



Minutes for Council Meeting

Tuesday the 31st of March 2026

Held via Zoom

Agenda Item No.	Agenda Item Name
1	Apologies for Absence
2	Persons present
3	Current Composition of the BCA Council
4	Previous Meeting Attendance & Report Submissions
5	Acceptance of previous meeting's minutes
6	Officer Reports
7	Acceptance of Reports
8	Matters arising from the previous Council Meeting
9	Items for Discussion
10	Any Other Business
11	Details of the Next Meeting

1.0 Apologies for Absence

Simon Perkins, Andy Eavis, Pete Knight, George Plant, Tom Phillips

2.0 Persons present

AK, CJB, TR, JP, VK, PJ, RV, DJ, MH, AR, IH, IN, TN, JG, TR, ZW, Gethin Thomas (on behalf of GP, joined following the Chair's report)

No quorate number required.

Minutes compiled by Katie Eavis (not present at the meeting) from the zoom recording.

3.0 Current Composition of the BCA Council

	Position	Name	Initials	Vote
BCA Executive	Chair (2024-27)	Rostam Namaghi	RN	N
	Treasurer (2024-27)	Chris Bolton	CJB	Y
	Secretary (2024-27)	Aidan Kuhlmann	AK	Y
Individual Members Representatives	Position 1 (2023-2025)	<i>Vacant</i>		
	Position 2 (2024-2026)	Andy Eavis	AE	Y
Group Member Representatives	Position 1 (2023-2025)	<i>Vacant</i>		
	Position 2 (2024-2026)	Jenny Potts	JP	Y
Regional Council Representatives	CNCC	Todd Rye	TRY	Y
	CSCC	Linda Wilson	LJW	Y
	DCA	Mike Higgins	MH	Y
	DCUC	David Jean	DJ	Y
	FoDCCAG	Ian Healey	IH	Y
	Ogofa Cymru / Caving Wales	Allan Richardson	AR	Y
Constituent Body Representatives	Assoc. Caving Instructors	Stephan Natynczuk	SN	Y
	BCRA	John Gunn	JG	Y
	BCRC	Emma Porter	EP	Y
	CDG	Simon Perkins	SP	Y
	CHECC	Tom Phillips	TP	Y
	NAMHO	Peter Jackson	PJ	Y
	National Scout Caving Team	Tony Radmall	TR	Y
	William Pengelly CST	Richard Vooght	RV	Y
Working Group Convenors	Anchor	Pete Knight	PK	N
	Conservation & Access	Victoria Kocher	VK	N
	Finance	Chris Bolton	CJB	N
	Incorporation	Chris Bolton	CJB	N
	National Access	Rostam Namaghi	RN	N
	Publications & Information	Zac Woodford	ZW	N
	Qualification Management Committee	George Plant	GP	N
	Radon	<i>Dormant</i>		N
	Training & Equipment	Aidan Kuhlmann	AK	N
	Youth & Development	Isaac Neale	IN	N
Other Positions	BCL Representative	Jenny Potts	JP	N
	FSE Rep	Tom Phillips	TP	N
	Safeguarding Officer	Chris Boardman	CBD	N
	UIS Rep	John Gunn	JG	N
BCA Staff	Artificial Cave	Katie Eavis	KE	N
	Bookkeeper	Karen Lydon	KL	N
	Membership Admin	Katie Eavis	KE	N
	Training Admin	Mary Wilde	MW	N

4.0 Previous Meeting Attendance & Report Submissions

Note that Regional Council & Constituent body representatives are not required to submit reports and doing so is entirely at the representatives' discretion. Furthermore, Individual and Group Member representatives do not submit reports.

5.0 Acceptance of previous meeting's minutes

5.1 **Motion: To accept the previous Council Meetings' Minutes as most recently submitted by the Secretary**

Proposer: Jenny Potts, **Seconder:** Chris Bolton

For: TRY, RV, DJ, JP, CJB, AK, AR, PJ, IH, MH

Against: None

Abstentions: JG, TR

6.0 Officer Reports

6.1 **Executive**

6.1.1 **Chair (Rostam Namaghi)**

Northern Ireland

Most of my volunteer time since the last meeting has been devoted to Northern Ireland. This has been due to questions over the use of qualifications (CIC, LCMLAs) and whether they apply in Northern Ireland.

Sport Northern Ireland have long recognised the SUI as the National Governing Body (NGB) for the whole island of Ireland, the BCA is only recognised as the Governing Body in England and Scotland - Caving Wales is the recognised NGB in Wales. As we don't receive funding from Sport England/Sport Scotland/Sport Wales the onus on us to comply with various regulations has been minimal. The SUI are in a very different situation and are very generously funded. As a result there is a different requirement from their qualifications which need more focus on coaching than what is required from the qualifications from BCA. There is a recognition of prior learning scheme from the SUI which results in an additional assessment be made regarding coaching so that BCA qualifications can be recognised by the SUI.

The situation that forced the question 'are BCA awards valid in Northern Ireland?' is due to the fact that the University sector requires any instructor to be in compliance with the NGB (for their own insurance to be valid). We do not place any restriction on the awards - they are of an excellent standard and should a person/organisation be happy with them their use is not restricted in Northern Ireland, i.e. they are just as valid.

There are constitutional implications. As has been repeatedly pointed out, our constitution states in clause 2.3 'In this Constitution, the national interests of the Association are those covering the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, together with the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.'

This becomes more complicated as the SUI are a member club of BCA and so as a result the autonomy clause (2.1) and non-interference clause (9.1) also apply. As a result I have spent many hours in multiple meetings with Dr Les Brown of SUI. He is working on a joint statement that will also have Sport NI's input.

I include all of this not to necessarily provoke discussion on this matter but rather to highlight my actions and my interpretation. 2.3 means we must do all we can to help a member, while 2.1 and 9.1 means once dialogue is concluded (provided no discrimination) our scope of action is limited. I will point out that last October the BCA advocated for its members in Northern Ireland last Autumn.

