inflator regulator) for the benefit of a buddy is required.
- Timing device and dive tables or dive computer.
- Where diving at night or into caverns, at least two torches (primary and backup) should be carried by each diver.
- An independent alternative air supply is recommended (e.g. pony cylinder, twin cylinders using two regulators), especially for caves or deep diving.
- Dive knife or other line/mesh cutting tool is recommended.
- Snorkel is recommended
- All members are encouraged to carry and become familiar with the use of safety sausages and/or delayed surface marker buoys and associated reel/spool/line deployment systems.

Conduct of diving by members.

Every Seadragons diver or guest should take note of the following recommendations:

Preparation

1. All mechanical or electronic equipment should be in good condition and properly maintained and/or serviced.
2. Ensure that you are medically and physically fit for each dive. Avoid diving when suffering from psychological, respiratory, ear, sinus or any other conditions prejudicial to safe diving. If in doubt seek medical advice.
3. Avoid medication, drugs, alcohol and tobacco before diving.
4. All members are encouraged to obtain and maintain First Aid qualifications and to be familiar with the use of the first aid equipment on any dive boat.
5. Take precautions against fatigue, seasickness, sunburn, hypothermia and dehydration.

At the Site

6. Give full attention to the pre-dive briefing.
7. Dive within the limits of your experience and qualifications; if a diver is uncertain about their ability or wellness to safely undertake a proposed dive, they should decline to attempt that dive and must be supported by other members in making this decision. A Dive Leader may stop a diver from diving if he/she believes that this is necessary. This includes members diving from privately owned boats, including charter boats, where this is part of a Seadragons activity.
8. A diver expanding their experience should ask to be paired with an appropriate buddy/mentor.
9. Discuss the dive plan with your buddy before the dive. Check that both you and your diving buddies are healthy before and after the dive.
10. Each diver in a buddy pair carries out a buddy check.
11. Follow all the Dive leader's directions.

During the Dive

12. Dive to the dive plan.

13. Maintain contact with your dive buddy. This will require active effort by both divers, especially where visibility is reduced or there are distracting activities being undertaken. Most incidents occur after buddy separation.
14. Undertake Lost Buddy Procedures in the event of losing contact with a dive buddy (search 360° ascend 3-5m, search 360°, then surface. Exceptions to this would be in circumstances where this may not be practicable or desirable to surface immediately, such as during mandatory decompression or certain current affected sites where a direct return to the surface is not desirable or practical.
15. Perform a 3-5 minute safety stop at 3-5 m on every dive deeper than 9m, unless unsafe to do so.
16. Monitor your own air supply, and inform your buddy at regular intervals of air status. All dives should be completed with 50 bar of air remaining.
17. Seadragons Recall Procedure, Several loud revs of the outboard motor over the diver is the Seadragons recall procedure. If possible we can also tug four times on a surface marker buoy line. Divers must then return to the boat. These recall procedures must not be used unless it is an emergency, or you will encourage everyone to ignore the signals.

After the Dive

18. Where an incident has occurred during a dive, or associated with a dive, the Dive leader and Seadragons officers must be informed, especially where it involves any missed decompression stops or insufficient time at a stop.
19. Notify the Dive leader of any incident or injury that occurs as soon as possible.

SEADRAGONS POLICIES

Inclusion

If you are being ridiculed, or feel uncomfortable or at risk of harm because of someone's behaviour, let a Seadragons officer know. We are committed to allowing everybody to participate and to protecting people who may be at risk. We will also endeavour to stop cyber-bullying and internet trolling undertaken by people using our on-line resources. You can contact any officer, but we would suggest the Executive Officer in the first instance.

Diver Development

All members are encouraged to further progress their diving qualifications and skills in order that they can graduate to more exciting and challenging diving and it is expected that established divers will continue the practice of assisting newer, less experienced members in improving their skills and experience through steady progression.

As a new or inexperienced diver you should ensure that you follow the directions of more experienced buddies on dives. Members are specifically encouraged to undertake Rescue or Stress and Rescue training with a recognized training agency as this improves the safety and enjoyment of diving for all members.

Environment

We also encourage people to take an interest in a variety of activities, and to learn more about the ocean environment and be informed about current issues.

We want everyone to interact with the ocean in a way that does as little harm as possible. People fishing on club dives must comply with fisheries restrictions and be properly licensed. Heritage sites must not be tampered with.