

BCA Executive Consultation Document on BCA Training and its Recommendations of Changes

The BCA Executive is proposing a number of changes to the current BCA Training and BCA Qualification Schemes arrangement. This has been based on a long period of research, interviews with many people across a wide range of caving disciplines, soliciting their views. These recommendations have been also discussed with both QMC (Qualifications Management Committee) and the Training Officer to solicit their thoughts and recommendations in a meeting on the 10-Nov-2020. This document outlines the summary of this investigation and outlines recommendations for changes to the current system.

N.B. In this document the following nomenclature will be used to ensure clear distinction between the two sections; Training Committee and the Training Officer will be referred to as the "BCA Coaching Scheme" & Convenor, with QMC and its Chair, being referred to as the "BCA Qualification Scheme" & Convenor. The potential for the renaming of the two sections is discussed in 1.6.

1.0 Recommendations for changes to the overall BCA Training setup

1.1) BCA Training Oversight/Liaison Group

There should be consistency across BCA training as a whole with regard to caving practices, use of equipment and techniques and documentation. This has happened dysfunctionally in the past with some agreement, but often driven by one group or the other, almost in a power struggle aspect.

An oversight/liaison group needs to be established consisting of the BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor, BCA Qualification Scheme Convenor, the E&T Convenor and members of the Executive. This is to ensure that all groups are liaising correctly, coordinating and agreeing methods, use of equipment etc. to produce the same or similar documentation that the BCA recommend. Its function is NOT control of the groups i.e. hierarchical control, but merely a means where training/equipment issues can be raised and then the group decide the appropriate course of action/review e.g. E&T to chase, the formation of a temporary expert group to report back on an issue etc. In this way, the BCA should have a more succinct approach to techniques, equipment and documentation. This oversight group and the proposed training set up is shown in Appendix A.

This has been agreed by both the BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor, BCA Qualification Scheme Convenor, and E&T Convenor.

Recommendation 1.1: The approval by Council for the formation of this group.

1.2) Equalisation of the two groups.

Currently the BCA Coaching Scheme is a Standing Committee and the BCA Qualification Scheme is a Working Group. This creates many disparities between them, e.g. one can vote on Council, the other can't, the election of their Convenors is different. It is suggested that this should change and that both function in the same manner.

It is recommended that both sections become Working Groups, but in the terms and references, there are clear rules that regional representation for all regions is required. While Standing Committees have a limited place, they are exceptionally restrictive as they can possibly only be changed by an AGM and not Council, however there is some disagreement on this point.

The Executive feel that in this case it would be much better that these are Working Groups that are changeable by Council, as many of the problems over the terms and conditions, particularly relating to the current BCA Coaching Scheme and its Convenor, that can only be rectified once a year at an AGM, prolonging the problem.

As with current working groups' rules, both Convenors would not have a Council vote.

Recommendation 1.2: Both the BCA Coaching Scheme and BCA Qualification Schemes both become Working Groups with clear terms and conditions that require regional members.

1.3) Appointment of Convenors.

The appointment of the Convenors needs to be a fair and open process.

The BCA Qualification Scheme Convenor and Deputy

Applications for the BCA Qualification Scheme Convenor and Deputy will be accepted by the BCA Qualification Scheme Administrator from any current T/A who has been operating in that role for at least three years. He or she should also have been working for a minimum of two years in a group or role for the BCA or constituent body.

An interview panel will be made up of members of the Executive and an elected member of the Qualification Scheme Working Group and the Qualification Scheme Administrator. Their decision will be ratified by Council. The Convenor will be appointed for a 3 year period, ratified by Council each year for the remainder of their term (as inline with other BCA Working Groups). The Convenor can only stay in post for 2 terms (a maximum of 6 years).

BCA Coaching Scheme

Applications for the BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor will be accepted by the BCA Secretary from any caver who's CV indicates significant caving experience,

(preferably with a good expedition or foreign background). Previous experience of organising coaching/training events for cavers is also encouraged.

An interview panel will be made up of members of the Executive and an elected member of the Recreational Caver Coaching Scheme. Their decision will be ratified by Council. The Convenor will be appointed for a 3 year period, ratified by Council each year for the remainder of their term (as inline with other BCA Working Groups). The Convenor can only stay in post for 2 terms (a maximum of 6 years).

