Role of an SDC Organiser

The purpose of this document is to describe the role and attributes required of an SDC Organiser. In some regions this may be a designated role. In others it may be undertaken by the Regional Coach or members of the regional team on an event-by-event basis.

1. Attributes of an SDCO

The SDCO needs to be a confident communicator, able to use their initiative, personally organised, a good organiser of others and facilities, flexible and adaptable. It is important to point out that an SDCO should be organised themselves and have good IT skills. The SDCO does not need to be a BSAC instructor although familiarity with the events is useful in understanding the requirements for each of the different SDCs and Diver Training Days.

2. SDCO Role Overview

The primary purpose of the SDCO role is to arrange necessary venues and facilities for BSAC SDC and DTD courses and assessments. Key to success of the role is to liaise closely with and support the Regional Coach and the event Boss to ensure the smooth running of events and to communicate and liaise with BSAC HQ.

The SDCO is responsible for:

- identifying and booking a venue for each event which meets the requirements of the event and comes within budget limitations.

- identifying a range of accommodation to advise potential students on what they can book in an area and to book suitable accommodation for the staff within expense guidelines.

- providing the necessary tea, coffee and other drinks and refreshments during the course, lunches for the staff and to arrange meals at local eating places where necessary.

- making sure all the necessary visual aids, IT / audio visual equipment, catering, training and diving equipment including safety equipment is available and brought to the course with the event team.

- preparing the joining instructions for the students and the event team and make sure these are distributed in ample time. JIs should be available for distribution at least 2 weeks prior to the event.

- managing course logistics on the day including the setting up of the venue, provision of necessary facilities and general organisation as required.

3. Event Planning

The SDCO is responsible for making all the necessary venue arrangements and ensuring there are adequate facilities available, for example a pool, classrooms, boats and any domestic arrangements such as staff lunches and occasionally staff and participant accommodation.

Planned regional event details will be issued around August to September for the following year. However, there will be occasions when an SDCO will be given an additional date which is outside of these timescales, and the SDCO will need to find an appropriate venue / facility within a specific area.

3.3 Type of venue

The venue requirements will depend on the type of event that is scheduled – dry/classroom teaching, online presentations, will a pool be required, is open water / boat(s) necessary or does the event require any combination of these elements? It's always worth checking if there has been a similar event run in the area before, where was it, are those facilities suitable and can they be used again? Do we have details of who to contact?

3.4 Online events

Several events can be delivered partially online via webinars (Teams, Skype or Webex). Sometimes events will be set up as face-to-face delivery and then change to partial online delivery. Close liaison is needed between the SDCO and the event Boss to ensure any adjustments in the requirements of physical facilities are made timeously to avoid any unnecessary costs.

3.5 Classroom requirements

Where a room is required, what type of configuration is needed? Does the event need a main room and breakout facilities, more than one lecture room? How many people does the facility need to accommodate and how will it be used? What sort of layout is required for example large tables for chart work, chairs and small tables for group work. Can furniture be moved around if required?

The SDCO should identify what facilities come with the classroom(s) such as: IT computers / screens / large televisions projectors and what types of connections they have / whiteboards / flipcharts? Is this equipment available for the event to use, or we do need to bring our own? Is there Wi-Fi access available? The SDCO will also need to consider the positioning of power sockets and remember to provide extension leads.

3.6 Swimming Pools

Finding venues with pools can be a challenge. The following need to be considered:

- Pool overall size, depth, entries & exits, is there a shallow end
- How much space is there around the poolside for kit up etc
- Are there changing facilities close by, can we use them
- How many people can the pool accommodate
- If the whole pool is not available is there an option of using lanes
- How is pool divided – is it all one depth, shallow & deep ends
- Is access available at all times or across other pool areas
- Can we get access immediately before / after a session to facilitate getting kit in and out
- If necessary, is there overnight secure storage for kit?

Most SDC events do not need a pool. Events that can be run in a pool include Try Tech dives and Lifesaver/Snorkel Lifesaver award. These events can sometimes be run over a series of sessions utilising branch pool times.

3.7 Open Water

Most regions have a set of sites that they regularly use for running events. These will each come with their own facilities (or lack of) for changing and dry room work. They will also have different water access points and depths of water. Matching the requirements for the course to the venue should be agreed with the Regional Coach / event Boss.

A lot of inland sites require divers to book in advance. If possible sufficient spaces should be reserved for the course, such that students and instructors can then book against those spaces.

3.8 Accessibility

At the planning stage specific student needs will be unknown but it is always worth checking if the facilities are accessible to staff or students with mobility issues. Elements of the event may need to be adapted to cater for their needs.