Caving has its own Irish question - there are potential developments within SUI that may change the nature of the two associations. These may need to be addressed alongside incorporation, but I would like to be very clear we need to make policy not in response to individuals but in response to large structural change.

Subterra

I have contacted a few members of council regarding this website - one of our members has created this website and I have been providing some support with its development. We are still looking to iron out some concerns before bringing a considered proposal to Council, but Mike would appreciate feedback so if you would like to visit it then please do so at <https://subterra.world/>

Ghar Parau

I attended (alongside Chris) the future of Ghar Parau meeting and advocated for more expertise and services from GPF rather than just funding. Expeditions have such a big impact on clubs and this once in a generation change has the potential to significantly change a large lifeline to our members (that we fund significantly). It was a very positive meeting, and I look forward to seeing the ideas suggested being implemented.

Constitutional Changes

Owing to time commitments (and events above) I have not progressed further with incorporation - very careful change is needed and my early reading shows significant constitutional change is needed. There was not time to bring a carefully considered proposal to a vote this year as a case needs to be made to the main membership and this should start at this year's AGM.

I have not received any other proposals for constitutional change or policy.

Organised Fun

Lastly, I would like to end on a more positive note - many officers have been doing quite a lot and the support I've been able to give recently might not have been what I would like to give but that hasn't stopped things getting

done. I cannot stress how proud I am of the change we are seeing in BCA - people have a lot going on outside of caving, some even having their guts removed, and the passion shines through. We are fiscally responsible and proactive in looking out for our members.

I think this is epitomised by the impact we have had over Organised Fun and I would like to bring that up the agenda. I think it shows why the BCA being a proactive Governing Body is essential and the amount of engagement we've had from members over this has been overwhelming.

RN would like to add a couple of words remembering Geoff Yeadon, who sadly passed away at the weekend. Geoff's legacy in caving was immense and he will be missed the caving community.

RN states progress is being made on Northern Ireland and a definitive statement with SUI will be made in due course. The situation is complicated and may still change.

RN thanks the council members and RCCs that have engaged with Mike Waterworth's project Subterra.

Organised fun's report has come out. Early reviews are quite reassuring, although a close eye needs keeping on it. RN is pleased with how proactive the BCA has been, and how beneficial this has been in this case.

Discussion about organised fun is continued in the minutes for IN's youth and development report.

6.1.2 Treasurer (Chris Bolton)

My main activity since the last Council meeting has been to finalise the Annual Accounts for 2025, which are now with the scrutineer. While the budget for 2025 predicted a significant shortfall, subject to any corrections from the scrutineer we actually made a small surplus. Furthermore, the amounts the Regional Councils estimated that they would be claiming for 2024 turned out to be generally high, so my accrual for that in the 2024 accounts was also high. Also, for 2024, while I included bank interest actually paid during the year, I had omitted the interest accumulated but not paid by the year end. The balance sheet therefore includes a Prior Year Correction which effectively reduces the large deficit made in 2024 by about a third and means we have more money in the bank.

The accounts are included as an appendix, and I will be happy to answer questions.

Following the renewal of the BCA's Public Liability Insurance, Katie, Aidan and I have been checking the policy to ensure that it covers what we expect. Recent events have increased the turnover of the Gaping Gill winch meets and it is important that the Insurer fully understands the current scale of the meets. I drafted a summary, discussed this with BPC and CPC and sent it to the Insurer, who has now confirmed that the clubs and their members are covered for public liability.

The Incorporation Working Group have held further discussions and will be bringing a proposal to the next Council meeting.

I have attended a meeting of QMC and am assisting with their budgeting. I also represent BCA on the committee of the Ghar Parau Foundation, to which BCA donates £3000 annually. I attended two meetings, to discuss how the Foundation can be more effective in supporting expeditions in future, and to allocate grants for 2026.

The backup server for BCA's Google Workspace, mentioned in my previous report, has now been moved from Simon Mullens' internet connection to mine. Ideally it needs a more permanent home, but the British Caving Library is too rural to have a good internet line.

BCA's £250 donation to the German Federation (VdHK), along with the same on behalf of BCRA, has now been paid, as has BCA's 2026 subscription to UIS. For transparency, I clarify that since BCA's bank accounts do not have a facility for international payments, I have paid these personally and been reimbursed.

CJB reports the accounts are still with the scrutineer.

Due to a prior year correction from 2024 BCA has about £7000 more than expected. Although CJB does know of some upcoming spends that can use some of this – the annual report, FoDCCAG, Subterra, software for corporation tax return.

CJB clarifies the details of the gaping gill insurance as mentioned in his report. There was some confusion as the brokers thought BCA wanted PL insurance to cover all members of the public, rather than just claims made by members of the public against clubs/ club members. The insurance have basically agreed it but not sent a definite reply yet.

Incorporation is progressing in the background. Some complicated areas need more thought. The plan currently is to form a company with temporary directors to start.

CJB raises a query that came from KE regarding whether regional caving councils should be included as access controlling bodies. They currently aren't listed as such. For insurance purposes CJB suggests it might be worth adding the RCCs to the BCA list of ACBs.

RV asks if WPCST can be included as they control access?

AR says he doesn't think CW/ OC controls access to caves but will check.

CJB is in discussion with FoDCCAG about 2026 budgets. CJB has allocated £500 to them. There was also money in the CW/ OC budget for a large project in the FoDCCAG, which they will not be going ahead with for the time being.

FoDCCAG would like to re-allocate some of this to smaller projects. It is up to VK and the C and A WG to decide if they spare this money from the pot.

VK will talk to the working group.

After some discussion the conclusion is BCA will find the money to fund these projects in FoD, either from the C and A budget or elsewhere. So the FoD can get on with their projects without being held back.

6.1.3 **Secretary** (Aidan Kuhlmann)

Since the last Council meeting, I must admit that I have had somewhat of a hiatus from my volunteer activities, having worked very intensively the previous six months. This combined with some poor luck personally medically is why the agenda and the previous minutes have been delayed.

