

Studley BSAC 1277 Welfare of Vulnerable People Policy

Policy Date 11th September 2005

Review Date September 2006

Responsible for policy: Branch Welfare Officer

Introduction: This policy sets out how the BSAC Welfare of Vulnerable People (WoV) Policy will be used in our branch.

Aims:

- To ensure vulnerable people, whether adults or children, are safeguarded.
- To ensure that transparent good practice is followed during dive training and diving operations.

Objectives:

- To set out the role of the Branch Welfare Officer (BWO)
- To make members aware of the BSAC WoV Policy and its implications
- To establish standards for Self Declaration and CRB procedures within the Branch Bye-Laws
- To define the requirements which must be fulfilled for vulnerable people to become Branch Members

Definitions:

1. A vulnerable person may be a child under the age of 18, or an adult who is made vulnerable either by a disability, or by virtue of their training (such as a trainee with an instructor).
2. BSAC WoV policy is on the BSAC website as two documents "Welfare of Vulnerable People in Snorkelling and Scuba Diving: Policy Procedures and Guidelines for BSAC Branches" and "Welfare of Vulnerable People in Snorkelling and Scuba Diving: Self Declaration and CRB Procedures". Hard copies are available from the Branch Welfare Officer.
3. Self Declaration is a form which asks for details of any convictions, police investigations, social services involvement, or disciplinary action from a sports governing body in relation to children or vulnerable adults. It relies on the honesty of the person completing it. The form is sent by the individual member direct to BSAC HQ who either issue a certificate which is given by the member to the BWO, or else HQ will advise the member that they are unsuitable and inform the BWO.
4. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks are done using evidence of identity which is checked by the BWO. The request form is then sent to BSAC HQ to be signed by the BSAC Welfare Officer and forwarded to CRB. The results are sent to the member and the BSAC HQ. BSAC HQ will then provide a yes/no answer to the question "The applicant will have significant contact with children and vulnerable adults. Is there anything within this person's criminal record that suggests they are not suitable for BSAC membership?" The service is free of charge provided that the Branch Bye-laws contain a statement defining which members are required to have a CRB and confirm annually to BSAC that this has been accepted at the AGM.
5. Good Practice and observation is by far the most reliable way to strive to ensure the safety of all within the BSAC Branch environment. Good practice is outlined within the BSAC WoV Policy. Awareness of this and vigilance will enable questionable behaviour and early signs of potential problems to be spotted and dealt with.

Role of the Branch Welfare Officer:

is detailed in the "Policy, Procedures and guidelines" document. The BWO is a Committee Member who leads within the Branch on welfare issues and is responsible to the Branch Chairman.

Specific responsibilities include:

1. Dealing with incidents or child protection concerns. The BWO is responsible for ensuring that these are documented and reported to the BSAC Welfare Officer, or police and social services as appropriate.
2. The BWO is responsible for processing CRB applications.
3. The BWO is responsible for implementing, monitoring and reviewing WoV policy and will report annually at the AGM and to the Committee as necessary.
4. The BWO is responsible for promoting awareness of welfare issues and good practice by Branch members.
5. The BWO is responsible for ensuring that the Bye-law regarding the use of CRB checks is accepted by the members at each AGM and that this is minuted and copied to the BSAC Welfare Officer.
6. The BWO is responsible for regulating the photography, filming or videoing of children or vulnerable adults participating in Branch activities and ensuring that appropriate consent has been obtained from them and from their parents or carers.

Criteria for acceptance of children and vulnerable adults as Branch Members.

1. Scuba diving is permitted from age 12 onwards in line with BSAC policy.
2. Any prospective members must complete a Self Declaration Medical Form, and consult a Sport Diving Medical Referee if appropriate. Medical Standards are on www.uksdmc.co.uk.
3. If a member has a disability which may affect their diving, the following applies:
 - a. Adaptations to equipment and practice are put in place.
 - b. All training is delivered to exhaustion of the possible options.
 - c. If a person still cannot perform one or more of the skills satisfactorily then they, their Instructor and their DO will meet to decide what support level applies, and whether a condition should be applied to the qualification.
 - d. If the individual or an instructor later finds a way round a problem and competence can be demonstrated, then the support level and condition may be updated.
4. Children under the age of 18 must be accompanied on all Branch activities by a parent or carer who is themselves a diver or is willing to undertake diving training and who is a Branch Member in their own right.

Categories of members requiring CRB checks

1. Instructors and Branch Officers will be required to have a CRB check. Those training as Instructors will be recommended to have a CRB check prior to qualification.
2. Self Declaration forms will not be used within this Branch.

Monitoring of this policy

1. Records will be kept by the BWO of the outcome of CRB checks, of any incident requiring investigation, and of application and consent forms for photography, video or film of children and vulnerable adults participating in Branch activities.
2. An annual report will be provided at the AGM and any ongoing concerns reported to the Committee.
3. The confidentiality of individuals will be respected at all times except when overridden by the duty of care to the child or vulnerable adult.