3.9 Car Parking

Ideally all venues will have car parking on the premises. The SDCO will need to check if it is available and are there any costs involved? Where there is no on-site parking, a suitable carpark needs to be available close by and where scuba equipment is involved, it should be possible for attendees to drop off equipment at the venue. All participants will need to be aware of this information in advance of the event.

3.10   Refreshments

Some venues may have a kitchen available on-site for teas / coffee / other drinks. The SDCO should check is we can use these facilities. Other venues may have on-site cafes/ snack bars. Where there are no catering facilities it is worth asking if it is permissible for participants to bring their own food/ drink to consume on the premises.
Gas Fills
The SDCO should check whether there are any facilities for filling cylinders either on site or close by. This is more likely to be a requirement for two-day events. The SDCO should also check with the event Boss if there is likely to be sufficient time within the timetable/overnight for students to get gas fills. Where this is not the case students will need to be advised what cylinders (and, where required, gas mixes) to bring with them.

3.11   Insurance

Often venues such as leisure centres and swimming pools will request a copy of BSAC public liability insurance. This can be downloaded from: https://www.bsac.com/document/summary-of-cover/

3.12   Risk Assessment & Management

Some venues will ask for an event risk assessment to be lodged with them. Early and frequent liaison between the SDCO and the event Boss is essential for the preparation and provision of any risk assessment.

All event instructors should be aware that we are increasingly required to account for the assessment and management of risk. BSAC Safe Diving already incorporates the principles of risk assessment and management and it is included within the diver and instructor training programmes. All personnel must demonstrate that these principles are taken seriously. The event Boss is responsible for co-ordinating the activities of all those involved, i.e., BSAC HQ, SDCO, instructors and students/candidates, to ensure that all the necessary arrangements have been made. On the day of the event the

event Boss is in sole charge, responsible for ensuring that the event is conducted in the required manner.

3.13 Specialist equipment

If the event requires hard boats a long lead time will be required to organise this and close liaison with the event Boss to ensure this is viable. Most SDCs do not necessitate the use of a hard boat but this remains an option.

Some events require access to RHIBs e.g. Boat Handling, Diver Coxswain, Chartwork and Position Fixing. Others may find the use of a RHIB useful to achieve required water depth / appropriate dive sites e.g. wreck diving. A long lead time will be required to organise these courses and close liaison with the event Boss to establish dates, times, cost and booking is essential. It is possible the students / candidates will be able to assist and maybe even provide the boat(s) required.

Some courses such as Compressor Operation and Gas Blender will require the use of a compressor. These courses are typically held at a branch site or a commercial centre.

Several courses require the use of emergency training equipment such as O2 kits, First Aid kits, Training AEDs and manikins. Some regions own their own kit, there is also a small amount of equipment which can be borrowed from BSAC HQ.

3.14 Accommodation - staff/students/candidates

Once a venue has been established it can be necessary to find accommodation if required by the staff team and possibly for the students / candidates. Local knowledge can be key however there are occasions when it is more cost effective for individual staff and participants to find and pay for their own accommodation e.g., using such as www.Booking.com All instructors should be made aware of and if appropriate given the current the expenses guidelines.

3.15 Refreshments

Providing lunch for the staff and on rare occasions for the participants may be required. Some premises will not permit users to provide their own refreshments and in house provision has to be used. This may be expensive and should be kept to a minimum. Asking staff and participants to provide their own packed lunches should always be considered (Covid recommendations being to be self-sufficient and avoid sharing).

Occasionally on larger events it may be cost effective to organise prepared sandwiches from a local supermarket – always look at the pre order 'party platter' options they can be economical. Ensure that a covid safe method of delivering/serving the food is considered.

4. Finance

4.1 Costs

The amount of costs/fees involved must be considered as events need to be financially viable. It is appropriate to discuss the costs involved with the event Boss and with the BSAC HQ before a decision is made. Where necessary the Regional Coach can flex the cost of the course to accommodate additional costs, such as the use of a hard boat.

4.2 Payment of deposits

To secure facilities payment of a deposit is normally required. Usually this will be the responsibility of the SDCO who will then reclaim the money back via their expenses claim. It is important for all expenditure that a VAT receipt is received and used to support the expenses claim. There will be occasions with larger events where a substantial deposit is required this can be paid direct by HQ to the service provider.

The SDCO should keep a record of the latest possible time that an event can be cancelled without loss of deposit to ensure that any decision to cancel an event is taken in sufficient time.

5. The lead up to an event

5.1 On-going liaison with venue / facilities

After initial contact by telephone / email / social media, the SDCO should visit the potential venue, view the facilities on offer, and make sure they will meet the event requirements. The SDCO should establish direct face to face contact with the venue's responsible person. Personal contact can be key to a successful event. Once established this communication is to continue at regular intervals before the event takes place. This way any potential hiccups can be identified and resolved before they impact on the success of the event.

