

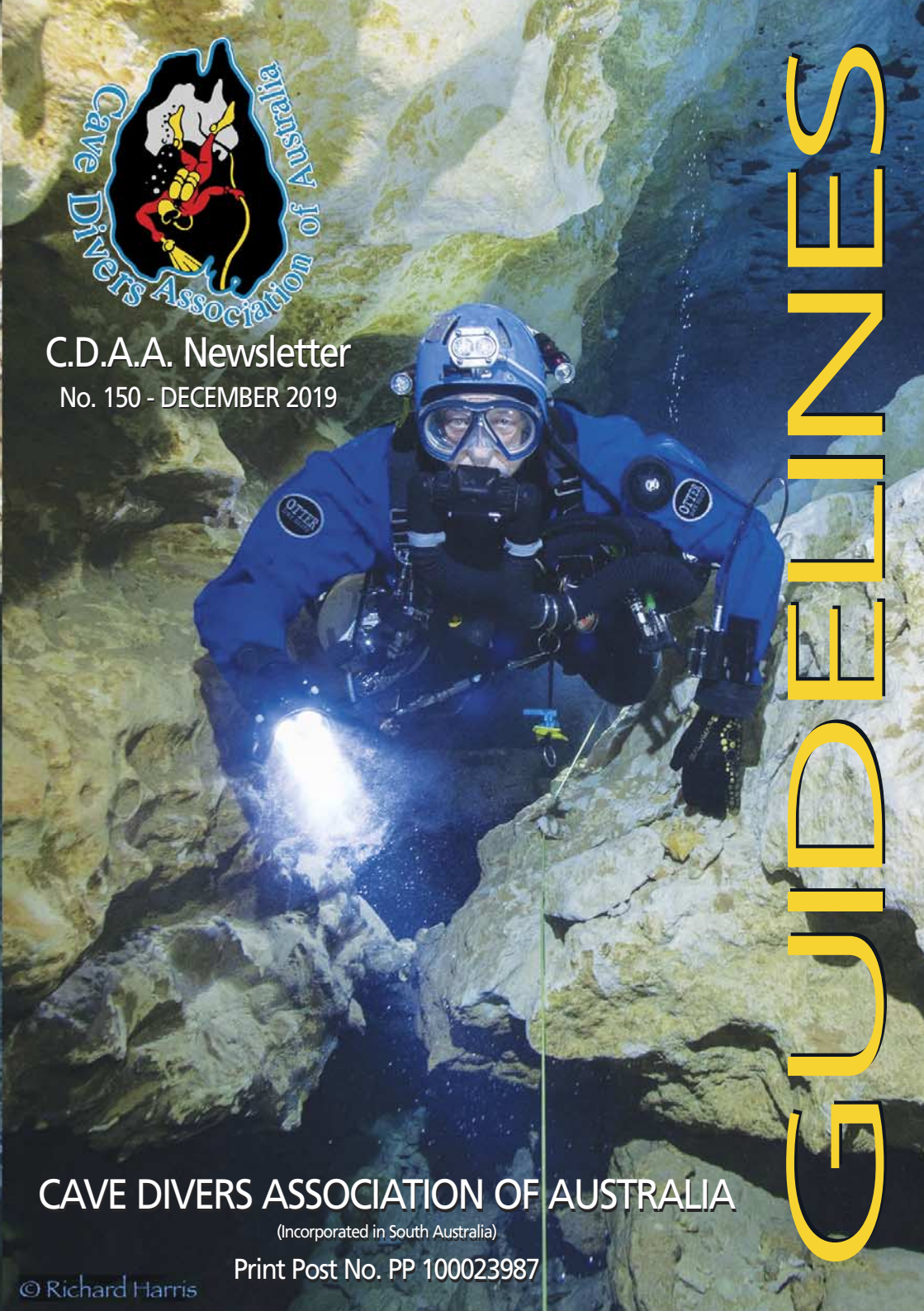


CDA Life Member Warrick McDonald diving the MJ cave system in Budapest. Photo by Jane Bowman.



C.D.A.A. Newsletter

No. 150 - DECEMBER 2019



CAVE DIVERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

(Incorporated in South Australia)

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SENDING GUIDELINES



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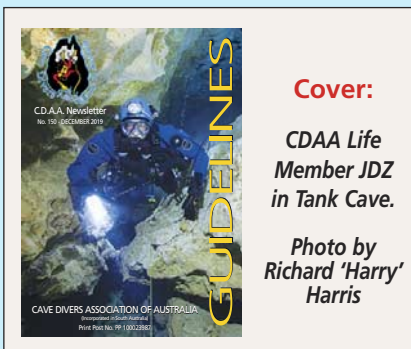
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## CAVE DIVERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

ABN 65 062 259 956

P.O. BOX 544, Mt Gambier, SA 5291

GUIDELINES is a newsletter of the Cave Divers Association of Australia. All articles for the following issue are to be sent to the Publications Director, Email: [publications@cavedivers.com.au](mailto:publications@cavedivers.com.au)

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Policy Type: Affinity Combined General & Products Liability Policy - LIU-CAS-AEAL-14-01  
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Underwritten by Liberty International Underwriters ABN: 61 086 083 605.  
Incorporated in Massachusetts, USA.  
Name Insured: Cave Divers Association of Australia Inc. Policy# 441680  
Public Liability: \$20,000,000 any one claim. Expiry: 30th September 2020.



# Pine Tank Lodge

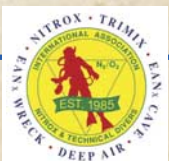


Photo by Liz Rogers

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## Pine Tank Dive Lodge AquiferTec Australasia

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## EDITORIAL MEGGAN ANDERSON



Dear members

I can't believe we are already at the end of the year. I hope this issue of Guidelines will give you plenty to read over the Xmas break. I want to thank all those who contributed photos and writing but special mention to Stephen Fordyce. Steve has been working on his articles for this issue for a while, during a year where I have come to admire him because of his character more so than his diving achievements. I applaud him for sharing his story, so that others learn from his experience.

Our AGM and symposium was a big success and thank you to those who were able to make it and to our awesome speakers. If you have not read each of the directors' annual reports, they are available on the website in the AGM section. Big kudos to Mary-Anne McLeod for organising her first AGM, it was so fun to work with her and we are already brainstorming for next year! Thanks heaps to everyone who donated prizes and members please go out and support their businesses. I found MCing a lot less stressful this year and I thank those who helped me out. It was a great weekend with lots going on – evening functions, people doing courses, people doing dives and the fossil workshop.

On the records front, there is one thing I want to flag. We get lots of enquiries about site bookings, site forms and endorsements – please note that while the system sends auto email responses from the records email alias, it does not mean we approve all forms or bookings. If you have a query about sites please look at the Contact List in Guidelines or on the website and contact the relevant site officer or the Site Director. Anything you need to upload to your CDAA record is done via your online account so please don't send attachments to the records email. Uploading it via your online account ensures it goes to the right person for approval. Thank you to all those volunteers who assist to help lighten the load.

You will notice we have removed the site access pages from Guidelines, this is because all this information is on our website. I will endeavour to keep the info on the website up to date.

I hope you all have a great festive season, I will be spending the day diving Tank Cave. Drive safe and dive safe.