Recommendation 1.3: The appointment of Convenor to the Working Groups is adopted and included in the terms and reference of the respective Working Groups.

1.4) Complaints and Concerns.

The complaints process both within the BCA itself and within the more public work groups/ standing committees, is dysfunctional and poor. For the BCA overall, this is currently subject to the Constitution and Manual of Operations Review Working Group (and also discussed in section 4.0). However, there are some points that are particularly pertinent to the Recreational Caver Coaching schemes and BCA Qualification Schemes.

1) Clear distinction should be made between formal complaints and concerns and just informal gripes. Too often, these are confused. For both complaints and concerns to be formally considered, they must be in written form and clearly labelled so. Gripes should be dismissed, indicating that if it is genuine, then a concern or complaint needs to be raised as one.

2) All complaints and concerns should be sent to the BCA Secretary. If one is passed to the BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor or a member of BCA Qualification Scheme or its Administrator, they are to immediately on pass it to the BCA Secretary, without comment to the concerned or complaining person bar acknowledgement of receipt and the on pass. The BCA Secretary will log the issue and the BCA Executive will consider the issue raised, either pass it on to the relevant person, or choose to deal with it themselves.

This is for two reasons:

1) The Executive are independent of the training schemes and thus there is no concern to the person raising the concern or complaint that it might have a detrimental effect on them e.g. a Qualification Holder or a caver complaining about a member of the BCA Qualification Scheme or the Recreational Caver Coaching Scheme.

2) It allows the Executive to monitor the complaints occurring (hopefully very few) within BCA Coaching and BCA Qualification Schemes and will readily highlight a problem with an individual or the training process.

Recommendation 1.4: The complaints procedure for both BCA Coaching Scheme and the BCA Qualification Scheme should be followed as above.

1.5) Website Training Pages

Clear clarification is required for BCA training on the BCA website. This is already work in progress with pages being ported across from the old site and now require updating further to be 100% transparent. Clear distinction needs to be visible between the BCA Coaching Scheme side focusing on events for clubs and the regions and the BCA Qualification Scheme, focusing on the Qualifications available and their description. It is recommended that the first Training web page highlighting this structure (with an improved diagram of Appendix A) with clear information about each and clear contact details i.e. BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor and the BCA Qualification Scheme Administrator. The agreed contacts for both sections to be placed on this page only.

Recommendation 1.5: Work to continue by both the BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor, BCA Qualification Scheme Convenor with the help of P&I and IT to ensure that this is correctly reflected and the appropriate information displayed on the Website.

1.6) Name Changes:

As indicated in the introduction, the naming of the sections of training and how cavers call themselves within this e.g. Recreational, Amateur, Sport, Commercial, Professional, QMC, Instructor BCA Qualification Scheme, unregulated, regulated etc has caused long debates over the previous years and possibly needs a final decision.

There are a number of reasons for this:-

1) It is useful in documentation to be able to differentiate between the regulated and unregulated cavers in documents, meetings, work groups etc.

2) The current naming of QMC and Training Committee has led to a lot of confusion and the names do not particularly indicate, "what is described on the tin". As has been shown when googling, the LCMLA and CIC BCA Qualification Schemes, or QMC do not hit the first page if at all.

Other considerations. QMC have just gone live with a new membership system and to change the name for them immediately would be inconvenient.

N.B. This is likely to be a hot topic of discussion (as it has been in the past), and if necessary will be parked for future discussion as this is only one of a number of recommendations that are being suggested to improve the BCA Training/Coaching set up.

Recommendation 1.6: The following names are adopted for the two sections of the BCA Training/Coaching Schemes; Training Committee and the Training Officer will be referred to as the "BCA Coaching Scheme" & Convenor, with QMC and its Chair, being referred to as the "BCA Qualification Scheme" & Convenor.

2.0 The BCA Coaching Scheme

2.1) The BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor

This is a post to facilitate the organisation of the BCA Coaching Scheme which would cover all disciplines within the caving sphere, e.g. rope techniques, surveying, cave science, biology etc. It has no part in the organisation or advice on the BCA Qualification Schemes (other than referring them to the BCA Qualification Scheme Administrator). The role is predominantly organisation of coaching events rather than being the lead role in these events.