Nevertheless, I have been involved in continuing updates to the website, communicating with Howden's over the various insurance queries detailed in Katie's report, worked with Katie to advertise caving news, continuing progress concerning a draft set of Articles of Association, minor involvement with the Anchor Working Group, held meetings with Paul Donovan and been involved in the BCA's plan concerning Organised Fun (see Isaac's report), continued to work to resolve the Northern Irish issue concerning qualifications (see Rostam's report), and as always dealt with a variety of communications and passed these on to respective BCA colleagues or other caving bodies, including but not limited to ones from Edinburgh UCC and the Black Country Museum.

AK has been involved in the insurance recently, also the articles of association and incorporation and the meeting with Paul Donovan as mentioned by IN. AK has also been involved in the Northern Irish issue which is making progress. AK has also passed on various bits of communication, including a request from the black country museum who were looking for a mines inspector, which AK helped resolve.

AK has helped with various working groups.

6.2 **Regional Council & Representative Body Reports** (Optional)

6.2.1 **CDG** (Simon Perkins)

Geoff Yeadon BEM – as you will know, Geoff, our President, passed away from natural causes on Sunday. Geoff led an extraordinary life and inspired many with his explorations, particularly in the Dales. Our thoughts and condolences are with his family at this time.

Gough's Cave – infrastructure works have now been completed, and plans are afoot to get a diver in the water, subject to weather and working within the parameters required by Longleat.

Wookey Hole – following the installation of the new platform in the resurgence, a series of successful dives have now taken place from the resurgence.

Exploration and tourist dives are continuing across the sections and expeditions to the Pyrenees and Greece are planned in 2026 and 2027 respectively.

The AGM is planned for the 25th of April 2026, taking place in Ingleton this year, and the training camp will be in Derbyshire, over the weekend of 10th and 11th July.

AK adds BCA will advertise the CDG AGM through the BCA channels.

6.2.2 **DCA** (Mike Higgins)

Now that we have a Project Officer again, work has commenced on a comprehensive programme of works, starting with the secure fencing of Christmas Swallet, placing of anchors and removal of the very heavy lid. Work is due to start at Faucet Rake later this month with the opening up and gating of the blocked adit followed by the installation of a pipe in the collapsed stope to provide access to the upper levels. Inspection and measurement of the entrance to Suicide Cave has been carried out prior to the design of the proposed wall and gate. Gates have now been designed for both Masson Hill mine workings accessed from the quarry and Wapping Mine and liaison with Natural England is taking place as they are both known bat roosts and the latter is in an SSSI.

Our new Equipment Officer and Assistant have now settled in and are aiming to become qualified anchor installers once their employment schedule allows. They are routinely inspecting the 2 full sets of installation gear owned by DCA and are recording details of all anchor installations as they take place. There are currently 214 standard BP anchors in stock. An outdoor SRT training pitch has been installed on the crag above Gautries Hole. It has been decided that the DCA pull-throughs will be replaced by the CNCC chain and maillon system and the necessary equipment is being ordered.

The Conservation Officer continues to organize litter-picking at popular sites and to remove graffiti as necessary. The purchase of a small 4 wheeled cart has been approved to help with the transport of water for the pressure washer. A visit to the site of Milldam Mine has been made with a view to improving conservation of the area and providing historical interpretive signage to encourage responsible use of the site.

DCA Council has agreed the final details of the proposed programme of Radon monitoring which will take place in June this year. The purchase and processing of the monitors will be funded by donations from an individual DCA member and from Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club. A provisional programme for 2027 has been agreed subject to the success of this year's programme.

Things are moving forward with an online booking system for DCA training courses and approval for a software upgrade was given by DCA Council at the AGM. Hopefully this will see a resumption of training before too long and the Training Co-ordinator is appraising a number of options.

The future of The Derbyshire Caver (formerly the DCA Newsletter) was considered at the DCA AGM and sadly it has been decided to discontinue publication with immediate effect. Cavers are now rarely submitting items for publication and the present editor has experienced extreme difficulty in obtaining material – as previous editor I know from my personal experience how very difficult this has become. Publication started in 1962 and every issue since then is now available on the DCA website. The possibility of producing some sort of annual publication is being considered.

RN adds that SUSS have been making breakthroughs in the Assault course.

6.2.3 **Caving Wales** (Allan Richardson)

The Caving Wales AGM was happy to support the formation of the new Regional Council in the Forest of Dean.

This only leaves the financial aspect to be sorted out, the division of the money from BCA is under discussion, we are planning on passing the lion's share of the money to the Forest of Dean.

AR adds that the land OFD resurgence is on has recently sold. AR has talked to the new owner who has indicated they may be happy to allow diving in the autumn and winter but not the spring or summer due to nesting birds and otters.

6.2.4 **CSCC** (Linda Wilson & Joshitha Shivkumar)

The last CSCC meeting took place by Zoom on Monday 9th February at 7pm. The meeting was well attended.

The meeting discussed the formation of the Forest of Dean.

Conservation and Access

The access agreement with Longleat, covering the main caves in Cheddar Gorge, is up and running. To date some 15 Wardens have completed the training and assessment program, with another 5 in the pipeline. There have been 7 Recreational trips to date, along with 19 training and / or conservation trips.

The Cave Diving Group have started work on refurbishing the platforms in Lloyd Hall, in Gough's Cave, with the intention of commencing diving operations in the summer. Work has also started repairing the conservation tape in Reservoir Hole. Grand Gallery has been completed, along with the first section of the Frozen Deep. The bolts leading up to High Country have been inspected. They aren't in the best condition and haven't been placed to facilitate SRT. The CSCC's Equipment Officers will look at what can be done.

An application has been submitted to recommence digging in Spider Hole. This is progressing through the approval process, as laid out in the Access Agreement. As this is the first such application, Longleat naturally have many questions and queries and thus progress has been quite slow. The next Longleat Estate's Meeting is early February, and I am hoping this will approve the dig. The next step will then be to approach Natural England for permission, as the dig is within a SSSI.

