Scouts
Horsham District

ACTIVITY RISK ASSESSMENT RECORD

Artificial Caving System

Brief of Activity:	Location:	Date/s of Activity:	Assessor: Don Moyse
Caving Activities within Horsham District Scout Artificial Caving Project	Horsham District Scout Campsite	As arranged	13th July 2021 (Reviewed 05.23) Reviewed 29.05.24, 09.26

Risk Assessment:

- **A *hazard* is something with the potential to cause harm**
- **The *risk* is the likelihood of potential harm from that hazard being realised. The level of risk is linked to the severity of its consequences**
- **The level of risk remaining when controls have been put in place is the *residual risk*. This should only ever be considered high where there is poor H&S management and inadequate control measures**

Overview

Horsham District Scouts have an artificial cave system at the Beacon Hill campsite. Caving is both a physically and mentally challenging sport and by providing this facility promote healthy lifestyles and physical and emotional development in young people. The facility will provide a safe and exciting environment that will be used by Scouts, Guides and other interested groups such as the South East Cave Rescue Organisation (SECRO).

General risk control measures:

Scout Leaders or external (non-Scout) activity leaders responsible for caving events must have received the appropriate training and briefing in the safe management of activities in this caving system. Note Scout Caving permits are not required for artificial caving systems. For each caving event every unit/group will have a nominated leader in charge responsible for the event, the cavers and any other members of the leader support team. That team will have a minimum of two adults present at each event, including the event leader. They will be familiar with the participants sufficient to assess individual and group capability and needs. No group of caving youths will exceed 15 in number at any one time, not including the leader team.

The event leader and support team will individually or as a group be able to direct, train, coach, support, control the group and administer first aid when necessary, have a plan for emergency situations and know the procedure to be followed for different types of incident.

Activities will commence with a group briefing covering intended goals, hygiene measures, necessary personal protective and safety equipment, any additional group safety and emergency equipment, group control, potential hazards, any relevant directional signals and contingency or emergency action.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION [What is hazard that could cause Injury / Illness / Loss]	WHO MAY BE AT RISK & HOW [Injury / Illness / Loss]	CONTROL MEASURES ALREADY IN PLACE What are we already doing?	ANY FURTHER ACTION OR CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED	ACTIONED (Date)	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
For the purposes of this risk assessment any artificial caving participants shall be referred to as 'cavers'					
Arrival of participants into campsite car park for drop off **Injuries sustained from moving vehicles**	Anyone involved in activity or providing transport or escorting of cavers arriving or departing camp site car park. Muscular-skeletal injuries.	Event instructions for those involved to include location and car park descriptor that reminds arrivals of the single access lane into car park, to park reasonably and in a way that does not expose a caver exiting a vehicle into path of other moving vehicles. Follow any displayed camp site car parking guidance or if being marshalled follow their instructions when safe to do so. Event leader to plan for a team member to meet arriving cavers, to form up in safe area or at the cave.	Where assessed as a potentially busy period controls could include clear expectations on the drop off or pick up with all involved and consider the staggering of arrival and pick up times. Maximum number of any event group is 15 cavers plus Leader Team.	As required	Camp site Committee for any car park management rules or guidance Event Leader
Walking the track to caving system is under tree canopy **Strikes from falling branches**	Persons at risk of muscular-skeletal injuries, strains, cuts and grazes from falling branches	Annual tree and canopy survey to assess need for any required trimming or thinning of branches or weakened trees.	Event day survey by Event Leader where weather conditions may loosen tree debris or branches.	Annually as set by campsite committee	Event Leader
Trips from exposed roots or ground debris on approach track or around external waiting area **Injuries sustained from trips**	Persons at risk of strains, cuts and grazes from trips, slips and falls.	Annual track and external caving area survey to assess need for any required repairs to ground works or removal of exposed roots. Caving briefing to include waiting area behaviour and safety, caution and care warnings, use of torches if dark and looking out for each other.	Event day survey by Event Leader where weather conditions may loosen ground works. Reminder briefings	Annually as set by camp site committee	Camp site Committee Event Leader
Failure of structure or cave system itself causing risk of entrapment related injures	Cavers and support team at risk of fatal, serious or minor injuries if this occurred including during attempts at rescuing participants still in structure.	Structure is an industrial quality framework on foundations that meet guidelines for such builds. Cave system is commercially built and advised with additional safety framework to prevent movement. Annual caving system and building survey to assess need for any required repairs to ground works, building or the caving system.	Event day survey by Event Leader where weather conditions may cause movement or tree debris.	Annually as set by camp site committee	Camp site Committee

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Cavers waiting for their caving experience interfering with caving safety equipment (Bell, Fire Extinguisher or tools)	Injuries caused by untrained users of equipment or cavers in system panic or attempt escape in a hurry and without direction Cavers in system at risk of strains, cuts and grazes or undue stress and fear	Briefing covers behaviour and dangers of inappropriate behaviour. Event Leader or nominee from support team to be present in waiting areas to provide any required supervision of activities or waiting group. Maximum number of any event group is 15 cavers plus Leader Team.	Event Leader to manage any escalation of poor behaviour with appropriate sanctions, consider removal of responsible caver(s) or cancel event and cease activities. Reminder briefings To manage safety of those involved any member of campsite committee may impose a shut down and ceasing of the event.	As required	Event Leader
Risk of infection from contaminated surfaces or passing on from one caver to another an infectious disease	Persons at risk of: • Fatal disease • Scalable infection • Corporate liability • Damage to organisational reputation	This insert is intended to place measures to reduce risk at all times not just whilst under restrictive practice imposed centrally such as Covid 19. Briefing covers hygiene behaviour generally including cavers and support teams use of antiseptic hand gel or soap before entering of caves and on exit. Briefing seeks declaration from cavers or from Event Leader on their behalf of any known ailment, infection or injury that may place others in risk of transmission or contamination. Briefing explains all cavers to avoid rubbing eyes, or placing fingers in mouth. Wash properly on completion under supervision of group Leaders. On return of equipment all helmet and torch sets will be wiped down by either a support team member or by a caver under supervision of a leader.	Any cavers identified or suspected of having any infectious illness or ailment will not cave or be allowed to remain in any of the caving waiting areas. To manage safety of those involved any member of campsite committee may impose a shut down and ceasing of the event. Regular cave inspections will ensure supply of cleaning materials and minimum monthly internal clean of caving system, checks to include helmets and any suffering wear that makes cleaning ineffective to be taken out of use.	As required Monthly cleaning of caving system	Event Leader Campsite Committee - Cave Team

