

MINUTES OF NDC MEETING HELD ON Wednesday 7th September 2005

Present: Joe Campbell, Tony Carter, Frank Connor, Peter Courtier, Hugh Fraser, Don Lees, Murray McCallum, Kevin Miller, Bert Smith, Ken Smith, Nigel Spike, Drew Stevenson, Kevin Webb (NDO). Tony Dorrington attended the initial part of the meeting concerned with CRBS checks.

Apologies: Martin Henderson, Billy Symington, Diane Webb.

Previous minutes: Noted that Andrew Murray and Graham Forsyth had tendered their resignation at the meeting on 15th June 2005 as RC's. Subject to this amendment, the minutes were proposed by Murray McCallum and seconded by Bert Smith.

Communications

Difficulties have been experienced with email traffic – corruption of information, viruses and some misinterpretation of meaning. All future communication with the NDO should be either: by telephone, using the numbers noted on the meeting agenda, or via SSAC head office by telephone, email or in writing.

CRBS checks

TD gave an overview of current status of checks. Surprisingly low number of forms submitted – 35 forms returned, 3 outstanding, 23 checks complete (all fine), 3 returned incomplete. Current timeline for turnaround of checks is significant – 3-5 months. NDC considered that it was acceptable for an instructor to continue teaching where the form has been submitted to TD – i.e. it is in process. Noted that some local authorities are requiring that instructor checks are completed where pool contract is being renewed. This may become critical for certain branches. RC's should continue to highlight the critical importance of checks and timelines involved to branches. Scottish Diver should include some guidance and background to CRBS check process and requirements; also include on the website.

A number of matters were highlighted re completion of the forms: form should be highlighted as advanced check required, read the instructions, don't write on the envelope, "childcare" should be noted as job title.

We have 4 check signatories: TD, NDO, Iona Anthony and Gerrard Lafferty.

Iona Anthony has indicated that she is retiring with immediate effect as SSAC Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer. Frank Connor volunteered to fill this vacancy. The NDC expressed a vote of thanks to Iona for her work in this role and to Frank for agreeing to step in.

Senior coaches

The NDO advised the meeting that two senior coaches had been appointed: Tony Carter and Murray McCallum.

Regional Coaches

There is a need for more RC's to come forward. RC workshop to be held on 16 October 2005 at HQ, starting at 10.30am. Any ideas for areas to be considered to be emailed to SSAC HQ prior to the workshop. RC workshop should specifically consider use of SSAC training weekends.

The NDO highlighted the absence of RC reports being submitted at present. Reports to be submitted by RC's to HQ.

Course update

Nitrox

Material for basic and advanced nitrox courses will be circulated before the next NDC meeting – comments requested from NDC members. Need to identify instructors for the new SSAC courses. NDO is confident that the new courses will achieve satisfactory recognition.

RI course

Under review, with focus on “management skills”. Need more RI’s to come through the system.

BI course

Discussion concerning BI assessments – two pool assessments required could be done in one pool session. Two open water assessments could similarly be done on one day. Lecture skills to be presented on BI course, but no requirement for assessment on the day. NDO to check with Alicia re BI course book numbers – seems low.

O2/Heartstart

5 names in book for September course. Break-even for course is 8.

Boathandling/VHF

Courses currently being re-written.

1st Class

Dates to be agreed in spring 2006 for written and practical events. DS and NS to discuss and propose suitable dates. Spring 2006 should give interested candidates enough time to complete all pre-requisites. Event number to be 6 maximum.

Deep diving course

Andy Parks has been appointed as new course director. Noted that cards do not yet appear to have been issued for the 1st course running.

Deep rescue endorsement

Confirmed that Billy Symington continues to be the director for this endorsement.

Training schedule

Discussion took place regarding our rescue training. Whilst it was agreed that inclusion of rescue training is one of the differentiating factors for SSAC training approach, we are in danger of becoming inflexible/unrealistic in our approach eg the poolside lift. Train for more diving “scenarios”. NDC to consider ideas and discuss at RC workshop.

Lecture material

Standard lecture material is currently being developed. Don Lees is leading this initiative.

AOB

Next edition of Scottish Diver to include advice to membership that correct procedure for notifying authorities of decompression incidents at a dive site, is to call 999/coastguard.

Discussion took place concerning theory examinations and whether these should be “open book” or not. Other than in exceptional circumstances (requiring RC involvement), it was agreed that exams should be “closed book”.

Noted that Don Lees and Murray McCallum had visited Limerick.

Discussion took place over procedure for notifying Coastguard of diving expeditions. Agreed as recommendation that Coastguard should be notified of departure and return for all boat dives. However, agreed as impractical for many shore diving situations, eg party of two, to notify Coastguard.

NDO noted that he has been advised of an incident, but has yet to receive the report.

Discussion took place on PADI cross-overs. Noted that new members should be classified as trainees until the cross-over is completed. Old rigid cross-over sheets should not be used. More flexibility required for experienced divers. Existing PADI instructors require to attend the relevant SSAC instructor courses and perform assessments, however no charge for course attendance.

Date of next meeting: after RC workshop ie 16 October 2005.