The BCA C&A Working Group have approved the budget for a new lid for Home Close. A new design is in progress. A CSCC padlock was installed, a while ago, on Stock Hill Mine Cave and the cave is proving quite popular. The lid needs to be modified so that it can be locked and opened from the inside. The BCA C&A Working Group have approved the budget for the modifications. The farmland at Lower Pitts Farm has recently been sold. The new owner has been approached and has confirmed they are happy to continue with the existing access arrangements for White Pit, Sand Pit and White Rabbit. Access to Templeton and Templeton also remain unchanged.

The Show Cave Management at Wookey Hole expressed concern over a YouTube video that they felt showed too much of the dry route to Wookey 24 and that this might entice "urban explorers" to attempt the trip. The owner of the video was approached, and they promptly edited it appropriately. On two separate occasions, the hinge pins on the lid to Stainsby's Shaft, at the head of Velvet Bottom, have been removed by persons unknown in an attempt to gain access. They have been replaced and, on the last occasion, a sign has been placed on the lid explaining what is below and how easy it is to gain access. A loose boulder at the top of the climb into the Barmaid's Bedroom, in Hunter's Lodge Inn Sink has now been cemented securely in place.

The radio location equipment, the Grunter Phone, is now with our C&A Officer, Wayne Starsmore. Despite its age, it is still in working order and appears to remain accurate. If anyone has a radio location project they would like to pursue, then please get in touch.

Future Priorities for C&A work are:

- 1) Progress the Spider Hole digging application with Longleat
- 2) Complete the conversation and bolting work in Reservoir Hole
- 3) Finalise the access arrangements (on-line facilities) for Harridge Woods
- 4) Progress the new lids for Home Close and Stock Hill Mine Cave

Equipment

Since the last meeting our Equipment Officers, Andrew Atkinson and Matty Dredge have been working on developing technique and equipment for the complete extraction of expansion bolts, with the intention of fitting resin anchors in their place, including above ground practice on an inoffensive boulder at a Mendip Quarry.

Work has commenced on renewing the required anchors in Spider Hole ahead of commencement of trips again. One expansion bolt at the head of the 1st pitch was successfully extracted and a replacement resin anchor was fitted in its place, the other expansion bolt at the head of the first pitch unfortunately snapped during extraction with minimal force – definitely proving the need for its replacement, so a replacement resin anchor was fitted close by. Due to equipment difficulties, they were unable to attempt to replace the expansion bolt protecting the approach to the 1st pitch and this has been left in place, with its hanger, pending further work.

Future needed is the replacement of expansion bolt protecting the approach to the 1st pitch in Spider Hole with a resin anchor. At the request of CCC Ltd, the replacement of one of the anchors securing the chain for the Ladder Dig. This is non-urgent as it is still considered sufficient for the immediate future, especially as the other anchor is fairly recent.

A request to place 9 anchors at Bridge Rift and Avalanche Pot in Thrupe Lane Swallet has been received and will be reviewed in due course and, if

appropriate, actioned in more agreeable conditions. One anchor at Sago's Pot in Hunters Hole remains on the non-urgent replacement list. Further work is still required in Eastwater to replace the snapped anchors for Lolly Pot.

Website

The front page is up to date with the current news and events, and the welcome page now includes a link to the Priddy Rainfall Gauge in the weather section. This can be useful to give an idea of how wet your trip might be. The page provides links through to give the water levels at the Cheddar and Wookey risings. The weather section has link to the Met Office forecast. It also will show any weather warnings that might be in place for the CSCC area.

Formation of the Forest of Dean Conservation and Cave Access Group (FoDCCAG)

CSCC members unanimously supported the formation of this new regional council, and it was agreed that the Bristol district remains part of CSCC, with areas north of this, namely South Gloucestershire available to fall within FoDCCAG's remit if they so wish. CSCC wishes FoDCCAG well and looks forward to future cooperation between the regions, as the two regions will have many clubs in common.

No comments or queries raised at the meeting.

6.2.5 FoDCCAG (Ian Healey)

No report submitted.

At the meeting IH reports they have had a recent AGM which has created two new committee positions. One of these is in equipment officer. FoD have been in talks with anchor installers from CSCC to get some training sorted so the FoD can install their own resin anchors in caves.

They also elected a training officer. Previously the main 3 clubs have run training, but there is a plan to widen this within the new regional council.

IH reports they have renewed their licensing agreement with forestry England, the main landowner in the area.

TN reports there has been a few small discoveries. They aren't back in to Redhouse yet – hopefully soon as the weather dries up.

TN has spoken to Mike Waterworth about Subterra and thinks it could be a valuable tool, especially with a booking system.

RN says it is great to see FoD getting on with things, and reminds them that they can send a rep to any of the working groups. Or bring any issues to council meetings.

There are been some discussion about the area covered by FoDCCAG, with a small addendum between FoD and CSCC covering south Gloucestershire.

6.2.6 CNCC (Todd Rye)

Report read out in meeting:

The CNCC has recently had its AGM, with me continuing as Chair. Matt Ewles has stepped temporarily into the Secretary role, and Jill has stepped into the Treasurer role. Overall, the AGM was well attended and progressed at a good pace considering the agenda. Healthy discussions took place, and there were a few passionate voices on issues surrounding conservation signage, the use of X (formerly twitter) and our representation review.

Besides the AGM, work has continued to facilitate access in Littondale after discussions with the landowner there. The CNCC has decided to take the wonderful Cavemaps website under its wing to save the information and to make accessing surveys easier alongside topos and descriptions.

The ever-popular training program has continued, despite some setbacks involving the training officers van being stolen along with the CNCC SRT kits, though work to replace this has already begun.

Overall, the day to day running of CNCC seems to be working very well, and though there has been a reshuffle of faces around after the AGM, the team remains a cohesive and focussed unit. We have added Christopher Holt as the new Y&D coordinator, who will be officially co-opted at the July meeting.

I have signalled my intention to stand down as Chair at the next AGM, though this is not a certainty, as we will also have to find a Secretary, Matt is only filling the role for a year to ensure things run smoothly, for which I am thankful.