Meg #4942

*Meggan Anderson #4942 | Publications and Records Director  
M: 0415 291 904 | E: [publications@cavedivers.com.au](mailto:publications@cavedivers.com.au)*

## Articles for Guidelines March 2020 - Deadline is Feb. 15th

- Send articles and jpeg images by email to [guidelines@cavedivers.com.au](mailto:guidelines@cavedivers.com.au)

### Did you know?

**You can opt for an electronic copy of Guidelines** rather than a paper copy. **Simply login to your CDAA online account**, select the dropdown menu under the My Records tab and click on Update My Details. Handy for those who have multiple CDAA members in their household or for those wanting to do their bit for the environment!

# NATIONAL COMMITTEE UPDATE

DECEMBER 2019

2019 has almost come to an end, and what a year it has been for both the CDAA and the National Committee. I feel like I haven't had to duck and weave this many blows since my days boxing! Despite a few hits getting through, though, thanks to the efforts of the Committee and the many members that have helped us along the way, we've been able to ensure that for those who just want to go cave diving, it's been "business as usual".

For members who are interested to know what we've achieved over the past year, I encourage you to read the Director's Annual Reports. These can be found the CDAA website in the Member Library, under the 'AGM 2019' tab.

A couple of months ago I decided that (pending successful re-election) my resolution for 2020 would be to dedicate more time to achieving outcomes that benefit all CDAA members, and less time getting side-tracked by (less-savoury) matters that relate to individual members. I suspect that my fellow Directors would share this goal. After all, the former is the entire reason we signed up as volunteers in the first place!

That said, it looks like it's happening sooner than expected as we are closing out 2019 on a high-note!

The Instructor workshop coordinated by Standards Director, Joseph Monks, which was held in Melbourne in September, inspired great confidence that the future of cave diver training in Australia is in good hands. It provided a rare opportunity for members of the NC and CDAA instructors from around Australia to discuss all manner of topics face-to-face. Huge thanks must go to long-time CDAA member and instructor Tim Payne who presented a new set of training materials which he has developed. He has put in a

tremendous amount of work, and we are sure this will benefit both students and instructors moving forwards.

In October we also hosted the CDAA's 46th AGM and symposium in Mount Gambier. I won't spend too much time writing about this here as it is covered extensively in this issue, but we had an excellent turnout of around 70 members who enjoyed this year's "Home-grown" theme. The guest speakers were first-class, presenting on an interesting and diverse range of topics. This was followed up on Sunday by the Fossil recognition workshop, and the annual SROP program, which were equally well-attended, and by all accounts, both enjoyable and informative. Special thanks must also go to the CDAA's Public Officer, Andrew Seifried for once again chairing the AGM itself.

To successfully organise an event of this scale and quality is only possible due to the efforts of many volunteers and the generosity of our sponsors. It is also an absolute privilege to have the support of the City of Mount Gambier who provide the venue to the CDAA each year. On behalf of the National Committee, I'd like to thank everyone who helped bring the weekend's events together, as well as the members who made the effort to come and take part. I'm already looking forward to next year!

As for this year's voting, it is a pleasure to announce that Richard 'Harry' Harris and Craig Challen have successfully been inducted to the CDAA's 'Hall of Fame', thanks in no small part to their respective efforts during the now famous Thai Cave Rescue.

The two Life-Member nominees, John 'JDZ' Dalla Zuanna and Warrick McDonald were successfully awarded CDAA Life Membership. It is gratifying to see "politics" taking a backseat, and the individual

efforts of both gentleman and their respective contributions for the betterment of the CDAA being recognised by the overwhelming majority of voting members.

As per the email bulletin that went out to members, the nominated Committee members stood unopposed and have been re-elected for another term. So I guess it's back to the grinding-wheel for us. As the saying goes – "There's no rest for the wicked!".

In closing out my final Director's Report for 2019, I'd like to wish all CDAA members, landowners and land managers, fellow volunteers and my colleagues on the National Committee a safe and

fun-filled Christmas break! I have a feeling that 2020 is going to bring great things for the CDAA. Until then,  
Pete Wolf

Warm Regards, Pete  
CDAA National Director



Mary-Anne McLeod,  
Business Director



Kelvyn Ball,  
Site Director



Joseph Monks,  
Standards Director



Meggan Anderson,  
Publications and  
Records Director



And that's a wrap for the 2019 AGM Symposium! Thanks once again to all of our generous sponsors, presenters, volunteers and members that made it such a success. I particularly enjoyed looking across into the foyer during breaks and seeing so many of members mixing, catching up with old friends or making new ones....sometimes it's the little things that make the time spent seem so worthwhile.

This year was the first official electronic ballot. Aside from just a couple of emails getting lost in junk email folders, from my end the process went very smoothly. It certainly saved a lot of time and effort for the returning officer and volunteers in counting the votes, and we saw a large reduction in invalid votes. So what were the numbers? I'm pleased to announce that we had 36% of eligible members vote, well up on the rate of around 17% that we had been achieving. With no directorships being voted on this was a great outcome. Whilst I understand the electronic ballot isn't supported by all members, it has achieved the aim of simplifying the process and attracting greater election participation. Thank you to Mathew Rochford for the hard work to get this in place, the benefits have been realised.

At the AGM I presented a summary of the 2019 financial results and the 2020 budgets. For those

that were unable to attend, please refer to the AGM 2019 section of the member library for my annual report and the financial results and budgets. If you have any questions or feedback please do get in contact.

Victoria Hudson, with the help of Andrew Ottanelli, did a fantastic job managing the merchandise stand. We had fresh product available, including the ever popular jackets and a new t-shirt design, featuring many of our favourite cave names on the back. There is some limited stock remaining, so please contact us at [products@cavedivers.com.au](mailto:products@cavedivers.com.au) if you are interested.

I am delighted to announce that Victoria has been appointed to the role of Products Officer. I look forward to once again having some focus on the Products Portfolio and you can expect more prompt responses than I've been able to provide in the last months. Victoria has a lot of great ideas and is going to be a great asset to the association. It is really exciting to see some different members volunteering to help take us forward.

The holiday season is now upon us, I wish everyone a safe and happy time, and hope you get some dives in!

Mary-Anne McLeod #5011  
Business Director





Hello fellow members,  
One year down and my how fast it has gone. I walked into this role with an expectation that I would devote quite some time to the role, however my expectations were greatly underestimated in the first month, let alone the first year. I must thank all the directors, instructors and most importantly the members who have helped me out along the way.

The director position is often an under-appreciated role, the people we help sometimes forget it is volunteer-based and we are all members walking the same path. My job and that of the other members of the National Committee are black and white, we follow the Regulations, constitution and training standards to the best of our abilities and if we fail in this we are held to account. We do not have agendas, except to help the membership and the association to grow. If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to please follow it up with us rather than speculating.

I have experienced some unpleasant dealings with a few members who feel that breaches should be overlooked or downplayed for one reason or another. The best strategy is to take feedback onboard and if you feel that there may have been an error or misunderstanding, I encourage you to seek clarification in a professional and courteous manner. Other members have been upset when requests are denied, please remember that 'no' is not a bad word, it can often help you develop by forcing you to take a step back and examine your other options. The last 3 months have been very interesting: Our annual Instructor Day was held in September, current instructors with active teaching status were invited to attend and discuss goals for the next 12 months. The instructor

body turned out in force and the majority of the National Committee who could attend, were onboard to answer questions and provide assistance/guidance when needed. It was a very productive meeting, we now have some fantastic goals in place for the future, I cannot wait to see where it leads the association. We are fortunate to have such a strong instructor base and I would like to thank them again for being ambassadors for the CDAA.