It is strongly suggested that this position is held preferentially by a non-Qualification Holder with caving/expedition experience for reasons of potential conflict of interest.

If a Qualification Holder (LCMA,CIC,T/A) or one who has commercial interests in caving activities is appointed then some in-depth scrutiny of that individual must be agreed in accordance with the BCA Conflict of Interest Policy (see later) to avoid any possibility (or even any suggestion of) a conflict of interest which could result in bringing the BCA into disrepute.

Recommendation 2.1: While the above is basically in line with the terms of reference passed by the 2019 AGM, further clarification should be made to make it a clear and water tight understanding. The addition of the Conflict of Interest Policy should be included. (See Appendix B - for proposed terms and references).

2.2) BCA Coaching Scheme Working Group make up

The Executive feels that the current Training Committee is far too big and unwieldy. The idea of the BCA Coaching Scheme Working Group is to facilitate training events for Recreational cavers, both by national events and helping the Regional Training Officers organise events.

The Executive therefore believe that this should be a working group solely made up of a Convenor and the Regional Council Training Officers, BCA Y&D officer and a CHECC Representative (see Appendix A - Organisational Diagram & B - terms of reference). With the formation of the BCA Training Oversight/Liaison Group (see Section 1.2), there is no need for this group to replicate the work of the Working Groups (as what could be and may have been seen as a power struggle). It should forward any suggestions/ concerns to this group, which will develop a solution/recommendation to BCA training as a whole (where applicable).

Co-option of additional members is permitted but on a temporary basis unless ratified by changes in the terms of conditions of the working group.

Recommendation 2.2: The make up of the BCA Coaching Scheme Working Group, should be radically reduced to just include the Convenor and the

Regional Council Training Officers, the BCA Y&D officer and the CHECC Training Officer.

2.3) BCA Coaching/Training Events

These are coaching/training events to improve recreational cavers' skills in all aspects of caving and its disciplines, not just rope techniques. For it to be considered a BCA event, the trainers/ coaches will be only permitted to claim their reasonable expenses for the event. This also includes coaching/training events that are reimbursed by BCA to regional councils. These events must also abide by the BCA Conflict of Interest Policy.

Careful consideration of how these BCA events are run should be made for each event, particularly those regarding rope techniques, in the use of qualified trainers or peer to peer coaching. If Qualification Holders are to be used for a BCA event, again they may only reclaim travel expenses. They should also be selected from a pool of willing Qualification Holders interested in participating, in a fair, unbiased and transparent way, so as not to give preference to any one Qualification Holder.

The organisation of these events will be further aided by a BCA Event Coordinator who can help in the booking of locations, any equipment required (projectors, refreshments etc), sign ups and payment etc, to help the Convenor focus their time on organising the aspects of coaching/training to be covered or assisting the Regional Representative in doing so.

Recommendation 2.3: The rules for organising coaching/training events are adopted as above and laid out in guidance to be developed by the Working Group and ratified by Council.

3.0 BCA Qualification Scheme

3.1) BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group make up

The BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group should be made up of the Convenor, Deputy, BCA Qualification Scheme Administrator, Area Liaison officers (ALO's), Chair of CIC Panel, AHOEC rep, The BCA Coaching Scheme convenor, a Voluntary Sector Rep, the BCA Safeguarding Representative & two members appointed by BCA council (not necessarily from) who are regarded to be from a strong Recreational/expedition background to provide input to the group and additional feedback to Council from an Recreational prospective.

Co-option of additional members is permitted but on a temporary basis unless ratified by changes in the terms of conditions of the working group.

Recommendation 3.1: The current make up is in-line with those passed at the 2019 BCA AGM. However, it is suggested, in-line with the justifications above, they are revised accordingly. (See Appendix B -for proposed terms and references).

3.2) BCA Qualification Scheme regional panels.

A transparent and fair method of a training assessor becoming a member of a regional panel needs to be developed. It should be the same across all panels. The number of regional panels a T/A should be allowed to sit on, should be given careful consideration.

Recommendation 3.2: BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group should develop such procedures and be ratified by BCA Council.

3.3) BCA Qualification Scheme Disciplinary procedures.

Clear disciplinary procedures need to be developed for Qualification Holders who have acted outside the rules of the scheme. Currently there are no such procedures in place. If they have not acted in the interest of the BCA, then the BCA disciplinary procedures will apply.