6.3 Working Group Convenor Reports

6.3.1 Anchor (Pete Knight)

Our most recent meeting will be the night before the BCA Council meeting, so there might be some additional developments that will have to be reported on verbally or at the following Council meeting.

Since our last meeting, I have been working with a small team to produce a guidance document for conducting future test beds. This work lays out a standard process for conducting the practical work and the statistical analysis of the results and is intended to be the guiding principles for any region wishing to add new resins to the scheme list. In future this document will also support the work we have planned on extending the use of BCA anchors to non-karst rock types, e.g. some of the mines in igneous or metamorphic rock over North Wales. This document is now in its final draft version and will go to the AWG meeting for approval and adoption on the 30th of March.

The next task is to look at the criteria given to covers when they are asked to inspect an anchor prior to use, and then a more in-depth version of the inspection criteria for the installers sent out to investigate any defective anchor reports that are received. This is in a very early draft form at the moment, but I hope to have this ready to present by the next BCA Council meeting.

I have created a central log of defective anchor reports on the BCA Google Drive so that in future the AWG can periodically report to Council on the

number and type of anchor defects being received and dealt with nationally. Although I do not yet have the national evidence to back this up definitively, from personal experience at DCA and talking to the CNCC, it seems that many anchors placed in the late 1990s and early 2000s are showing some resin shrinkage which can lead to a small movement in the anchor placement likely resulting in a need to have the anchor replaced. The extent of the problem and any future risk to cavers it might pose still needs to be established, and at that point AWG will consider whether continuing with reactive responses to defect reports is sufficient, or a pro-active national replacement program of these anchors will be needed. At this stage it is too early to know which option is most likely and any associated costs this might incur, however I wanted to put this growing issue on BCA Council's radar early.

I am beginning to give some thought to the BCA AGM weekend and hope to run a workshop for AWG members and regional installers on Saturday the 27th of June. This will focus on techniques to remove existing anchors of all types, and whether we can reliably reuse holes for future placements. This will likely happen at Horseshoe Quarry in Stoney Middleton Dale.

My hope for the coming year is for AWG to tackle the following projects:

- Creating a guidance document for the removal of old Spits, expansion anchors, DMM Eco, PECO, IC and BP anchors in the field.
- Create guidance for approving BCA anchors for use in non-karst rock types in areas such as North Wales or Cornwall.
- Updating the BCA Anchor Policy.

If Council has a specific question or direction for the AWG or myself that you would like to be addressed at the upcoming Council meeting, please contact me by email and I will endeavour to send a written reply before the meeting takes place, in case I am unable to attend in person.

CJB adds that PK is doing a great job and useful progress is being made.

AK adds creating a guidance document for conducting testbeds was approved, which will be particularly useful when looking at different rock types.

6.3.2 Conservation & Access (Victoria Kocher)

I have recently circulated the memo to C and A groups seeking any submissions for reports for BCA to show what work has been done. Katie Eavis has passed on that this year BCA are planning to produce a publication to showcase all the things BCA, this involves constituent bodies and regional councils and their involvement in 2025. (in a similar vein to the BCRA Review) I have encouraged our working group to send in articles for inclusion that summarises 2025. This can be the highlights of the year, or focus on one or two main projects, or a brief report on many projects We are also looking for photos to accompany. Articles and any photos to me and I will pass them on to Katie Eavis by the 31st March.

Attending the DCA AGM at the Caving Library in Glutton Bridge on March 14 I have been helping to organise accommodation at Magpie Mine. There is limited camping and bunks there. I am awaiting confirmation to move this forward.

Minutes from the C and A working group were distributed. The last meeting was on January 21st at 7:30 on Zoom. The next meeting is Wednesday 6th of May at 19:30. This meeting saw regional councils give an update on issues and works in their areas. No project funding requests at this time.

Meeting dates are available on the calendar on the BCA website, events page.

VK adds the group have been involved in discussions about the budget for FoD.

6.3.3 Finance (BCA Treasurer)

See Treasurer's Report.

6.3.4 Incorporation (Chris Bolton)

See Treasurer's Report.

6.3.5 National Access (Rostam Namaghi)

See Chair's Report.

6.3.6 Publications & Information (Zac Woodford)

This term saw a continued focus on the International Day of Cave and Karst. An advert has been submitted to Descent with the intent to replicate it across social media channels at the point of publication.

I had an extended conversation with the Chair about current P&I work and potential future focuses.

The Student handbook is continuing at a slow pace as well. The sections have been laid out, and I have jotted down a skeleton of content for them. I am also continuing to find and analyse existing material published by student caving groups.

Next terms focus will be on recruiting and organising volunteers for the International Day of Cave and Karst as well as producing a preliminary chapter of the student handbook for review.

ZW adds he has just received the demographics report from our wonderful volunteer, Eve. Membership numbers have increased slightly and the gender balance is improving.

ZW is looking for volunteers for the international day of Caves and Karst – 13th Sept.

ZW highlights that members can self-submit their data via the justgo membership system. BCA should encourage cavers to add their data.

ZW plans to work on a statement for the student groups about the organised fun report. The main aim would be to reassure, as the report is better for caving than expected. But also to highlight areas that need monitoring.

JG asks what BCA are planning to do the International day cave and karst? ZW would like to focus on contact with members of the public in caving regions. Potentially opening club huts with photos, surveys etc. Maybe including 'give it a go' underground sessions.

JG adds illustrated talks could be a good way to engage the public.

JG is keen to talk more to ZW about the plan going forward.

JG mentioned it at the showcaves meeting recently, and the showcaves are keen to be involved – maybe by hosting talks by cavers.

6.3.7 Qualification Management Committee (George Plant)

No report received.

Gethin Thomas reports QMC had a meeting in January. They are working to standardize their syllabuses. A recent meeting looked at how the national awards coped with regional differences.

GT and RN note how much GP has done recently for QMC, in particular with the Ireland issue.

