



Social Event Risk Assessment

As well as diving members of BSAC clubs regularly engage in a range of social activities not only for sheer enjoyment but also to involve the local community and perhaps raise money for charity.

Evidence of the success of such events can be found in the News Items on BSAC members Website www.bsac.org and the enjoyment of those involved is clear and serves to promote the branch and their activities.

Such events are often adventurous in their nature and where diving is involved in the form of a Try Dive then it is easy to anticipate the specific risks associated with the event.

A question often asked of other events however is “Is the branch covered for Third Party Liability for the activity” and most often this question is asked by the land or venue owner. The simple answer is yes providing you follow some simple steps.

Odette Baker (Marketing and Events co-ordinator, BSAC HQ)

SOCIAL EVENT RISK ASSESSMENT

The process of Risk Assessment is relatively well understood by divers today. In living our normal daily lives we are also constantly undertaking assessments of risk and making consequent judgments and decisions to mitigate such risks (such as look right, left and right again when crossing the road). When organizing social events for groups of people it is natural to make similar judgments for others. However, where the more unusual events take people outside of their usual experience it is important to undertake a more formal process. This formal process involves a simple first step of notifying the Safety & Development manager at BSAC HQ of the event. Depending on the nature of the event a formal Risk Assessment may need to be prepared to ensure all appropriate risks are considered and to allow for additional suggestions to be made. A formal approval for the event and supporting letter and copy of the current Insurance cover will be provided for the branch to show to any property owner.

Some examples of the type of event frequently considered include:

TRY DIVES

The inherent risks of a Try Dive are well known to diving instructors and supporting advice for pool safety officers exists in a BSAC Guidance Note. However, where different circumstances arise, such as the Try Dives run in 2005 & 2006 as part of ‘Hemi Help’ days for hemiplegics children and their friends and carers then both Surrey Aquanauts and Bath branches have submitted Risk Assessments covering the specifics of those events.

POOL MARATHONS

Diving is not a competitive sport but marathons of one form or another have a particular appeal for social and charity events. In considering either record attempts or just multi game ‘fun’ events it is important that the risks associated with the unusual circumstances are carefully considered and mitigated against. For example recent consideration and approval has been given for a “24 hour Gameathon” for Portsmouth University branch.

RAFT RACES/RIVER EVENTS

Christmas, or more specifically Boxing and New Year’s Days, seem to encourage groups of people, including diving clubs, to engage in strange outdoor activities including raft races and jumping from bridges. Personally I can think of less stressful things to do on those days but although a number of clubs have been running such events safely and successfully for many years, in more recent times they have been formally notifying HQ and submitting Risk Assessments which have enhanced the safety of these events.

In addition to covering the safety aspects of an event assistance can be given with publicity for the event either before, to increase participation, or afterwards to recognize achievements and promote subsequent events.

Think SAFE – Dive SAFE

Jim Watson

BSAC Safety and Development manager

For more detail and information please visit www.bsac.org/safety