

# Conducting Coaching Visits

The purpose of this document is to help the regional teams arrange and conduct coaching visits. These may be with BSAC branches, other diving clubs or regional organisations.

<b>1. BSAC branch visits .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.1 Priorities for BSAC branch visits .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Arranging a BSAC branch visit.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. BSAC branch visit purpose.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. BSAC branch visit reporting.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5. New BSAC branch visit .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6. Expenses .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>7. Visits to non-BSAC diving clubs .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>8. Other meetings and events .....</b>	<b>4</b>

## 1. BSAC branch visits

The regional teams are BSAC's direct link to our members for NDC and head office. Branch visits may arise by request, as part of an initiative to support all branches or in the event of a new branch being formed. When conducting any branch visit there are several pointers to consider:

- Information given must be accurate and up to date.
- A good grasp of BSAC affairs should be demonstrated.
- Answers should be clear and concise.
- You should be approachable, friendly and supportive.
- You should be able to offer resolution.
- You should be diplomatic.
- You should be unruffled.

### 1.1 Priorities for BSAC branch visits

- Branches without a BSAC Nationally Qualified Instructor
- Branches requesting specific assistance
- Newly formed branches
- Youth (university and college) branches
- Snorkelling branches
- Other branches / diving clubs

## 2. Arranging a BSAC branch visit

The regional teams are BSACs direct link to our members for NDC and head office. Contact should be made with all BSAC branches in the region at least once each year and any help, advice and instruction given in accordance with the aims of the National Coaching Scheme. This contact should usually come from the member of the regional coaching team assigned to that branch. Regular contact should be maintained by the assigned regional team member by e-mail or telephone.

Some branches will request a visit to help with a specific query or issue, others will simply appreciate a social contact visit, but there will always be those who perceive the regional team member in a negative light, as a policeman or HQ spy. Not all branches want to be visited and such branches may have issues relating to misunderstandings or perceptions relating to BSAC. The most successful branch visits are pre-arranged with officers of the branch, whether the visit is for a specific purpose or simply to maintain contact.

Some branches are simply difficult to contact, in which case 'cold calling' may work. The regional team member should just turn up at their meeting venue, introduce themselves and discuss the objective of their visit.

### 3. BSAC branch visit purpose

The objectives of a branch visits are coaching, communication and counselling. The branch has to perceive the visit as providing a useful service and a positive experience. There are some pre-set presentations that visiting regional team members may use to initiate contact with the branch, or a branch survey, but there is no reason why the visiting regional team member may not develop their own material, provided that it aligns with BSAC policy.

It is easy on a branch visit for the regional team member to be monopolised by the committee members, but it is essential that the ordinary branch members have the opportunity to communicate with the regional team member too. There must be a two-way communication process that allows the branch and its membership to relate queries, issues, ideas, views and requests, as well as the regional team member relaying communications from BSAC HQ.

A fundamental objective of the BSAC Coaching Scheme is to help branches to help themselves, and any services provided should be concentrated on developing this self-sufficiency. For example, if a branch has difficulty in teaching a particular skill, the coach should not visit the branch to teach the skill directly to those who need it: rather, the coach should train the instructors within the branch how to teach it themselves.

The regional team member should expect a cool, possibly difficult, reception from those branches who have outstanding issues. It is important to remain calm and to make a note of the most important issues raised by the membership and committee officers. It may not always be possible to fully answer these issues immediately and it is important not to give an answer unless absolutely certain it is accurate; it is far better to go away, make sure of the response and return at an agreed later date. It may take time to overcome these perceptions, but it is in the persistence of the regional team member and nature of the relationship that they build with the branch that will address them.

It is essential that the visiting regional team member does not get drawn into branch politics, internal disputes or be seen to 'take sides' in any disagreements. It may be possible to arbitrate between opposing sides in a branch, and this will not be a comfortable role for the visiting regional team member but is vital to try to find an amicable way forward. Ultimately, it may be that the suggestion of the branch splitting may have to be raised in order to allow both perspectives to exist.

### 4. BSAC branch visit reporting

Following any form of visit (and within a week), a written report should be submitted to the regional coach. The report is strictly confidential between the visiting team member and the regional coach, unless a welfare concern requiring immediate referral has been made. The visiting regional team member must not complete the report during the visit, and the branch should not receive a copy of the report; it may be appropriate for the visiting regional team member to send a separate brief letter or email outlining the visit and any agreed action to the branch.

The regional coach, who will agree any further action or refer specific matters to BSAC HQ. If a specific action is agreed with a branch, it is imperative that it is completed and the outcome communicated to the branch.

Regional coaches should monitor and identify any common problems the branches have and communicate these to NDC via HQ.

## 5. New BSAC branch visit

Guidance on new branch support is provided below:

- You will receive notification from HQ
- Contact the branch and arrange a visit
- Explain the role of the region, BSAC and courses/support available
- Arrange support for cross over instructors. Normally cross over instructors will attend an OWIC but be prepared to find an IT to assist in understanding BSAC differences ahead of the OWIC.
- Connect the new branch to your communication structures
- Offer a DO workshop or Know and Grow workshop
- Arrange a visit to a large and active BSAC branch locally for contact and ideas

## 6. Expenses

An expense claim for each visit should be submitted to the regional coach immediately following each visit.

Branches are not to be charged for these coaching support visits. Where the region provides bespoke training or workshops for a branch, all costs are to be met by the branch; thus, it is more cost effective for the branch to be encouraged to take part in regional or national events or to bring a small number of branches together to share the costs of bespoke requests.

## 7. Visits to non-BSAC diving clubs

Non-BSAC diving clubs within the region may be visited from time to time when a general offer of help and co-operation may be extended on the basis that BSAC is the UK national governing body for the sport. Clearly it is important that the visit is not perceived as an attempt to persuade divers to join BSAC and nothing more; the primary objectives of the visit must be fulfilled in order to ensure a positive perception and should this lead to appropriate opportunities, the benefits of the BSAC membership and instruction system may be raised.

Where an entire non-BSAC club expresses an interest in BSAC membership, they should be actively encouraged to join. The regional coaches should seek an opportunity to address the whole club to ensure everyone understands the BSAC membership and instruction system.

Members of non-BSAC Clubs cannot attend BSAC Instructor Training Scheme (ITS) courses or assessments but may be invited to take part in the programme of events in the region, subject to payment of the current course fee.

## 8. Other meetings and events

Regional Coaching Teams should endeavour to meet requests from local authorities for public 'Try Dive' events, ideally by directly involving local branches.

The regional coach should attend or appoint a delegate to attend meetings convened by bodies such as regional sports councils, which deal with matters such as access or local grants, where the interests of divers are to be represented and promoted.