Recommendation 3.3 : Disciplinary procedures for Qualification Holders that have acted outside of the BCA Qualification Scheme rules should be developed by the BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group and ratified by BCA Executive.

3.4) BCA membership and Qualification Holders.

All BCA Regulated Caving Qualification Holders need to be members of the BCA for their Qualification to be and remain valid. (This was agreed by all parties at the meeting on 10-Nov-2020). Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the Qualification Holder to ensure that their BCA membership as well as their BCA Qualification membership is paid up and current. Better ways in which the BCA Qualification Scheme Administrator and the BCA Membership administrator can verify this, need to be developed. This will hopefully be aided by the new BCA membership system that is being developed, and is included into this work stream.

The amount that a Qualification Holder has to pay to be a BCA member to ensure the Qualification is valid has been up for debate for sometime (Nick Williams did a lot of the initial work on this but which was sadly left unfinished). The debate continues and is a balance between what benefits are given to the Qualification Holders via the BCA versus the costs to the Qualification Holders and potential detrimental effect (financial) of people not continuing to partake in the BCA Qualification Scheme to the BCA.

Recommendation 3.4: BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group to bring a proposal regarding BCA membership to the BCA Executive for initial agreement, with final ratification by Council.

4.0 Changes to operations of BCA itself

4.1) Complaints

Clear definition of what is a complaint, a legitimate concern or just a gripe is required. It is recommended that complaints and concerns can only be considered if in written form and are sent to the BCA Secretary. The BCA Executive will log it and then decide how to process this complaint/concern in accordance with BCA procedures, passing it on where deemed appropriate.

The requirement to go to the BCA Secretary is so that complaints/concerns can be looked at independently of any officer. It will also allow the Executive to have a tally of complaints/concerns received and act accordingly. Hopefully, the level of concerns/complaints will be low, however if the Secretary is receiving a large number of concerns / complaints about an individual or a process, then the Executive should be one of the first to know so that they can take the appropriate action.

Recommendation 4.1: The Constitution and Manual of Operations Review Group bring a new Complaints Procedure Policy to Council for immediate adoption. In the interim, the Executive are recommending that the principles laid out in the above are adopted as supplementary guidance to the existing complaints procedure forthwith.