Our next big event on the calendar was our AGM held in Mount Gambier. As far as standards go this is one of the lighter jobs 😊 but for business it's the crazy time of year and again the National Committee was onboard to provide assistance when required. A big thanks goes out to our sponsors who provided excellent prizes at the event and congratulations to the lucky winners. I would like to thank our hard-working Business Director Mary-Anne for all her work in the lead up to this event and also to Meggan our Publications Director. These jobs are done by volunteers and I thank you for your time and effort. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the members whom were presented with awards at the AGM; we now have two new life members- #1882 Warwick McDonald and #236 John Dalla-Zuanna and two Hall of Famers #1360 Richard Harris and #2993 Craig Challen, a massive congratulations to all of you. I would also like to congratulate the Directors for running again, unopposed, I look forward working with you all again for the next 12 months. Next, thanks to the speakers, you all did a great job presenting some very interesting topics. I very much look forward to following up on some of the topics that were discussed. The members made every effort to make the speakers feel welcome, so great job team!



I am happy to report that we are looking very strong as an association and heading in the right direction for a great year to come.

Dive safe and within the Standards!.

Joseph Monks #4653  
Standards Director



Another great AGM delivered. Thank you to everyone who helped organise it and also to the sponsors with their awesome donations. Congratulations to our Hall of Fame and Life Members. We had a catch up with volunteers on the Friday night beforehand. Really appreciate their time and effort supporting the CDAA in various roles. SROP course ran on the Sunday/Monday after the AGM which I attended and it was a very informative course and we got a good appreciation of logistics in an emergency. Thanks to Phil Croker for organising this course. My wife and daughter attended the Sunday session for a hands on fossil information talk and really enjoyed it. Lots of knowledge gathered. State Reps have been having meetings – Qld and SA both have had successful attendances at their meetings. VIC/NSW/WA each have meetings planned shortly so keep an ear out for one near you.

Benn Walton is running a Working Bee at Tank Cave in December and due to work commitments I am not able to attend so would be great if any members could contact him and lend a hand.

KILSBY'S. A reminder to ensure that you keep to your 2 hour time slot at the platform please!! If you need extra time setting up and dismantling you are more than welcome to do so upstairs away from the platform please.

Coming up to the holidays season please appreciate that booking officers will be celebrating the festive season too, so please book well in advance

to avoid disappointment. Not everyone carries their computer around for last minute bookings. Safe diving everyone and enjoy the festive season ahead!!

Cheers Kelvyn Ball – Site Director

**ACCOMMODATION**

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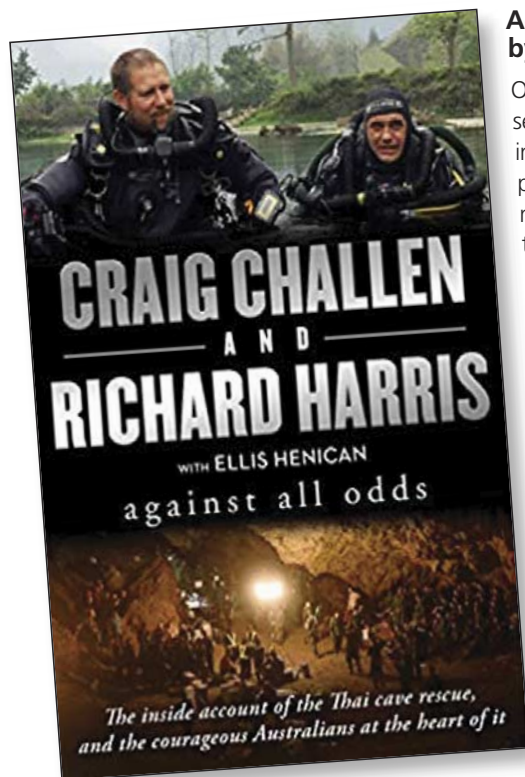
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*It's heading for that time of year where most people get some time off work over the festive season. If you have family obligations and can't get to the caves then the best substitute is reading about caves! We have been really spoilt in recent months with some cave diving related releases and I have compiled a list. These are also great stocking filler suggestions you can make to your family – maybe leave Guidelines lying around open on this page as a subtle hint. Happy reading!*



**Against All Odds**  
by Craig Challen and Richard Harris.

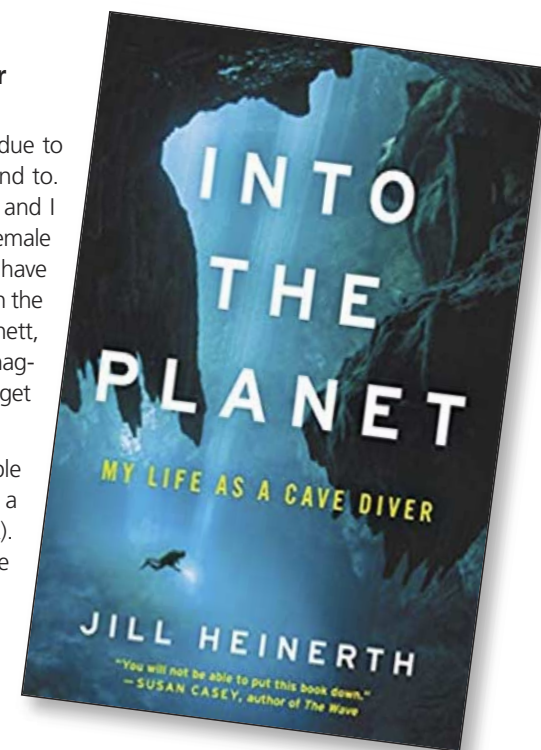
Obviously this book is going to be the top of the list seeing as it is written by CDAA members. I can imagine Craig and Harry are going to have to carry pens to future cave diving sites in case they run into members who want them to sign a copy. At the time of going to press I unfortunately had not finished the book but 50 pages in I am already enjoying it more than other books I have read on the Thai Cave rescue. I've particularly enjoyed reading about Harry and Craig's background stories (fun fact, Harry was president of my dive club once). Unfortunately reading it during work lunch breaks has been challenging as everyone wants to put their sticky paws on it. If you're not much of a reader, there is also an audio version, great for those long holiday drives and you can turn the volume up as the kids get cranky in the backseat.

Against All Odds can be bought at Amazon (including a Kindle version), Big W, Dymocks, QBD, Readings and Booktopia. I have also spotted it at independent bookstores.

**Into the Planet: My Life as a Cave Diver**  
by Jill Heinerth

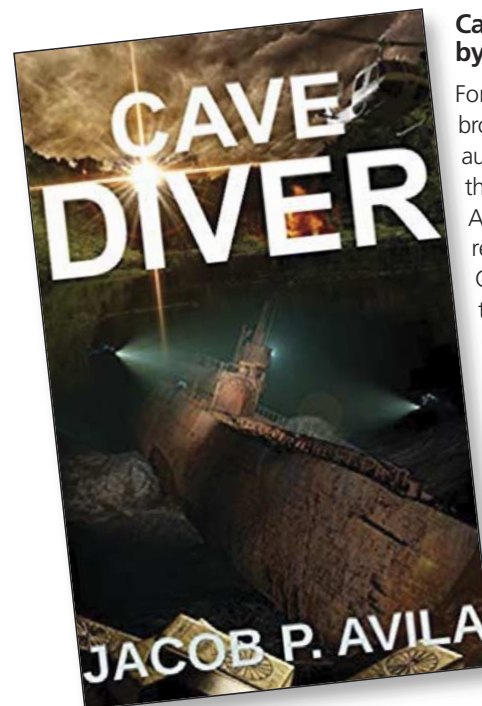
I have unfortunately not yet bought this book due to having a pile I need to work through but I intend to. Jill is friends with quite a few CDAA members and I am a huge fan because she is an inspiration to female divers (and all divers for that matter) and I have enjoyed some insightful articles she has written in the past. CDAA member and instructor Sam Bennett, who has been a friend of Jill's since he was a teenager, raves about the book. So if anyone wants to get me a Christmas present, now is your chance.

