



# Diving Policy

## Aim

The aim of this policy is to communicate the requirements for diving with the club and club boats.

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## 1 Background

AUSC organise several trips away from metropolitan waters each year.

Divers who attend these club trips need to be a member of the AUSC to dive.

## 2 Revision

This policy is to be maintained and reviewed by the AUSC Committee.

## 3 Application

This policy applies to all members who attend dive events.

## 4 Diving requirements

Members must hold an open water dive certification, or equivalent, from an accredited dive school in order to dive with AUSC.

AUSC membership can be terminated when any individual uses falsely documented certification credentials and/or assists in falsely documenting the certification of any guest participating in a club sponsored dive.

AUSC abides by SSI/PADI/NAUI “Good Buddy” diving practices, and members are expected to do a safety stop on all dives for 3 minutes at 5 metres (15 feet).

DAN membership is recommended. DAN insurance is required on all out-of-country club sponsored dives.

AUSC advocates a drug free diving environment. Illegal substances and alcohol are not permitted on the boats, as per *AUSC Alcohol Management Policy*.

## 5 Safe diving

The following measures are tips for safe diving:

- Diving alone is discouraged on all club dives, and all dives should be conducted with a dive buddy. Strict buddy teams of 2 or 3 will be used for all dives.
- Stay close to your buddy, for if there is a low air supply event, he/she can reach your alternate air supply.
- Surface and descend as a buddy team. Divers should not return alone even if you have plenty of air and/or bottom time left. If you become separated from your buddy, search for him/her for one minute and then surface and continue to search on the surface.
- Each member of a buddy team must have a timing device (watch, or dive computer with a timer build-in), a depth gauge, and a tank pressure gauge (SPG). Computer diving is recommended as standard practice on all dives.
- Adherence to applicable no-decompression dive tables/computers is mandatory for all dives.
  - It is each member’s responsibility to plan and record their dives, and ensure their diving is within the no-decompression limits. It is not considered safe practice to dive from your buddy’s computer, if you do not have your own computer you should plan your dive according to the no-decompression dive tables and discuss the dive plan with your buddy before entering the water.
- No decompression diving is allowed unless a member AND their buddy have been properly trained in compression diving.

- If members who are trained intend to undertake a compression dive this must be discussed with the boat handler before the dive.
- Members who are trained in compression diving and choose to undertake a compression dive during a club dive do so at their own risk.
- A safety stop of at least three minutes at five metres is required for all dives exceeding 10 metres.
- A dive flag must be flown any time diving from the club boat.
- Discuss and plan the dive with your buddy. Go over time, depth, route, hand signals, emergency procedures, etc. (do you feel comfortable diving with this person?)
- On a boat dive, the boat handler is in charge. Their rules apply - No arguments or exceptions. Pay attention to any briefings, since every dive handler does things differently.
- On any Club trip, a Committee Member can cancel the dive due to bad weather, etc. Any Committee Member may also revoke a member's privilege to dive during a trip if that member violates these rules or otherwise demonstrates unsafe diving practices.
- Always begin your dive against the current and return with it to the exit site. Always keep in mind where you are in relation to the exit site.
- Finish your dive (exited from the water) with at least 50 bar remaining in your tank.
- Penetrate a wreck only if you are certified to do so and your equipment is positioned so that it won't become snagged. Wreck or Cave Diver Certification is highly recommended. A dive light and a dive knife are also recommended.
- Penetration cave diving (i.e. beyond the visible range of the cave exit) is not permitted on club dives unless the purpose of the trip is for cave diving and all divers are certified cave divers or are under instruction by a suitably qualified person.
- Observe the marine life while diving, but do not disturb it. Keep track of where your gauges, octopus, and other gear are so that they don't dangle and hit corals or plants. The same goes for your fins when you kick.
- Observe and obey all rules for safe diving practice per your dive agency and rating level.
- Any observed diving practices deemed unsafe by the officers will result in immediate sanctions and may result in termination of club membership.

## 6 Spearfishing

Spearfishing is not permitted from the club boats under any circumstances.

## 7 Diving equipment

It is the responsibility of all divers to ensure they are appropriately equipped for a boat or dive activity.

Divers are to ensure they have the following dive equipment during all club boat dives:

- Basic scuba equipment; and
- A noise-making device capable of attracting the attention of the boat operator at the surface from 100 m when the boat engine is.

It is recommended that divers bring the following on all club boat dives:

- Torch (most dive sites have areas of darkness and a torch is often necessary to find sea creatures and to appreciate colour in the marine environment);
- Sufficient drinking water (depending on length of activity and weather);

- Sun protection – a hat with chin strap, sunscreen, long-sleeved shirt;
- Snack (note that sugary food may be a good source of energy and useful for a cold or tired diver); and
- Dive compass.

## 8 Shark risk management

### 8.1 Shark Shield use

For all club dives, a Shark Shield should be hung beneath the boat at the safety stop mark.

It is recommended that if only the one boat heads out, two Shark Shields should be taken. One Shark Shield should be hung at the surface, and the other at the safety stop mark. Alternatively, Shark Shields may be given and rotated between diver groups.

If both boats are taken out, each boat is to attach the Shark Shield to the surface (safety stop mark).

In the situation where one club boat is tethered to another, a Shark Shield should be hung below the anchored boat, or the one nearest the mooring buoy. Consideration should also be given to using a second Shark Shield at the second boat if they are not moored immediately adjacent to each other.

