

The Cave Diving Group Constitution – April 2016

Updated at the 23rd April 2016 AGM

Objects

- 1) The name shall be the Cave Diving Group. The objects of the Group shall be;
 - a) To explore submerged caves and cave passages.
 - b) To lay down codes of practice for that purpose.
 - c) To review and publicise new diving techniques.
 - d) To provide education primarily, but not limited to, the area of side-mount techniques applicable to UK conditions.

Central Committee

2) The cave diving group shall consist of any number of regional sections and a central committee. The central committee shall consist of a President(s), a Chairperson, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Foreign Officer, an Editor, and a Distribution Manager each elected at the Annual General Meeting; and in addition to these officers there shall be appointed by the Annual General Meeting the posts of a Librarian, a Web Site Manager and a BCA Representative. The posts of any two of these Officers or Appointees may be combined. In addition to these Officers and Appointees there shall be two Committee members for each regional section, who will have one vote between them at committee meetings.

- 3) The committee shall meet at least once a year between one A.G.M. and the next, the meeting places being in each region by rotation, unless agreed by a simple majority of those entitled to attend. The committee shall deal with the following matters:
 - a) General administration and policy.
 - b) To supervise and finance the publication of sump indexes, technical reviews, newsletters, updates to the group's manual and the five year index of dives.
 - c) To maintain public relations with other bodies on a national and international level.
 - d) To initiate new regional sections as and when they become necessary.
 - e) Finance; in respect of powers delegated by regional sections under paragraph 23.
 - f) To consider appeals against expulsion from membership.

Regional Sections

- 4) The function of regional sections shall be as follows:
 - a) Finance, except where delegated to central committee under paragraph 23.
 - b) To encourage all members to use the safety code for divers and follow the group's rules.
 - c) To supervise the cave diving and training of its members.
 - d) To elect members into, or expel members from, the Group.
 - e) To establish and maintain a regional equipment store.
 - f) To consider all new forms of diving equipment and to make recommendations regarding their use on group dives.
 - g) To furnish the editor with material for his publications. To prepare a regional sump index.
 - h) To award or remove diving status or any category thereof.
 - j) To present a report of their activities to the A.G.M.

5) The regional committee members shall be responsible to the central committee for ensuring the functions of the regional sections are implemented. They may delegate responsibility for any section.

6) The regional sections shall be named by reference to their geographical location, or by such other name as the members shall determine, providing the words Cave Diving Group appear in the title.

7) Each regional section shall elect at its annual meeting a secretary and a treasurer. The treasurer shall receive all subscriptions from the region, present properly audited accounts to the section once a year for approval, and send a copy to the secretary of the central committee. He or she shall be responsible for forwarding the annual subscription to the central committee. Where the regional section has no treasurer, the regional secretary must observe the rules relating to annual accounts.

8) Subject to the provisions of this constitution and the rules, the business of the regional sections may be carried out in whatever manner the members of that regional section shall determine.

Membership

9) There shall be four classes of membership, namely Honorary, Diving, Non-diving and Temporary Membership.

10) Honorary members are to be proposed by regional sections for consideration by the central committee. The central committee will put its recommendations to the A.G.M. where election shall be by simple majority vote. These positions shall be awarded to persons who have made a valuable contribution to cave diving or the Group. Honorary members are entitled to receive all the Group's publications and attend and vote at all general meetings and attend but not vote at Regional Section meetings. They are covered by the Group's insurance as non-divers and pay no subscription. Honorary members who wish to be covered by the Group's diving insurance must apply to the treasurer on an annual basis.

11) There shall be two classes of diving membership, namely trainee diver and qualified diver. The election of diving members and the award of qualifications is the function of Regional Sections in accordance with the rules. All diving members are entitled to receive the Group's publications and attend and vote at all general meetings and Regional Section meetings of which they are a member, except Trainee divers who cannot vote on the election of new diving members or matters of qualification. All diving members shall use the Group's safety code for divers and follow the Group's rules. Any diver wishing to rejoin the Group after a period of non-membership is subject to a review of their Qualification status by a Section Meeting.

12) Non-diving members are elected by the regional sections. They must be proposed and seconded by existing members of the group and shall be entitled to receive the group's publications. They are also entitled to attend and vote at all general meetings and regional section meetings of which they are a member, except that they cannot vote on the election of new diving members or matters of qualification. They are not covered by the group's insurance and cannot borrow group equipment or take part in group dives. Members ordinarily resident abroad will normally fall into this category.

12a) Temporary Membership is limited to a maximum of 15 days in a Year, and is open to overseas cave divers, who should be judged suitable by the Section Committee, in advance of their attendance.