Into the Planet: My Life as a Cave Diver is available online from Book Depository, Amazon (including a Kindle version), Fishpond and Kobo (as an ebook). It is available from other places but their prices are ridiculous. An audio book is also available.



**Cave Diver**  
by Jacob P. Avila

Former CDAA National Director John Vanderleest brought this book to my attention. John assisted the author (who is Australian) with the technical aspects of the book. I have not read it yet but it's only \$4 on Amazon Kindle, so worth a download. The book also recently won the Adventure Writers Clive Cussler GRANDMASTER Award 2019 – which is a good indication that it's a good read. The plot is as follows: The quest for a WW2 Japanese submarine in a bottomless Papuan cavern could be the opportunity Rob Nash needs to rebuild his once glittering career in cave diving exploration. Since losing his wife in a controversial diving accident he's been dumped by sponsors, shunned by friends, and has developed a secret terror of confined spaces. Nash soon learns the price of redemption will consume every molecule of his self-belief. Not only must he battle his demons in the darkness below but vanquish fanatical terrorists hell-bent on unleashing a monstrous weapon lost in the depths for over seventy years.





# JF-8 Junee Cave, ASF Diving Expedition Report

By Stephen Fordyce (with input from other team members), January 2019.

*The haul up and over the "Mount Niggly" rockpile at the bottom and the final pack-chaining exercise through the squeeze bits at the end went smoothly and soon we'd run out of excuses and had to get into it.*

A crew from 4 states (3 Victorians, 1 South Australian, 1 New South Welshperson and divers from both from southern and northern Tasmania) assembled in the height of summer with the goal of making an assault on Junee Cave (JF-8). This is the resurgence of just about all the caves in the Junee-Florentine karst, lying under Mount Field, which includes such well-

known caves as Growling Swallet and Niggly Cave (the deepest cave in Australia). The cave is at the centre of the Junee Cave State Reserve, managed by the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service. It's well known for flooding, and even summer weather can include snow and torrential rain in the mountain catchment above. While we were lucky to enjoy mostly rainless

weather, the nearby bushfires had to be carefully monitored and planned around. Junee Cave has seen a number of heroic pushes over the years, by many of the who's who of Australian cave diving. Those hoping to dive to the current end of Sump 2 can expect a thorough spanking from the cold water (6-7degC), depth (max ~65m) and access (short Sump 1 dive, plus streamway walking both sides, not to mention the cave entrance being 400m from the carpark). Doing productive "working" dives is even

more challenging. As usual, seeing the progress made by previous teams was mind-blowing, especially given the modern technology they did not have access to. Full respect was paid!

While the local Tassie cavers complain about the sherpa loads for 2-tank dives in other JF caves, this dive was an order of magnitude more gear - we collectively used about 40 SCUBA tanks for various things in Junee. Plus a scooter, rebreathers, and various other exciting paraphernalia. Having informed the Spirit of Tasmania that we had too many SCUBA tanks to unload (and couldn't empty), they were kind enough to make special arrangements so that we could leave them in the cars. The Australian Speleological Federation (ASF) was also kind enough to contribute \$500 towards consumables for the expedition - rebreather sorb, and helium.

The team arrived at different times and split

into groups with different focus and timings. Even with this many people, there was enough space that nobody got in anyone else's way, and with some considered planning, minimal impact was not compromised. The Victorian contingent spent a leisurely two days setting up gear, portaging everything into the cave and preparing to dive Sump 2. For Pat and I, our plan was to stage near Sump 2 everything that would be needed for the entire week of diving (sorb, oxygen, diluent, reels, food, tools, etc.). With odds and ends added by everyone else, this staging area was soon known as "The Corner Shop"! By replenishing our rebreathers in the cave, we avoided having to carry them out each day and saved a great deal of time, energy, and misplaced heat. A pair of 7L tanks were used to transit through Sump 1 (about 200m long and average depth 12m). The dedicated setup and cleanup days were an excellent investment and this system made it possi-




Stewart and Andrea enjoy one of Steve's excellent jokes in the rainforest outside the cave. Photo by Patrick Fitzgerald

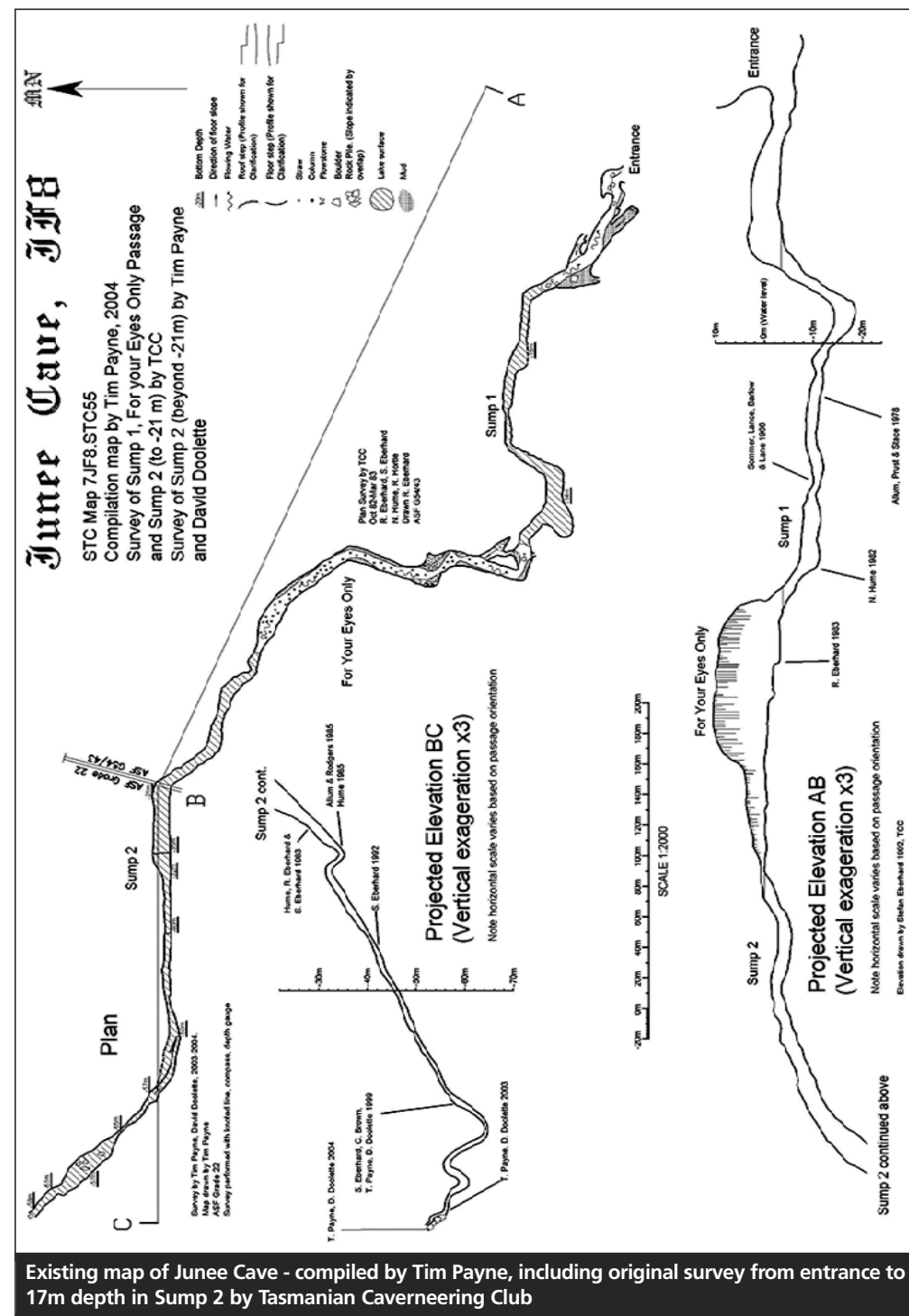


The Junee River emerges at the base of the mountain range from this spectacular entrance (complete with tourist viewing platform). Photo by Stewart Donn.