5.2 Preparation of Joining Instructions - JIs

Event JIs are an essential element of event success. They inform the participants preparation and are integral to the event risk management. JIs are prepared by the SDCO in liaison with the event Boss and are usually sent by the SDCO to all participants (Instructors and students) at least 2 weeks before the event.

Where an SDC includes a Course Pack, BSAC HQ will produce an event specific coupon for the students to use to download/order their packs from the BSAC shop in advance of the event. This coupon should be included in the JIs.

5.3 Provision of student / candidate contact details

About 4 weeks before an event start BSAC HQ will send the SDCO/Regional Coach the spreadsheet containing the participant contact details. These details can only be used to send the joining instructions to the participants and should it be necessary to contact someone during the event for example is someone fails to turn up for day two of an event. With the students' permission they may be added to an event-based WhatsApp group to receive updates about the event. This information must be deleted from the SDCO's computer immediately after the event to comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) requirements.

5.4 Preparation of event timetable and group structure

Liaison with the event Boss is key, some ask the SDCO to prepare the event timetable including the allocation of students into groups – others prefer to do this task themselves. Either way preparation of a timetable and student groups is required with copies made available during the event.

Allocation of instructors to Groups and if appropriate who gives which lessons is an event Boss responsibility. These together with timetable details will be emailed out to the event staff including the SDCO for information.

The groupings should separate members of the same club, family members and instructors with attendees they express a wish not to teach for a number of potential reasons.

Where an SDCO is also an instructor, it is possible that they will take the dual role of organising and teaching. This however can be problematic and SDCO duties can become a secondary role which is then detrimental to the event.
Event materials
There are other administrative tasks for SDCO's such as making sure all the necessary event paperwork is available. Each event needs different materials and supplies.

One week before the event, BSAC HQ will send the Candidate Report form to the Regional Coach / SDCO.

5.5 Covid considerations including provision of manikins

Where an event includes the administration of rescue breaths, in water manikins may be required. The SDCO needs to discuss the provision of the manikins and any additional scuba kit for them, and the availability of consumables such as face plates and lungs. Means to sterilise equipment should also be made available by the SDCO. The SDCO in liaison with the event Boss should review the most recent Covid guidelines as made available by BSAC HQ immediately before the event for them to be applied as necessary.

6. Running an event

6.3 Venue Access

Liaison with the caretaker or similar person is crucial, for ensuring premises unlocked and available at the agreed time for an event to run to schedule. Contact details for the caretaker during the event is essential and it may be necessary for the SDCO to have keys or access codes.

Where an event spans more than one venue, or areas within a venue, different access may be required at different times of the day. This should be pre-agreed to avoid introducing delays into the timetable.

The SDCO should provide signage which confirms students and staff are at the correct venue and directing them to classrooms, pools. Simple laminated A4 logos will often be sufficient. SDCOs should ask the permission of venue management to put up signage. Care must be taken not to damage the fabric of the venue e.g., use blu tack and make sure it is removed without trace at the end of the event.

If the format of the facilities is to be changed in any way e.g., desks / tables moved around, take photos before anything is moved so everything can be returned to its correct location at the conclusion of the event.

Where an event is held outdoors, BSAC flags and banners can be used to mark out where students should congregate. A gazebo is bookable through BSAC HQ should this be useful either as an informal classroom/ dry teaching area or simply a meeting point.

6.4 Ongoing Risk Assessment

The event Boss in conjunction with the SDCO must compile the event Risk Assessment and Safety Briefing for the event. The SDCO may be the most

appropriate person to produce the venue specific elements and deliver the onsite briefing. In addition to the formal recorded event risk assessment, dynamic and ongoing risk assessments are to be conducted throughout the event by all those taking part.

Dynamic risk assessment can be conducted in five steps. These are:

- What are the risks?
- Who could be harmed?
- How are the risks to be managed?
- Communicate the plan as part of the dive brief and plan
- Review the dive and act on any lessons learned.

https://www.bsac.com/advice-and-support/dive-planning/risk-assessments/

A review of the whole process should be conducted within the event final debriefing session.

7. After the event

All facilitates must be returned to the condition / format they were in when the event started. All rubbish should be removed, any washing up done, work surfaces clean, and the facilities left ready for the next user.

Feedback from the event Boss on the suitability of the facilities and or any amendments to arrangements for future events should be identified. This feedback should be shared with the Regional Coach in order to inform the next event.

It may be appropriate to give feedback to the person responsible for the facilities on their suitability, developments for the future and the possibility of further events. Thank you / appreciation for use of the facilities should always be expressed by email or other means as appropriate. The SDCO should confirm with the event Boss if they will do this or if they want the SDCO to do so.

The SDCO should check and confirm that any outstanding invoices for the facilities / equipment are paid either leading up to or immediately following the event.