13) Permanent Diving and Non-Diving members will pay an initial joining fee when first joining the Group or when re-joining after a period of lapsed membership.

14) Subscriptions are due on 1st January and shall be paid to the Regional Section except as provided in paragraph 15. Annual fees for the following services shall be determined by a majority of members attending and voting at the annual general meeting:

- i. Charge for the Group's publications for domestic and overseas subscribers.
- ii. Non-diving membership fee.
- iii. Diving membership fee.
- iv. Temporary membership fee.
- v. Regional section levy.
- vi. Joining / re-joining fee.

Non-diving members shall pay the sum of i, ii and v and diving members shall pay the sum of i, iii and v with the Regional Section levy being retained by the Regional Section and the balance being forwarded to the Group's Treasurer. Membership of additional Sections is charged according to v. and is retained by the appropriate Regional Section. Temporary membership fees should be forwarded to the Group's Treasurer as well as any joining / re-joining fee from new or lapsed members. In the event of a failure to determine the charges for the following year, the existing rates shall continue to apply.

In addition to the membership fee, members will pay an annual levy to cover the cost of the Group's insurance policy. The amount of the insurance levy will be set by the central committee before 1st November each calendar year.

15) Payment for subscription to the Newsletter by non-members will be made to the Distribution Manager. The Distribution Manager will inform the Central Treasurer and Central Secretary of the details of all non-member Newsletter subscribers.

16) Members expelled by their regional section shall have a right of appeal to the central committee whose decision shall be final. The appeal must be made in writing to the secretary within three months of the member being notified of the expulsion by the regional section. Expelled members will only be able to rejoin the CDG after gaining the approval of the central committee.

Meetings

17) There shall be an Annual General Meeting, to be held in the months of April or May. The secretary shall give six weeks notice of the meeting and twenty one days notice of all proposals to be put to the meeting. Notice shall be circulated to all members via the CDG on line site and published as a record with the next available NL including ones that are in advance of the meeting.

18) The central committee or a regional section may call an Extraordinary General Meeting by giving twenty one days notice to all members and a similar notice of their proposals.

19) Proceedings at general meetings of the group shall be decided by a simple majority of those attending and voting. The decisions of a general meeting are binding on the central committee.

20) There shall be a quorum of 15% of the membership at any general meeting before the meeting is deemed validly constituted.

21) Amendments to the constitution take effect as soon as they are passed by a general meeting.

Officials

22) The secretary of the central committee shall call a committee meeting when necessary, at his or her discretion, in accordance with paragraph 3, giving notice of not less than one month to all committee members. After every committee meeting he or she shall circulate minutes to each committee member. He or she shall keep the minutes of all meetings called (ref. Paras. 1 7&1 8.); keep the membership list, maintain contacts on a National level, and be responsible for general correspondence.

23) The function of the Central Treasurer is to receive the annual subscription from the regional sections, to keep up to date the Group's insurance policy, to pay the expenses of the Group, to pay for Group publications and deal with all other matters relevant to the group's finances. The Central Treasurer shall present properly audited accounts to the Annual General Meeting.

24) The function of the Foreign officer is to establish and maintain contacts with overseas groups including the exchange of newsletters. He or she shall also ensure group representation at relevant overseas meetings where possible and maintain a library of overseas publications.

25) *Intentionally blank.*

26) The Editor will keep a record (supplied by regional sections) of all dives carried out by the group and will be responsible for the publication of a five year index of dives. He or she will also publish a newsletter quarterly, the deadline dates for which will be March 1st, June 1st, September 1st. and December 1st.

27) The Distribution manager, operating with the Editor is responsible for distribution and production of the group's publications.

28) The President shall preside over all general and central committee meetings, but these meetings shall be chaired by the Chairperson.

General

29) Every person whether a member or not, taking part in any activity or expedition organised by the group, or in which any member or officer of the group takes part, shall do so at his or her own risk, and he or she or his or her legal and personal representatives or assigns or dependants shall have no claim or right of action against the group or any member thereof in respect of damages or injuries to person or

property and whether fatal or otherwise notwithstanding any negligence of any member or officer of the group or of the body of members of the group.

30) Recommendations for changes of the group's Rules or Safety Code shall be put forward to the central committee for consideration. All such changes must be adopted at a general meeting.

31) Any member standing for office in the CDG shall provide the central committee with details of any business interest that could affect their judgement or ability to carry out the duties associated with that office. If the office is subject to election at the AGM those details should be made available to all members attending the AGM.