

British Caving Association
Equipment and Techniques Committee

Originally approved in 2013, as amended by 2021 BCA AGM

Association scheme for the placement of designated anchors.

1. Scope

This scheme shall cover the use of designated anchors for any purpose, including for ladder and line, SRT and other fixed aids. It does not cover, prohibit or endorse the use of any other type of anchors for the same purposes.

2. Selection of designated anchors systems

From time to time, the Equipment & Techniques (E&T) Committee shall make recommendations on the choice of designated anchor system to be placed for various purposes in UK caves and mines.

Regional Councils shall be free to use alternative anchors, but they must take responsibility for gathering the evidence required to demonstrate the safety of any system which they choose.

The results of any tests shall be reported to the E&T Committee.

3. Funding

BCA will re-imburse Regional Councils' expenses necessarily incurred in the placing of designated anchors in their region.

Applications for re-imbursement of expenses must be made via the E&T Committee.

In general, the E&T Committee will fund the direct costs of placing designated anchors, i.e. the purchase of designated anchors, resin, drills and similar equipment, travel, training and other directly related expenses.

From time to time, the E&T Committee may commit funds in support of testing programmes and other activities undertaken by Regional Councils and others on its behalf.

4. Location and use of designated anchors

Regional Councils shall establish a procedure to consider and approve the choice of locations for the placing of designated anchors within their regions.

5. Training of installers

Regional Councils shall ensure that all persons placing designated anchors on their behalf are appropriately trained and experienced to ensure that:

- designated anchors are placed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions;
- the choice of location of the designated anchor is appropriate for the caving techniques it is expected to support;
- the persons placing the designated anchor are able to ensure their own safety while placing the designated anchors;
- records of the placement are made in accordance with this scheme.

Regional Councils shall maintain a list of persons authorized to place designated anchors on their behalf within their region. Those persons shall be Individual Members of BCA. The list shall be reviewed annually with a view to deleting from the list persons who have insufficient recent training or experience in designated anchor placement or are no longer Members of BCA.

Regional Councils shall take responsibility for the training of persons who will be authorized to place designated anchors on their behalf. The delivery of training and assessment will be undertaken by individuals authorized by the appropriate Regional Council, who are already authorised to place anchors under the scheme. The Regional Council will pay particular attention to the ability of the proposed trainer to not only instruct candidates to install anchors but also to assess the candidate's competence for judging the location of new anchors and their ability to safely install anchors on location.

Training shall be undertaken in an organized manner against a written syllabus which shall be supplied to the E&T Committee.

The E&T Committee shall regularly review the information at its disposal and inform Regional Councils of any identified need for retraining or changes in procedure.

6. Record keeping and reporting

Regional Councils shall establish a procedure for recording the details of designated anchor placements, including at least:

- The location of the designated anchor;
- Who placed it;
- When it was placed;
- The type of designated anchor; and
- Batch and/or serial numbers of the designated anchor and resin.

Records shall be kept by the Regional Council and a copy shall be given to the E&T Committee.

7. Inspection of designated anchors and reporting of defects

Cavers using anchors shall be responsible for checking each anchor prior to use on each and every occasion.

Designated anchors placed under this scheme shall not be subjected to regular periodic inspection.

Regional Councils must have in place a reporting mechanism which permits cavers to report unsatisfactory designated anchors. The mechanism must be publicised so that it is widely known about and easy to use.

Regional Councils shall investigate reports of unsatisfactory designated anchors within a reasonable time period and shall take action to decommission and/or replace and designated anchors which are found to be unsafe.

Regional Councils shall provide a report on each such investigation to the E&T Committee.

Version 2: as amended by the 2021 BCA AGM.

Previous version 1a: as agreed by E&T Committee, 14th April 2013

Changes:

The 2021 BCA AGM approved a motion to replace the paragraph:

“Regional Councils shall take responsibility for the training of persons who will be authorized to place designated anchors on their behalf. The delivery of training and assessment will be undertaken by individuals authorized by the E&T committee.”

with,

“Regional Councils shall take responsibility for the training of persons who will be authorized to place designated anchors on their behalf. The delivery of training and assessment will be undertaken by individuals authorized by the appropriate Regional Council, who are already authorised to place anchors under the scheme. The Regional Council will pay particular attention to the ability of the proposed trainer to not only instruct candidates to install anchors but also to assess the candidate’s competence for judging the location of new anchors and their ability to safely install anchors on location.”

Note: the 2021 BCA AGM removed all Standing Committees from the BCA constitution. The Equipment & Techniques Committee was merged with the Training Committee to form a new Working Group.