6.3.8 Radon (Dormant)

6.3.9 Training & Equipment (Aidan Kuhlmann)

Unfortunately, the activity of the group has stalled due to myself not having enough time to run this working group alongside my other commitments at the BCA. We are hoping to meet again in April and try to pick things back up, but what the group needs is a dedicated convenor – someone who is organised and passionate about recreational training and caving equipment and how we use them in the interests of developing and promoting safer practices. I would again like to ask Council members to consider who they think would be suited to the role. The group is currently struggling due to my inability to devote the small amount of time to it which it needs, rather than any lack in volunteer passion or engagement.

RN states he is equally to blame as AK, which is due to the amount going on elsewhere in BCA at the moment. He is also very keen to appoint a convenor – if anyone can think of anyone suitable who could be approached please let him know

6.3.10 Youth & Development (Isaac Neale)

I have compiled all the key events, meeting minutes and officers' reports into one document so if it were to go up on the website an interested party could see the Organised Fun timeline from the BCA's perspective.

On the 24th of March I will be heading to London to attend the Organised Fun "Safe Adventures" report launch event.

I was put into contact with Jane Thompson, the BMC Club Development Manager. The BCA were ahead of curve in recognising the potential risks posed by the Organised Fun findings and decisions, and the BMC contacted us to find out what we knew about the situation. They were particularly concerned about the possibility that every activity would be recommended to be ran with an external third party. I was further contacted again by Jane the other day after she had had a meeting with Organised Fun and informed "Rosie and Jamie shared the 6 principles that SU's and Universities will be encouraged to follow, and the top one is "competence". The report reflects that a qualification is one way to prove competence, but not the only way as club members can be competent to lead activity even if they don't have an award." Of course, the full report will not be released until the 24th of march so it is yet to be revealed what the other 5 'principles' are, and how they may impact Caving.

I attended Northern CHECC at the beginning of March. In absence of a full delegates meeting, I took one on the road and managed to harass a fair few clubs into giving me the info on how they were doing! There was previously great concern for Newcastle, by some miracle they've managed to acquire a fair few members with cars and a former UBSS member who seems to be a useful guiding presence. They are once again happily plodding along. Lancaster University CC who contacted the BCA a while ago asking for assistance are now even worse. Very few members, one driver and a committee with commitments elsewhere. Worryingly the members I spoke to at NCHECC did not seem to fully realise the dire straits their club was in. Now we can't directly aid Lancaster as they are not a BCA member club (a matter which they were warned about last year and did not take heed to), however I managed to sit down with Lancaster, ULSA and UBSS who both offered support. The former two managing a trip together on the Sunday of NCHECC.

IN states he recently attended a meeting in London, representing BCA. He met a lot of people from other national governing bodies in a similar role to IN. IN states having met these people and exchanged contact details will be a real benefit going forward. The report recommends student unions use technical advisors and there was a lot of chat about where to find these technical advisors. IN used the opportunity to let student unions know they could contact BCA for anything caving related.

IN is concerned that the technical advisor to organised fun, Paul Donovan, is still keen to see qualifications needed for recreational student caving. Organised fun will be doing small focus group meetings, which IN will aim to attend some of.

IN feels the report may have a bigger impact on student unions manage things, than how the student caving clubs themselves do things.

RN thanks IN for his hard work on this.

AK asked IN if he had heard from Edinburgh Uni? IN confirms he has not heard from them recently.

6.4 Additional Reports by Appointed Officers

6.4.1 British Caving Library (Jenny Potts)

New Archive Material

Work continues on the Don Mellor collection of archive material, including information of the workings of BSA and records of other pre-WWII caving clubs. Where possible this material will be made available on the BCL website through the BCRA Online Archives.

We have recently been gifted a small archive of material from the late, great, Eric Hensler. This includes the original pencil and ink survey drawn on tracing paper of Hensler's Crawl, GG - done in May 1937, immediately after the crawl had been discovered. There are also printed GG surveys annotated by Hensler in later years.

We now have a BSA archive folder "Peak Cavern. 1948-1961" on loan from TSG and our volunteer is starting work to digitise this and make it available via the BCRA Online Archives.

Library Phone and Broadband

The new Zen phone/broadband system has been installed and there is an immediate improvement in communication with the new company. The system is still relatively slow as BT has no intention of upgrading to a fibre connection locally for at least a few years.

Item for Action

Recently the Chair of BCA approached one of our volunteer IT specialists regarding uploading items to the BCL Online Audio Archive. There is "history" relating to the person who originally produced these records and our BCL volunteer has now resigned altogether from dealing with our online presence. This follows an earlier volunteer who now refuses to have anything to do with the Audio Archives due to issues with the same person. BCL Steering Group consists of both volunteers and paid workers who have a detailed knowledge of the past history of various aspects of our online presence and are aware of previous problem issues. **To avoid difficulties in the future we would ask that anyone wishing to raise issues or promote initiatives always makes contact initially through the Librarian at BCL rather than direct to any of our volunteers.**

There is some discussion between RN and JP about the recent issue with an IT library volunteer. It seems there may have been a mis-communication, and a related historical issue, that has led to the current volunteer resigning. RN apologies for the mis-communication.

JP states the library are looking for a new volunteer.

6.4.2 FSE Representative (Tom Phillips)

No report received.

RN understands the general meeting is soon. If TP cannot attend either RN or AK will. AR notes the deadline for applying to attend the meeting is 1st April.

IN passes on a message that TP is not receiving emails from FSE. AK will look into this.

6.4.3 Insurance Manager (Vacant)

6.4.4 Newsletter Editor (Vacant)

6.4.5 Safeguarding Officer (Chris Boardman)

No report received.

AK notes he was approached by a club looking for proactive guidance which he has passed on to CB.