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Entrapment or Strangulation from tube seams or damaged parts of caving system	Cavers at risk of possible strains or other injury as a result of body, clothing, hair or body worn rings/studs snagging on any feature	Scouts will participate in a full activity brief prior to undertaking caving activity which includes tying back of hair where deemed necessary, all pocket contents removed except for tissues and any health tools (e.g. inhalers) if deemed safe to take in to caves, taping over of any body piercings or studs. No equipment has moving parts such that could cause trap risks. Leaders will be present throughout. Regular cave inspections will ensure system is devoid of any potential snagging or entrapment points.	Cavers briefed to inform Event Leader of any features cavers are concerned about for cave team inspection. Stop activity, inspect if safe to do so. Remove or repair if within capabilities or report.	As required	Event Leader Campsite Committee - Cave Team
Phobias	Persons undertaking caving at risk of phobia related reactions.	Scouts will participate in a full activity brief prior to undertaking caving activity, reactions to caving experience included. Leaders will be present throughout the system. Where this occurs whilst caver is in system, Leader Team to consider necessary response, taking out, joining and escorting out or extraction through nearest emergency access hatch.	Any cavers identified or suspected of having any phobia or potential adverse reaction to the experience will be subject of assessment by Event Leader as to whether they take part, partial experience or remain waiting.	As required	Event Leader
Risk of caver suffering Hypothermia, Heat Exhaustion or Dehydration	Cavers in extreme winter or summer conditions or cold water and wind combinations increase risk of suffering these extremes.	Initial briefing to include awareness of dangers as appropriate to conditions. Ensure clothing is appropriate to anticipated weather conditions. Briefing to include need to hydrate regularly. Note no drinks or food allowed in caving system.	Consider regular stops for cold drinks, food or hot drink intakes as required. No heating in structure.	As required	Event Leader
Other medical emergency	All participants	Emergency aid kit to be readily available to Leader Team and have access to minimum one mobile phone. Any individuals medications to be with group including readily available epi-pens where required.	Emergency aid training to be kept up to date (a SA requirement).	As required	Event Leader

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Rescuer unable to reach caver in distress	Worsening of caver suffering physical or psychological injuries	Leader requirements include to have a team member who is able to access the caving system through the caves or via the access hatches to get to a caver.	Event Leader to ensure team member becomes familiar with cave system.	As required	Event Leader
Caver misses briefing - unprepared for activity and risks personal injury	Late arriving caver or team member risks injury through being unprepared for experience or supporting others	Cavers and their carers encouraged to follow event instructions and to arrive in good time for briefing. Listen to safety brief, wear equipment and use as directed. Those late have own briefing from member of leader team. Briefing must not be a cascaded one from another caver.	Assessment by Event Leader as to whether they take part, partial experience or remain waiting.	As required	Event Leader
Leaving Caver behind	Caver at risk of suffering physical or psychological injuries through being in cave system beyond session.	Event leader to account for all cavers and support team prior to leaving and locking up facility. Maximum number of any event group is 15 cavers plus Leader Team, Event Leader to manage recording of attendees and their movements on or off site.	Consider use of Caving Board to record cavers.	As required	Event Leader
Cave system suffers bad or toxic air	All participants	Cave system is an artificial above ground facility within an airy single skinned hut. Cave system designed to allow free air circulation at all times. System is also fitted with two air movement and extractor units that draw air from the cave system expelling air to the outside.	This air movement and extraction system is switched on (switch by light switches) and timed for 1.5 hrs on each operation. Can be switched off, takes one minute to close down. Event Leader could open doors to allow movement of air and cool breeze if considered necessary for fresh air.	As required	Event Leader

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Cave building internal light failure	All participants	System has emergency lighting and emergency exit lighting above doors. Cavers have head torches as necessary personal protective equipment when in caves. Regular cave inspections will check and maintain lighting including checking of emergency lighting.	Open external doors for any natural light. Leaders use torches. Cease caving, end session.	As required	Event Leader Campsite Committee - Cave Team
Head Torch Failure **Faulty or Damaged Helmets**	Cavers at risk of suffering physical or psychological injuries through being in cave system in darkness.	Held in the cave lobby area will be sufficient and appropriate helmets for the activity along with a stock of replacement batteries. Event leader will ensure with their team that each caver is fitted with a correctly fitting helmet, that it is secured and that the caver is familiar with the head torch switch. The issued equipment will be visually inspected immediately before use, including the head torches by the Event leader or team member. The light should be checked. The cave team will make monthly inspections of the equipment.	On inspection if a helmet set is discovered or appears faulty, place aside, mark for the Cave Teams attention and do not use it.	As required	Event Leader Campsite Committee - Cave Team