### 8.2 Shark sightings

According to the DTEI (2008, p.59), if a shark(s) is observed, report the location, description, distance to shore and your contact details to:

- Fishwatch 1800 065 522 (all hours);
- SA Police 131 444;
- Local Council; and
- The local Surf Lifesaving Club.

Shark sightings should also be reported to the AUSC committee at the earliest opportunity.

## 9 Night dives

It is recommended that divers hold a Night diving qualification through SSI, or PADI, or equivalent agency.

Underwater lights are of primary concern to night divers because they are the only source of light during the dive. A primary light is a requirement per diver, and a secondary light is highly recommended. Secondary lights are backup lights, that are used if primary lights fail.

Locator lights, used to mark divers, are recommended. Locator lights can be chemical (liquid chemicals that, when mixed, produce a bright glow), or reusable flares (uses batteries instead of chemicals). It is recommended lights be reusable to reduce environmental impact. Divers should attach a locator light to his/her cylinder valve or regulator hose (high on the BCD).

A surface marker buoy is also recommended, with a working knowledge of how to use it.

## 10 Decompression illness

For suspected decompression illness, the Activity Leader is to:

- Call DES 1800 088 200 and seek medical advice
- Commence or cause to be commenced First Aid at the earliest opportunity, including administration of oxygen.

- Abort the dive activity where this is necessary to expedite qualified medical treatment.
- Evacuate the casualty to an appropriate medical facility.
- Ensure, where practicable, that the casualty is accompanied by a club member, or other appropriate person to the medical facility.
- Secure (subject to the owner's consent) the dive computer and equipment relied upon by the casualty.
- Tag, secure and isolate club equipment used by the casualty.
- Ensure, where practicable, that the casualty's possessions are safeguarded.
- Subject to the casualty's consent (if this is possible) contact the casualty's Emergency Contact.
- Record the circumstances of the incident.
- Ask witnesses to prepare statements on the incident.
- Advise the club president or vice president as soon as possible, and
- Provide a record of the incident and available witness statements to the club committee.

## 11 Ex-HMAS Hobart dives

It is recommended dives to the Ex-HMAS Hobart occur on a dodge tide. If weather conditions are suitable dives may also be planned to coincide with a low tide. A dive to the Ex-HMAS Hobart should only be undertaken if the conditions look appropriate and are considered safe for the skill level of all divers on board.

It is recommended a diver holds advanced certification, with a minimum of 20 logged dives, if they intend to dive on the Ex-HMAS Hobart.

Strict adherence to no-decompression dive tables or a personal dive computer by all members is essential. It is not considered safe practice to dive from your buddy's computer, if you do not have your own computer you should plan your dive according to the no-decompression dive tables and discuss the dive plan with your buddy before entering the water. If undertaking a double dive, the deepest dive should be your first dive.

If inexperienced divers are wanting to attend a dive trip to the Ex-HMAS Hobart it is the boat handler's responsibility to ensure there is enough experienced divers on board to buddy them up with before leaving the clubrooms.

## 12 References

Shark Shield (2015) – *Shark Shield*, <https://sharkshield.com/>.

## 13 Document control

Revision (Date)	Person	Comments
0 (15/11/2009)	<b>Author:</b> David Warren, Treasurer <b>Reviewed:</b> Emily Moskwa, Secretary <b>Approved:</b> Mostyn Walker, President	Document released to club membership.
1 (15/12/2012)	<b>Approved:</b> Sam Owen	

<b>Revision (Date)</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Comments</b>
2 (15/03/2013)	<b>Author:</b> Mike Swinbourne, President <b>Reviewed:</b> Committee <b>Approved:</b> Mike Swinbourne, President	Changed following comment "Collecting of fish for aquaria is permitted if it is within the legal fishing limits or you have a license, but spear fishing is not allowed on SCUBA" to make clear spearfishing is not allowed on club boats. Added diving alone discouraged comment.
3 (13/10/2015)	<b>Author:</b> David Warren <b>Reviewed:</b> Committee (via Meeting 13/10/2015) <b>Approved:</b> David Warren	Updated to new format. Added Shark Shield reference. Also amalgamated SOP 16 <i>Diver Equipment</i> (developed by Tim Brown) within this policy. Added SOP 12 <i>Boat Diver Responsibilities</i> (developed by Tim Brown) to appendix.

## Appendix A Boat diver responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every diver participating in a club boat dive activity to:

- Pre-dive, satisfy himself or herself that the proposed dive activity is within the reasonable limits of their equipment, skills and experience.
- Ensure they are properly equipped for boat and dive activities (refer policies).
- Conduct herself or himself in accordance with safe diving practice.
- Assist the boat operator or Activity Leader when requested to do so or when the need arises.
- Assist other divers when requested to do so or when the need arises.
- Participate, where practicable, in the post-dive clean-up of the boat and equipment.
- Pay cash (unless the activity is publicised as OK for online finance transfer) for the hire of club equipment and dive fees prior to commencing the activity, unless the Activity Leader approves payment immediately upon conclusion of the activity.
- Secure their equipment on the boat.
- Post-activity, remove all hired and personal gear from the boat.
- Act in an environmentally friendly manner, including appropriate storage and disposal of waste (including cylinder valve tape).