6.4.6 UIS Representative (John Gunn)

At its meeting on 26 February the UIS Bureau discussed whether to approve an application for UIS to become a UN ECOSOC Member. ECOSOC is the UN Economic and Social Council. It is the main organization within the UN that coordinates the economic, social, environmental and related work of the 14 United Nations specialized agencies, functional commissions, and five regional commissions. UIS is proposing to apply for ECOSOC consultative status, which would allow UIS to participate in UN meetings, organize events at UN functions and enter the UN, and have a voice in the UN that would be recognized far above the UIS' current status as an outside organization. Some members felt that speleologists should not get involved in politics, especially at the global level while others felt it was essential to become involved so that caves are not forgotten in high level discussions. There was a narrow margin, but the vote was passed and the application process has begun. It normally takes about two years and assuming UIS is accepted it will appoint an official representative to the UN.

There was much discussion over how the first IDCK will be celebrated on 13th September. It is hoped that individual countries will organise their own celebrations but there will be a major event in Slovenia commencing on 10th September and held under the honorary patronage of the President of the Republic of Slovenia and the Director-General of UNESCO. The preliminary Programme is:

- *10–13 September 2026 – International conference in Postojna*
- *Theme: Sustainable management of caves and karst, focusing on protection, education, and research as a foundation for sustainable development, combined with scientific excursions to selected karst and cave sites.*
- *10 September: excursion to Škocjanske Jame (Škocjan Caves; UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the Pivka Intermittent Lakes*
- *11 September (09:00–17:00): full-day conference (keynote speakers and participant presentations)*
- *12 September (09:00–15:00): half-day conference (keynote speakers and participant presentations)*

- 12 September (evening): official IDCK celebration event in Postojnska Jama (Postojna Cave) (to be confirmed)
- 13 September (10:00–17:00): excursion to the Unica Spring (IAH/MIKAS event), the entrance section of Planinska Jama (Planina Cave), the Rakov Škocjan natural bridges, and Cerkniško Polje

An online registration page is due to open shortly.

The Bureau received an update from Bogdan Onac, President of the ICS 2029 Organizing Committee on how congress arrangements are progressing. Subsequently he sent the following letter to BCA / BCRA: [See Appendix 2]

JG raises the letter in the appendix from the Romanians asking if BCA/ BCRA want to organise an excursion either side of the UIS conference. They are asking other European countries. JG will raise it at BCRA.

JG doesn't think this needs a quick answer, so if anyone wants to have a think and maybe organise an excursion please let JG or RN know.

JG adds that if anyone is hoping to attend the International karst day celebrations in Slovenia in September it is worth looking at accommodation ASAP.

6.5 Reports by BCA Staff

6.5.1 Membership Administrator, Artificial Cave, & Insurance (Katie Eavis)

New clubs:

Staffordshire University Caving Club (stUCC)

A newly formed club with membership from Staffordshire university students.

They have sent in their constitution and paid their club fee for 2026.

Labyrinths Cave and Mine Exploration (LCME)

LCME are keen to join BCA as a member club. They are a group of people who all enjoy exploring underground places.

They have sent me their paperwork and had an invoice for the club fee, but at time of writing hadn't yet paid. (Invoice gives them 30 days)

Welsh Mines Society

Not strictly a new club but the Welsh Mines Society has re-structured and formed a sub-group – the Welsh Mines Society Underground Group, which will join BCA as a member club.

In previous years the whole of the Welsh Mines Society has been a BCA member club, however it became clear their group wasn't a good fit for the BCA club model. After consulting with BCA it was decided to form a sub group, that would join BCA as a member club. The larger parent club would source their insurance elsewhere. BCA has other mines/ historical societies that do the same, our insurance brokers are aware and happy with this set up.

The Welsh Mines Society Underground group have sent in their constitution and paid their 2026 club fee.

Another club has recently enquired about joining BCA as a member club but haven't yet submitted their paperwork or paid.

Renewals:

The final automatic reminder email for clubs and individuals who haven't yet renewed BCA membership for 2026 will be sent between this report, and the council meeting, so hopefully more will have re-joined by the time of the meeting.

Groups:

154 clubs have so far renewed for 2026. With 9 clubs yet to renew.

4 clubs have let me know they won't be renewing. This is due to dwindling numbers, and most members also being members of other clubs.

Individuals:

5845 individuals have joined BCA for 2026 (directly or via clubs).

This is very similar to the same date in 2025.

(End of 2025 BCA had 6763 members)

Insurance:

Insurance has been quite frustrating since the last meeting.

I have a list of 4 outstanding queries we are waiting for a reply from the insurance brokers on.

The first concerns tours for members of the public. We have been waiting for a response since the 23rd January, and this is an important issue to some of our member clubs. A few haven't rejoined BCA for 2026 as they are awaiting an answer on this issue, and a few more are struggling to plan their 2026 activities.

We are also awaiting a reply about Gaping Gill winch meets, trailer locks, plus queries around theft cover and sports equipment cover.

BCA has been notified of a claim on our insurance by a farmer, for the loss of a cow who fell down an old, abandoned cave dig. The insurers have notified BCA they intend to deny liability for the claim, on the basis BCA has no legal responsibility for maintaining the caves, nor does it have a written access agreement with the landowner.

Update 25 March

I contacted the BCA exec to make them aware the situation and poor response time from Howden. Aidan emailed Howden and pushed for answers, or a face-to-face meeting ASAP to discuss progress. This seems to have worked as we got answers to at least a few of the outstanding queries later that same day.

We have had confirmation clubs running tours for members of the public according to the BCA guidelines for such tours WILL be covered for PL risks by the BCA policy.

The winch meets still need further discussion, but it is looking positive.

Artificial Cave:

As usual the cave hasn't been out on any bookings over the winter. It's first booking is late April. I plan to get the trailer serviced before that date.

Social Media:

I am still trying to regularly post on the BCA website, Facebook, UKCaving and BuddlePit on behalf of the BCA. I'd welcome contributions from anyone in BCA. Please feel free to email me with anything that might interest BCA members and UK cavers generally.

Minutes:

Since the last council meeting, I have compiled minutes for the last council meeting and one Conservation and Access group meeting.

2025 BCA Annual Report

I have started work on the 2025 Annual Report for BCA. Mostly so far it has been a case of requesting content from BCA constituent groups, regional councils, working groups, and others.

RN is very pleased to see a new student club and welcome STUCC. Also LCME and a re-structured Welsh MS.