4.2) Conflict of interest

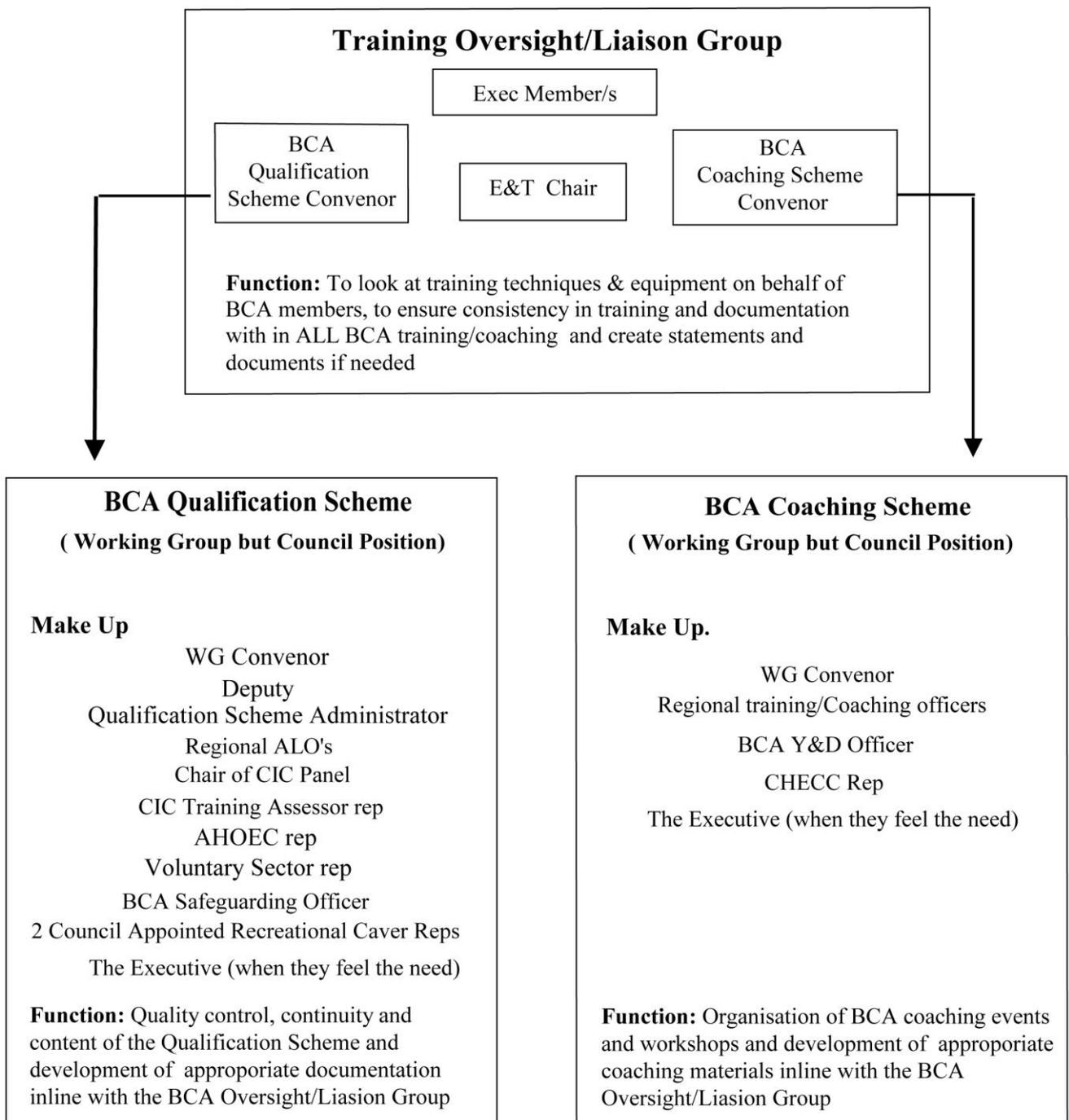
All of the current Executive have experience of working for large corporate companies where consideration of conflict of interests, is paramount. If dealt with correctly, this should mitigate the potential for both allegations of and actually falling into a conflict of interest situation that could bring that officer or the BCA into disrepute. A conflict of interest policy has been developed for the BCA - (Appendix C) based on that issued by the Welsh Athletics as a pro forma for new clubs.

Any persons involved in BCA business, e.g. Council members, members of Standing Committees or Working Groups, Constituent Bodies, and other additional BCA appointments as well as trainer assessors of the BCA Qualification Scheme, and those organising events on behalf of the BCA, will be required to fill in a signed **BCA Conflict of Interest Disclosure document** - (Appendix C) outlining any potential interests they may have that may lead to such a conflict. They will be kept by the BCA Secretary.

Recommendation 4.2: The Conflict of Interest Policy/Guidance proposed (as shown in (Appendix C) is approved by Council for immediate implementation and incorporated into the documents proposed by the Constitution and Manual of Operations Review Working Group.

Appendix A - BCA Qualification/Coaching Schematic Diagram

Proposed New BCA Training/Coaching Arrangement



Appendix B - Terms of references

A) BCA Training Oversight/Liaison Group

1. A working group consisting of the BCA Coaching Scheme Convener, the BCA Qualification Scheme Convenor, the E&T Convenor and members of the Executive, with other members co-opted on a temporary basis only (as the need requires).
2. Ensure the effective communication with the BCA Coaching Scheme Working, BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group and the Equipment and Techniques Standing Committee to establish standardised BCA policy and methods in relation to equipment, coaching and training.
3. The dissemination of information relating to the standardised BCA policy and methods in relation to equipment, coaching and training as mentioned above.
4. Liaison with other BCA Committees e.g. C&A on matters affecting training/coaching arising by the BCA Coaching Scheme Working Group and/or BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group.
5. Representing, within established protocols, matters of training and training process raised by any major incident involving cavers and Qualification Holders.

