



COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CAVING CLUBS

A constituent member of the National Caving Association

NCA REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT TO THE CSCC AGM 8TH MAY 2004

It has been a traumatic and eventful year on the national scene.

The trauma was insurance. A new national scheme is in place. It is more complex than the previous scheme and has been a steep learning curve for everyone. Although it has yet to reach its target, the early signs are that the scheme has been a success. Assuming the premiums are in line with this year, it should run again next year.

The eventful part was the formation of the BCA. I attended the inaugural meeting on the 20th March. A milestone in British caving history. Most active cavers in the country are now voting members of the National Body. Have your say, use your vote, get involved. You have the power to shape the new BCA!

Eddy Hill of the UBSS was elected Secretary, Andy Pryke was elected Equipment Convenor, Les Williams of the WCC was elected Publications and Information Officer, the post of SpeleoScene was left vacant but a volunteer, Jim Cockrane, has subsequently been found. The existing NCA officers have filled the other posts. It was resolved that all the functions of the NCA would be transferred to the BCA by the end of this year. The NCA would then be expected to wind itself up at its final AGM in March 2005.

As far as the One-Stop-Shop goes, that has been on hold whilst everyone takes a rest after forming the BCA. But the process of incorporating the Regional Councils and BCRA kicks off again with a Hub meeting tomorrow. Fortunately it is tomorrow so maybe we can escape talking about it for one meeting ...

Other items:

The BCA has issued a Handbook to all its member clubs, direct individual members and subscribers. It is packed with useful information, mostly culled from the regional handbooks.

The Training Committee is to look at producing some self-assessment training materials. The National Council made it clear that they are worried about a link to certification and that the matter needs to be treated carefully.

As I've mentioned before the HSE is currently proposing to extend the Safe Working at Heights Directive to caving and other adventurer activities. In brief this would require the use of two ropes on a pitch, completely undermining SRT. Initially this would only affect commercial caving, but there is a fear that it would be the thin end of the wedge. The Adventure Activities lobby group represents adventure activity interests and is chaired by a caver. It has been negotiating with the HSE for some time. It is now calling for letters to be sent to MP's. If you also wish to lobby your MP please contact Dave Cooke (ncarep@csc.org.uk) for a pro-forma letter.

Back issues of SpeleoScene 1 – 9 are available for a small fee from Jenny Potts (jenny.potts@ukonline.co.uk)

For my sins, I'm willing to stand as NCA Representative for another year.

David G Cooke

8th May 2004