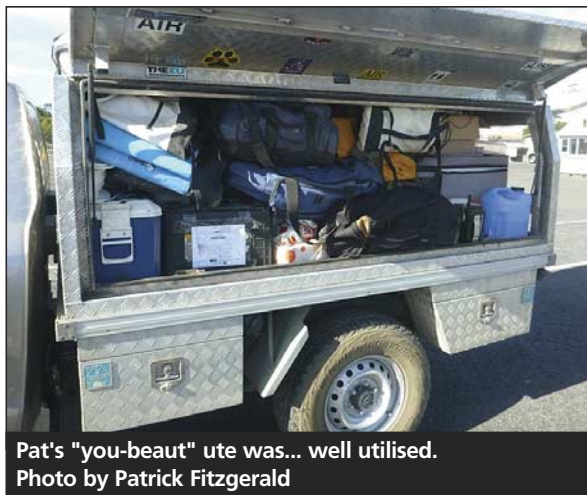


A person wearing a red helmet and dark gear stands in a cave, looking up at a dense forest of stalactites hanging from the ceiling. A beam of light from a flashlight illuminates the scene. The cave floor is wet and rocky.

The streamway cave between Sump 1 and Sump 2 named "For Your Eyes Only" is extremely spectacular and seldom visited. It's also good for photographers taking pictures of models looking speculative. Photo by Stewart Donn.







Pat's "you-beaut" ute was... well utilised.  
Photo by Patrick Fitzgerald

thermal protection, laying and surveying knotted line, and fixing existing line, with little time spent at the end. Intermediate dives saw the end reached quickly and smoothly, for maximum time pushing. The final "cleanup" dives were for the retrieval of gear, line and bailout.

**Party:**  
Stephen Fordyce  
Patrick Fitzgerald  
Stewart Donn  
Andrea Russo  
Stefan Eberhard  
Grant Pearce  
Dave Apperley

Impressively proportioned and decorate passage in For Your Eyes Only. Photo by Stewart Donn

Our early dives focussed on staging bailout cylinders, identifying (and videoing leads), checking exposure tolerance and adjusting

**Make sure to read the next issue of Guidelines for Part 2 of this report.**



Impressively proportioned and decorate passage in For Your Eyes Only. Photo by Stewart Donn

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# AGM 2019 Weekend Highlights

*Our annual AGM and symposium was held the last weekend of October in Mount Gambier. We estimate at least a minimum of 70 members attended, which we consider a very good result. Here are some highlights from the weekend.*

## Pre-AGM Volunteers Dinner – Friday 25 October

Text and photos by Meg Anderson



Friday started off with quite a few members getting some dives in. On the Friday night before the AGM, the National Committee organised a gathering for

our volunteers, AGM speakers, Life Member nominees and Hall of Fame nominees at Mac's Hotel. This was a chance to catch up before the busyness of the weekend and thank those who contribute their time and efforts to the association. This was the first time we have organised such an event and everyone had such a good time that we are considering making it a tradition!



## Symposium – Saturday 26 October

Text and photos by Meg Anderson

Our AGM and Symposium was unique this year in that all our speakers were current CDAA members who presented on a diverse range of topics. This year we had a venue change to City Hall, which made it easier for people to mingle and to come and go without interruption throughout the day. Thanks to our keynote speaker Dr. David Doolette, who came all the way from Florida, USA (but formerly from SA) as well as our other speakers Dr. Peter Buzzacott (WA), Dr. Julien Louys (QLD), Stephen Fordyce (VIC) and Dr. Stefan Eberhard (TAS). We also gave away stacks of prizes (more about that later!).

We'd also like to thank those who volunteered to introduce our guest speakers, namely Tim Payne, Peter Wolf and Phil Croker. Huge thanks also to Victoria Hudson (Products Officer) and Andrew Ottanelli for selling merchandise; Brett Harris for technical assistance; Damian Bishop for social media; Benn Walton for taking minutes; Andrea McIntyre and anyone else who helped in some way, shape or form!

Captions:

**Top: Dr. Julien Louys**

**2nd: Dr. David Doolette**

**3rd: Dr. Peter Buzzacott**

**Bottom: Stephen Fordyce**

continued next page ➡







Dr. Stefan Eberhard with Brett Harris:



## AGM – Saturday 26 October

Text by Meg Anderson  
Photos by Damian Bishop

The AGM was held midway through the Symposium. It was a pretty quick affair, with our Public Officer Andrew Seifried running the meeting. Business Director (and organiser of the weekend) Mary-Anne McLeod, gave a detailed presentation on the financials. Then the excitement began with the voting results being announced: Life Membership was awarded to John Dalla-Zuanna and Warrick McDonald, while Craig Challen and Richard Harris (some blokes we sometimes see on the telly) were inducted into the Hall of Fame.

**\*\*Backstage secret\*\*** The certificates made for our Life Members and Hall of Famers were victims of the very windy and rainy conditions and blew out of the Publications Director's hands as she was getting out of her car. Luckily she had put them in plastic sleeves so they were not damaged. Phew.

New Life Members:

**Left: John Dalla-Zuanna**

**Lower left: Warrick McDonald**

**Lower right:**  
Craig Challen accepting his and Richard Harris's Hall of Fame awards from Public Officer Andrew Seifried. Harry unfortunately could not attend.



## Evening Function at Sorrentos –

Saturday 26 October  
Text and photos by Meg Anderson

Sorrentos once again looked after us for our evening function. Every cave divers' favourite tippie, Sinkhole Gin, was our special drink for the night.



Captions:

**Top:**  
Business Director Mary-Anne McLeod and Brett Harris enjoying a hard earned drink.

**Middle:**  
Warrick McDonald in open discussion.

**Bottom:**  
Standing room only.



## Fossil Workshop –

Sunday 27 October

Text by Julien Louys

Photos by Gary Barclay

On Sunday members of the CDAA participated in a Bone and Fossil Identification workshop, run by Julien Louys and Dr. Liz Reed (University of Adelaide). The morning commenced with a presentation by Julien on vertebrate skeletal anatomy. The participants were introduced to the major skeletal elements in the vertebrate body, with a particular focus on mammal bones and the range of forms they can take. Following this, the participants had a closer look at some real bones and fossils from southeast South Australia, including marsupial lions, short-faced kangaroos, as well as modern species including dogs, grey kangaroos, koalas and wombats. The focus here was on telling apart modern versus fossil species, as well as the shape and size of the



teeth of the most common animals found in the Mt Gambier region. The participants then divided into three groups, and each was assigned a whole skeleton to try to put together. They chose from a roo, a wombat, and a koala skeleton. The trickiest parts proved to be the vertebrae and the hand and foot bones, of which there are many of similar sizes and shapes. Nevertheless, by the end of this session three almost complete skeletons were laid out on the tables. Finally, the participants were given trays of

cave fossil material to sort. They divided rocks from fossils and grouped the same types of fossils together - rat with rat, tooth with tooth, and any special fossil identifications confirmed by Julien and Liz. The find of the session was made by Tim Featonby, who picked out an extinct giant Tasmanian devil tooth from the material. Overall, the workshop was a great success, with all participants coming away with the tools to tell apart a humerus from a femur, and a sheep from an extinct megafaunal short-faced kangaroo.