B) BCA Coaching Scheme Terms of Reference:

1. A working group consisting of the BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor, representatives from each of the regional councils. Other members co-opted on a temporary basis only (as the need requires).
2. Be the responsible organisation for BCA clubs, BCA regional and national coaching events in all caving disciplines and the administration of grants to do so. (This does not include anything related to the BCA Qualification Scheme. These are administered by the BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group)
3. Liaison with BCA Training Oversight/Liaison Group in matters or concerns with BCA policy and methods in relation to equipment, coaching and training.
4. Promote coaching for cavers and clubs by way of good practice on effective coaching methods, in accordance with the BCA Training Oversight/Liaison Group.
5. Liasing with the BCA Qualification Scheme on matters of mutual interest when required.
6. Operate within these terms of reference agreed by the National Council and BCA AGM.
7. The Convenor will be appointed for a 3 year period, ratified by Council each year for the remainder of their term (as inline with other BCA Working Groups). The Convenor can only stay in post for 2 terms (a maximum of 6 years).

C) The BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group - Terms of Reference:

1. A working group consisting of the Convenor, a Deputy, the Area Liaison officers (ALO's), the Chair of CIC Panel, a AHOEC representative, the BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor, two members appointed by BCA council (not necessarily from) who are regarded to be from a strong recreational/expedition background to provide input to the Group and additional feedback to Council from an Recreational prospective, the scouts representative. Other members co-opted on a temporary basis only (as the need requires).
2. Management of the BCA Qualification Scheme including the updating of the syllabus and training methods, in line with recommendations made by the BCA Training Oversight/Liaison.
3. Liase with the BCA Training Oversight/Liaison Group in matters or concerns with BCA policy and methods in relation to equipment, coaching and training.
4. Liase with the BCA National Council on matters related to BCA Qualification Scheme
5. Liasing with the BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor on matters of mutual interest when required.
6. Operate within these terms of reference agreed by the National Council and BCA AGM.
7. The Convenor will be appointed for a 3 year period, ratified by Council each year for the remainder of their term (as inline with other BCA Working Groups). The Convenor can only stay in post for 2 terms (a maximum of 6 years).

Appendix C - BCA Conflict of Interest Policy

Upon appointment, each Council member and those participating in the BCA Qualification Scheme will make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships, and posts held, that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. This written disclosure will be kept on file and will be updated as appropriate. In the course of meetings or activities, Council members will disclose any interests in a transaction or decision where there may be a conflict between the best interests of Association and any organisations that the Council member is involved with.

Disclosure: In the event of a Conflict of Interest, a Council Member may be asked to leave the room for the discussion and may not be able to take part in the decision or vote depending on the judgement of the Chairman. Any such disclosure and the subsequent actions taken will be noted in the minutes. This policy is meant to supplement the Constitution and any other BCA Policy.

All Council Members of the BCA will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the Association on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest. The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of the Association's decision-making process, to enable our members and stakeholders to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and Council members.

Examples of conflicts of interest include (but are not limited to):

- 1 A Council member who is also a club member who partakes in a decision regarding whether fees from members should be increased.
- 2 A Council member who is related to a member of any staff and there is a decision to be taken on staff pay and/or conditions.
- 3 A Council member who is also on the committee of another organisation that is competing for the same funding.
- 4 A Council member who has shares or an interest in a business that may be awarded a contract to do work or provide services for the club.
- 5 A Council member who is involved with decisions affecting the allocation of funds or work, who has interests or friends who might benefit from the allocation.



CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

Organisational affiliation

I, the undersigned, have the following areas of interest which may have a bearing on my activities as a Council member of the British Caving association:

I am a member of the following club(s) :

I am an office bearer at club(s) or other organisation(s) (state position held):

I am involved in a voluntary capacity with other organisations that may have areas of joint interest with the BCA (i.e. other caving bodies, trust boards, etc.):

Business and financial interests

Current employment:

My company has/I have a financial interest associated with caving in the UK in the following capacities:

Family interests

Members of my immediate family have an involvement in or are associated with caving in the UK in the following capacities:

Other

I have or my family have other interests that could be perceived as being in conflict with my role with the BCA *organisation* (include service on other boards here and financial interest in any organisations):

Statement

I have listed above all areas which could be defined as a conflict of interest in my role with BCA *organisation* at the current date. If my circumstances change and create any situation which could be perceived as a conflict of interest, I will advise BCA Secretary immediately I am aware of the situation. I agree to abide by the BCA *organisation* Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Name:

Signed:

Date: