

Rescue in an iconic cave: the Kubla Khan Cave Rescue Plan V1 (2017)

DEB HUNTER, Mole Creek Caving Club

Kubla Khan is an iconic Australian cave of great beauty, with dizzying chamber proportions and a variety of physical challenges. Due to its verticality, it was not entered until 1947 and was not fully explored until the late 1960s. Kubla is still found challenging by many Australian cavers, with through trips typically exceeding 10 hours. Conservation measures such as track delineation, boot-wash stations and the approved leader requirement are in place. However, decades of diligence in protecting the cave's values could be undone if a rescue was ever needed. Realistically, rather 'when' not 'if'. It is hoped the 2017 formal Rescue Plan, developed in great detail and facilitated by professional cave mapping, will prevent damage to the cave even in the event of a rescue.