**Top Left picture:**  
**Dr. Julien Louys**  
**and Dr. Liz Reed**

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When the rescuer becomes the rescued

## SROP Course –

**Sunday 27 October to Monday 28 October**

*Text by Joseph Monks*

*Photos by Diana Fernie*

Following the AGM, the SROP program was held in Mount Gambier, hosted by Philip Croker with assistance from Chris Edwards, Craig Challen, Samuel Bennett, Ken Smith and Tim Payne. This program was held over two days: day one focused on theory and land drills, it was a great day of learning for the participants. We were very fortunate to have secured the Mount Gambier Visitor Centre (formally the Lady Nelson Centre) for the occasion.



Day two saw the participants focus on practical skills application at the Pines dive site. Everyone jumped at the opportunity to get wet and put some of their newly acquired skills into practice with a body recovery. Our volunteer assessors were on stand-by to provide assistance and take notes; all of our volunteer assessors have attended this SROP program themselves over the years. We then moved onto the main show where the team executed a rescue scenario devised by Philip Croker. I would like to congratulate and thank Philip Croker for running this program for the first time. It was a huge success and I know Philip has some great ideas regarding the future direction of

the program. I must thank the Mount Gambier Visitor Centre for providing the venue, they are gracious hosts and always a pleasure to deal with. Thanks also to Forestry for booking out the Pines dive site for the day and for all the work that was done in the background.

Congratulations to Kelvyn Ball, Alex Lee, Rohan Flack, Cor Jongeneel, Mark Townsend, Richard Fernie, Lachlan Trott, Oleksander Borovstky, Michael Liarakos, Andrea McIntyre, Chris McCran, Murray Newhouse, Paolo Poggio, Danny Pethybridge and Josh Richards on completing the course.





# Thank you to our AGM and Symposium sponsors and supporters:



## Congratulations to our prize winners:

**Sinkhole Gin** prize pack:  
Tim Payne

**Sinkhole Gin** prize pack:  
Pam Payne

**Scubapro Jetfins from Ocean Divers:**  
Brett Harris

**Halcyon carbon backplate with cinch:**  
Michael Liarakos

**Santi Flex 190 undergarment:**  
Justin Reeves

**DiveRite BX2 Light from TecDiveGear:**  
Stewart Donn

**Australian Drysuit Repairs voucher:**  
Peter Wolf

**Redboats voucher:**  
Mark Simpson

**Redboats voucher:**  
Stefan Eberhard

**Pure X-Tek harness with single and twin wings:**  
Christopher McGowan

**Reel from Bay City Scuba:**  
Ian Lewis

**Reel from Bay City Scuba:**  
Richard Fernie

**Reel from Bay City Scuba:**  
Danny Pethybridge

**Caving bag from TFM Engineering:**  
Peter Buzzacott





# Safety Considerations When Using a 4WD Winch

By John Vanderleest #1965

*It is never fun to climb a wire trace ladder at the end of a long dive, particularly when you are cold and your muscles are not operating at their most efficient. In the past, we had to do it because it was the only way we could get back to the surface.*

*But today, we see a lot of people using their 4WD winch to haul people back to the surface. But have you ever thought about the risks involved? As cave divers, we constantly assess the risks in diving and prepare, train and adjust accordingly. But what about the risks of using a 4WD winch?*

Anyone who has done a 4WD course will have been taught basic winch safety. This is because the winch is under tremendous strain, dealing with weight and resistance. But a person is comparatively light. They don't weigh the same as a car and are not half buried in mud. So people think that there is no risk. But let's think about the risks or things that can go wrong.

**1. Wire cable.** Wire cables are renowned for having broken strands that can cut hands. After a dive, your hands are very soft and even more susceptible to cuts. While dive gloves provide some protection,

nothing beats the good old fashion leather riggers gloves available at any hardware store.

**2. Winching.** Winch cable or rope is pulled into or through rollers, and with it, anything loose that it can grab on the way. Loose clothing and hair are wonderful things to get snared on the cable and once caught can drag your head and body with it. Always make sure you have clothes tucked in, long hair pulled back, take extreme care when near a working winch or any redirection pulleys, and develop a good habit of never stepping over the winch line once it's connected.

**3. Communication.** There should only be one person operating the winch and one person giving directions. Having a diver dragged through a crack in the rock because the winch operator was confused by multiple people waving arms and yelling different directions is not good. Before any winching is done, the winch operator and direction controller should be agreed and they alone should confirm the arm signals to be used between them. I say arm signals, and not hand signals. The signals need to be big and clear.

**4. Winch failure.** The biggest risk to life is winch failure. I am not talking about the winch not working, but the winch not stopping. Winches and in particular their electrical relays, are subjected to all sorts of horrors. They are dunked in water, dunked in mud, have lots road grime and rarely if ever, stripped and serviced. Winches can and do fail by starting and then not stopping. Imagine yourself on the end of the winch cable as you are dragged over rocks, collecting the tripod and heading directly for the winch drum. That mighty 12,000 lb winch which you thought was going to make it an easy day, has just turned into a bone crunching monster and you are its dinner.

A fail-on electric winch can only be stopped by disconnecting the power. But how long does that take? Too long if you have to unbolt the cable from the battery.

If using a winch, assume it will fail. Make sure the



*Other owners have use inline quick disconnect on the winch cable. These are fast and effective.*



*Other safety options involve the use of a boat battery isolator switch under the bonnet. This is the fastest way to shut down a failed winch.*



*Some 4WD owners have winch cables connected to the battery using wing nuts. They are faster to undo than nuts, but in my experience, these are often tight and still require you to have pliers or spanner to undo them.*

winch operator knows how to isolate the power, can quickly open the bonnet or better still, opens the bonnet before they start, and if they need tools, has them ready to go.

So next time you use a 4WD with a winch to lower or lift people, think about the risks that need to be managed, and ensure you have the appropriate controls in place.

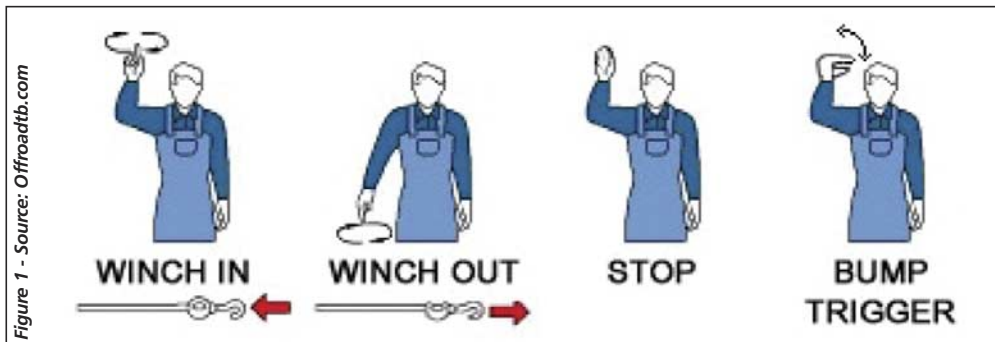


Figure 1 - Source: Offroadtb.com



# CDAA Suspension – My Time on the Outside

By Stephen Fordyce

*Well this is rather terrifying. Am I stirring politics, inviting judgement, risking my reputation? Probably. Hopefully I'm just trying to do what seems to me to be the right thing. Please be gentle.*

I have recently returned from a 12 month suspension from the CDAA. Thanks to everyone who respected my request to keep it on the down-low, however now that my membership status is restored, I would like to share some of the things I've learned with the wider membership. Being the analytical kind of guy that I am, a report for Guidelines seems most appropriate. The opinions and interpretations that follow are mine only.

Going through the sanction process was an emotionally difficult process for me, and some rather bitter pills had to be swallowed. I'm still accused of being a young male, with a satisfying string of cave diving successes, with a (sometimes well hidden) ego bigger than Cocklebidly and owing my living to a business which relies largely on cave divers and my personal profile. This didn't exactly help keep emotions in check. On the other hand, National Director Pete Wolf being my longest cave diving mate (we buddied up doing Basic Cave in 2008, and have consecutive member numbers), and having excellent and way-back relationships with the rest of the directors helped a lot. I'm pleased to say these remain intact, and I continue to believe the CDAA is in good hands.

So what did I get pinged for? I posted a video on public domain social media which was quite silly, making light of a serious cave dive and the associated risks, including the fact that I was solo diving in Olwogin. Multiple formal complaints were made, and I accepted the 12-month suspension offered by the National Committee, as a result of their preliminary investigation.

My breaches were specifically of Regulations:

- 2.4 Member Code of Conduct (point 3).
- 4.1 Members to Assess and Minimise Diving Risk.

I cannot fault anyone for exercising their right to make a formal complaint, or the National Committee for following due process and imposing a sanction they considered appropriate. No hard feelings.

## **The Dispute Process:**

"It's the Constitution, it's Mabo, it's the vibe, it's all there..."

There's a common grumble that the CDAA directors can do whatever they want. Actually, it's largely the opposite – especially where it comes to breaches, the Constitution (section 6) and to a lesser extent Regulations (section 2.6) are quite specific on the process. The Constitution is a high level instruction manual dictating how the CDAA should be run. The Regulations sit underneath and go into more detail. The directors have an obligation to follow these (as do all members!).

Obviously some discretion is needed, so when it comes to interpreting meaning or application, the National Committee gets the final word (Regulations 1.3). Someone has to, and indeed it's a specific responsibility of the directors in the Constitution (7.1.3). Whether you knew it or not, **we literally elected the National Committee to interpret the rules on our behalf.**

Section 6.1 (point 1) of the Constitution indicates that the National Committee may commence disciplinary proceedings for:

- a) A breach of the Constitution or Regulations
- b) Acting in a manner unbecoming of a member, or against the interests of the CDAA.
- c) Bringing the CDAA, any other member or cave diving into disrepute.

I can tell you that it's much better to get a handle on roughly how things work before you're emo-

tionally involved, so here is a summary of the processes required by the Constitution:

1. Preliminary investigation by National Committee (NC).
  - a. NC made aware of potential breach, most often triggered by formal complaint.
  - b. Evidence is checked, member has a chance to explain.
  - c. NC may impose a penalty, which member can decline to accept
2. Peer Review Committee (PRC)
  - a. 2x long term (5+ year) members randomly selected, 1x NC representative
  - b. PRC reviews and investigates existing evidence, does further investigation as needed, member can make a written submission
  - c. Culminates in a formal hearing, either face-to-face or via Skype
  - d. The PRC makes a final decision on the case and the penalty, which is binding upon the NC
3. Member Appeals Committee (MAC)
  - a. 1x life member, 1x person for the NC, 1x person for the naughty member
  - b. The naughty member has to stump up an "appeal bond" of (minimum) 5x annual membership (which is forfeited if the appeal is lost)
  - c. The MAC reviews everything and makes a final decision on the case and the penalty.

I had already admitted to solo diving in the video, and admitted to posting the video (although took it down within half an hour, after receiving feedback). So I accepted the sanction which was offered as a result of the preliminary investigation, and didn't get to the PRC stage.

The NC indicated it was my call as to how widely my sanction would be known. I was surprised but selfishly happy to keep it quiet. The Regulations (6.8.9) oblige the NC to be "scrupulous in the use of official information", and the Constitution (6.2.19) requires all reports into breaches to be "treated as confidential".

## **CDAA Member Code of Conduct:**

Regulations, 2.4 Member Code of Conduct

Point 3 states: "A member must not through their comments and/or actions, create a negative image of the CDAA including its members, the manage-

ment of the Association or the Association in general." This is what I breached by posting the video. Additionally, anything which glorifies risk taking in a cave diving context (whether intended or not) has the potential to influence other members and their attitude towards risk. That's pretty bad too.

If this seems a bit over the top, consider the purpose of the CDAA. There is a bunch of stuff in the Constitution (Section 3, "Aims and Objectives"), but I think for most members, site access is the most important function of the CDAA. Fair and equal access for all, to as many sites as possible. The admin and oversight to make that work. Use of collective negotiating power for the common good. That's largely why the association was formed in the first place.

In today's age of caution and rules, it's a bit of a miracle that we have landowner blessings to go cave diving at all, and sites can be lost very easily. A key way for the association to be effective, is to project a positive public image, and any member who impacts this is impacting the entire association. Landowners will inevitably have a tendency to lump all cave divers in together, so a member's behaviour outside the CDAA can still potentially impact the CDAA.

My sanction seemed unnecessarily harsh at the time, and I was very bitter about it. With time, I have become more philosophical – indiscretions must have consequences, especially when in the public eye, and the more so for high profile cave divers like me (he says, modestly). The more influential we are, the greater our responsibility to fellow cave divers, and to the good standing of the CDAA.

## **Solo Diving, and "Minimising the Risk"**

Regulations, 4.1 Members to Assess and Minimise Diving Risk

This was (at least for me) surprisingly tricky to understand, but once it percolated through my ego and bitterness, was truly an epiphany. I'm an advocate for solo cave diving, subject of course to appropriate equipment, training, mentality, and with a couple of other caveats. Being solo gives me a heightened awareness, a feeling of isolation that facilitates conservative decisions, but also the reassurance that I don't have to worry about a buddy in bad vis or restrictions. An unfortunate side-effect is an increased level of twattery when



narrating GoPro videos.

I've done a bunch of gnarly solo cave dives and have a load of experience – surely me diving solo is safer than a buddy pair of newbies on their first dive in Engelbrechts East? Maybe, but that's not the point: it's about minimising the risk in the particular case. Can something reasonably be done to make the dive safer, regardless of the initial level of risk?

This might sound a bit obvious, and indeed many of the examples and considerations mentioned in the Regulations (4.1) are engrained in us during training. But here are some more examples where risk can easily be further minimised:

1. An experienced cave diver, but doing their first dive in 2 years as a penetration to the back of Tank Cave. There would be less risk if they did a shakedown dive somewhere without overhead first.
2. Trying a home-made sidemount setup for the first time in Allendale Cave. There would be less risk testing it in the ocean, or elsewhere.

**The Regulations in their present form mention “planned separation of an extended nature” (5.1.2, point 5c) where it is necessitated for cave exploration. They also allow for “short duration planned separation” (4.1, point 3a), presumably for negotiating restrictions one at a time, checking leads, etc.**

Whilst they were not conducted in CDAA sites, my well-publicized Tassie solo exploration dives were arguably within these parameters. The expected tight, silty (and generally unknown) nature of the dive meant solo diving was ultimately safer than proceeding with multiple divers. However, dives to almost all parts of Olwolgin are regularly done as buddy teams, so for the bulk of any dive there it's unarguable that solo diving is necessitated. I'll admit, I was for the most part “solo diving for convenience” in Olwolgin but still felt wronged because I believed the risk to be sufficiently minimized due to my experience, equipment and planning.

I found plenty of technicalities in the Constitution and Regulations, and had been planning to leverage them to great effect in a long-winded Peer Review process. I had written a starchy refusal of the initial sanction and was about to send it. However a final phone call with Pete (on suspicion

that one of us must be missing something) led me to properly appreciate:

1. Many non-cave divers perceive solo diving to be reckless. I.e. landholders or managers of sites.
2. Many CDAA members and others the broader technical diving community consider solo diving to be risky.
3. **The CDAA's insurer will expect that a conservative approach be taken in relation to risk.**

Suddenly, the NC position that solo diving for convenience was unacceptably risky, and thus sanctionable seemed quite reasonable. Perhaps I had just been too close to the issue to see it properly.

While I remain an advocate for solo cave diving (including for convenience, and also safety), I have to admit that I just can't see a practical way to officially allow it in CDAA dive sites beyond the current limited circumstances. CDAA members enjoy access to the sites we do because of a positive community image, collective negotiating power and the work of the volunteers that make it all happen. Not always being able to dive exactly how we would like is a sacrifice for the good of all.

CDAA members might also consider that they represent all cave divers and by extension the CDAA even if they are not diving CDAA sites or using the CDAA to gain access. Solo cave diving and the perception of risk taking in the public domain has high potential for a breach of Regulations 2.4, point 3 “A member must not through their comments and/or actions, create a negative image of the CDAA”.

**Lessons: Any CDAA member contemplating a partial or full solo cave dive should consider carefully...**

1. Whether it is within the scope of the CDAA Regulations
2. Whether the dive plan should be reviewed and ratified by the National Committee
3. Who will gain knowledge of the dive, and the possible impact on the CDAA

**20hrs Experience On New Equipment:**

*Huh, that's interesting...*

Another thing which came to my attention was this

section of the Regulations (4.1, point 8): “...have at least 20 hours of experience with any new type of life support equipment before having a dependency on this equipment for diving in a Cave or Advanced Cave Site.”

Seems like a fairly reasonable precaution, and it's been there in the Regulations for ages. This is a trap for an advanced cave diver making the switch from open circuit to rebreather, or perhaps from backmount rebreather to sidemount rebreather. A bit greyer in other transitions – but well worth being aware of.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Relevant stuff I didn't manage to fit in anywhere else, and some reiteration

1. How did you manage to attend and speak at consecutive AGM/symposiums?
  - a. My 12 months was from/to 9th October, so I was “back in” for the 2019 symposium. The preliminary investigation was not completed at the time of the 2018 symposium, but the sanction was back-dated as I had agreed to refrain from CDAA diving at that time.
2. What about other cave dives completed during the year?
  - a. These were in non-CDAA sites, and/or did not use CDAA membership to gain access.
3. Who complained? Wanna get them?!
  - a. Dunno, and nah. I did wrong, I've got nobody to blame but myself. The peer review committee or appeal committee would have access to the complaints if it came to that.
4. What about your business?
  - a. This is one reason why I asked those in the know to keep my suspension to themselves
  - b. Getting special consideration because I benefit from the CDAA seems kinda counterintuitive.
5. What about your solo diving in Tasmania?
  - a. It was considered the safest way – and pretty obviously necessitated for exploration (and for the high profile connection dive, I gave the NC a heads up beforehand).
  - b. I chose to pursue the media attention,

confident in being able to project a good image for cave diving (but aware that a negative image could result in further sanctions).

6. These rules and the directors are such bull\$&!#, what can I do about it?
  - a. Contact me, I'm happy to discuss them.
  - b. Contact a director and discuss the rationale behind your issue.
  - c. Become a director yourself.
  - d. Draft a viable Regulation or Constitution change.
  - e. Make a formal complaint if you have evidence of a breach
7. Why don't the members hear the full story about all these people getting sanctioned?
  - a. Well, ah, it's kinda nice for the member who was sanctioned
  - b. Regulations 6.8.9 obliges CDAA representatives (NC, instructors, etc.) to be “scrupulous in the use of official information”
  - c. Constitution 6.2.19 requires all reports into breaches to be “treated as confidential”

### **Final Words**

Phew, (I think) I'm glad that's off my chest. Well done to you if you made it all the way here. I'm happy to discuss in more detail any of the points I've raised in this article.

Email me at

stephen.fordyce@tfmengineering.com.au

References:

Official CDAA documents can be accessed via the members library at: [http://www.cavedivers.com.au/cdaa-documents?field\\_download\\_type\\_tid=All](http://www.cavedivers.com.au/cdaa-documents?field_download_type_tid=All)  
(CDAA login required)  
CDAA Constitution (2018)  
[http://www.cavedivers.com.au/system/files/cdaa\\_constitution\\_2018\\_0.pdf](http://www.cavedivers.com.au/system/files/cdaa_constitution_2018_0.pdf)  
CDAA Regulations (2018)  
[http://www.cavedivers.com.au/system/files/cdaa\\_regulations\\_manual\\_v4.7\\_nov\\_2018\\_0.pdf](http://www.cavedivers.com.au/system/files/cdaa_regulations_manual_v4.7_nov_2018_0.pdf)



# CDAА INSTRUCTORS

NAME	Basic Cave	Cave	Adv. Cave
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## NEW SOUTH WALES

 FEATONBY, Tim (CDAА 3327) Worowing Heights, NSW Mob: 0402 129 253 E: tim.featonby@hotmail.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
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## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

 BENNETT, Samuel (CDAА 5203)) Mob: 0484 741 067 E: sam.bennett96@outlook.com	Yes		
 PAYNE, Timothy (CDAА 2640) Mob: 0448 147 927 E: Tim@diveessentials.com	Yes	Yes	Yes

## VICTORIA

 ALLEN, Terri (CDAА 3483) Mob: 0419 176 633 E: terri.allen@monash.edu	Yes	Yes	Yes
 BARCLAY, Gary (CDAА 1735) Mob: 0407 527 921 E: garinda@bigpond.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
 BOWMAN, Jane (CDAА 1880) Mob: 0407 566 455 E: janelbowman@hotmail.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
 CLARIDGE, Linda (CDAА 2214) Mob: 0408 052 070 E: garinda@tpgi.com.au	Yes	Yes	Yes
 DALLA-ZUANNA, John (CDAА 236) Mob: 0407 887 060 E: jdz@paintandcustom.com.au	Yes	Yes	Yes

NAME	Basic Cave	Cave	Adv. Cave
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## VICTORIA Continued

 DALE, Steve (CDAА 3926) Mob: 0468 417 211 Email: info@extremewatersport.com.au	Yes	Yes	
 EDWARDS, Chris (CDAА 2247) Mob: 0417 116 372 Email: chrisedwards01@me.com	Yes		
 MONACO, Rubens (CDAА 1731) Mob: 0413 429 533 E: info@idcscuba.com.au	Yes	Yes	Yes
 MUSCAT, Tim (CDAА 4557) Mob: 0422 127 802 E: tim_muscat@bigpond.com	Yes	Yes	

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

 BICANIC, Josip (CDAА 4691) Mob: 0412 571 779 Email: joseph_b@me.com	Yes	Yes	
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# PARTING SHOTS



SRQP Course - Sunday 27th and Monday 28th October 2019.  
Photos courtesy Diana Fernie