CJB adds himself and KE have recently been in discussions with the brokers trying to get clarification of exactly what is covered, in particular regarding theft and sports equipment. It appears these things are covered but in different places in the policy and with certain conditions.

CJB also mentions the microsite Howden are creating which will be an improvement as it will be Howden's interpretation of the insurance cover, not BCAs as currently.

7.0 Acceptance of Reports

Motion: To accept the reports received by National Council from the BCA Officers and other representatives to the National Council

Proposer: TR **Seconder:** MH

For: JG, TN, TRY, RV, DJ, JP, CJB, AK, AR, PJ, MH, TR

Against: None

Abstentions: None

8.0 Matters arising from the previous Council Meeting

9.0 Items for Discussion

10.0 Any Other Business

AK mentions a query KE raised about whether a single BCA individual member can be an access controlling body. This will be looked into further and potentially brought back to a future council meeting.

Deadline for AGM issues to be raised before the 19th May.

11.0 Details of the Next Meeting

Tuesday the 19th of May at 7pm via Zoom

DRAFT

	2025	2024
	£	£
INCOME		
Membership fees	132,962	113,856
Other income	5,693	6,073
Conservation & Access	0	0
Training Services	18,610	21,015
Publications & Information	0	0
Equipment & Techniques	0	0
Artificial Cave	540	(not itemised in 2024)
Meetings & Conferences	0	0
Web Services	0	0
Expedition Programme	0	0
International	0	0
TOTAL INCOME	157,804.68	140,944
EXPENDITURE		
Membership administration	17,758	24,956
Public Liability Insurance	78,020	75,703
BCA management	3,720	3,702
Conservation & Access	0	0
Instructor Training Services	20,276	19,999
Publications & Information	67	454
Artificial Cave	359	205
Training and Equipment	0	0
Youth Development	456	1,383
Radon Expenditure	0	0
IT Services	4,508	4,453
Regional Caving Councils	12,617	16,708
International	0	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	137,781	147,563
CHARITABLE DONATIONS		
British Cave Research Association for British Caving Library	16,636	12,000
Ghar Parau Foundation for Expedition Programme	3,000	3,004
SURPLUS/ (Loss) FOR THE YEAR	388	(21,623)
TAX	0	0
SURPLUS/ (loss) FOR THE YEAR AFTER TAX	388	(21,623)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2025	2024
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
IT equipment	449	
CURRENT ASSETS		
Stocks	0	0
Debtors and Prepayments	2,268	14,560
Balances at Bank and cash in hand	231,270	189,925
	<u>233,987</u>	<u>204,486</u>
LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors and Accruals payable within one year	83,878	61,578
NET ASSETS	<u>150,109</u>	<u>142,908</u>

REPRESENTED BY :

Balance brought forward	62,908	84,808
Surplus/(loss) for year	388	(21,623)
Prior year corrections	6814	(277)
	<u>70,109</u>	<u>62,908</u>
less transfer to Reserve	<u>38,300</u>	<u>0</u>
	31,809	62,908
Reserve	118,300	80,000
TOTAL	<u>150,109</u>	<u>142,908</u>

Approved on behalf of the Executive Committee

R Namaghi, Chairman

Date

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

1 Accounting Policies**a) Basis of Accounting**

The accounts have been prepared under historical cost accounting rules

b) Equipment

Equipment is charged in the accounts in the year of purchase.

2 General Reserve

The Reserve is held at a level which allows a minimum of 75% of annual turnover (income)

3 Result for the year

There is a surplus for the year of £388 compared with a budgeted deficit of £5,930

This compares with a declared deficit for 2024 of £21,623, now reduced by prior year corrections of £6814

PRICE (REAIS) R\$ 5.300,00

COORDINATOR**Tom Morita**Email: tomdmmorita@gmail.com

Phone/WhatsApp: +55 11 976050510

DATES**Pre-Congress - PRE-05**Start July 13, 2025, at 10h00, at
Campinas Airport (SP)End July 19, 2025, at 13h00, at
Campinas Airport (SP)**Post-Congress - POST-05**Starts July 28, 2025, at 10h00, at
Campinas Airport (SP)Ends August 3, 2025 at 13h00 at
Campinas Airport (SP)**MEANS OF
TRANSPORTATION**

Van for tours

Airports used:

- Belo Horizonte – CNF
- Campinas – VCP



The practice of speleology in the Ribeira Valley started by the German paleontologist Richard Krone (1896) to find and register new caves and later, with the arrival of French speleologists in the 1950s, to carry out the respective topographies and new explorations. The valley was certainly one of the cradles of the development of Brazilian vertical speleology and even diving techniques. As the Ribeira Valley is covered by the vastest area of preserved Atlantic Rainforest, with a high rainfall index and mountainous terrain, many of the caves have perennial and powerful watercourses, which have been the guidelines for many of the explorations in the region. In the explorations following underground rivers, some of which were started by the resurgences and others by the sinkholes, many caves were literally crossed, some very easily, others not so much, and still others with the use of a lot of vertical speleology technique. The following caves or systems are planned to be traversed on this route: Couto Morro Preto (easy), Diabo cave (demanding), Casa de Pedra (largest cave entrance in the world - 215 m), Água Suja (a single 98 m free abyss with a beautiful walk along the underground river) and Ouro Grosso (250 m descent with a sequence of abysses and waterfalls).

BASIC ITINERARY**Day 1: Pre-Congress, July 13 - Post-Congress, July 28**

Reception at Campinas Airport at 10h00, both pre-Congress and post-Congress, followed by transfer to Eldorado/SP (360 km).

Day 2: Pre-Congress, July 14 - Post-Congress, July 29

Crossing the Diabo Cave.

Day 3: Pre-Congress, July 15 - Post-Congress, July 30

Traverse Morro Preto - Couto (resurgence).

Day 4: Pre-Congress, July 16 - Post-Congress, July 31

Crossing the Água Suja Cave.

Day 5: Pre-Congress, July 17 - Post-Congress, August 1

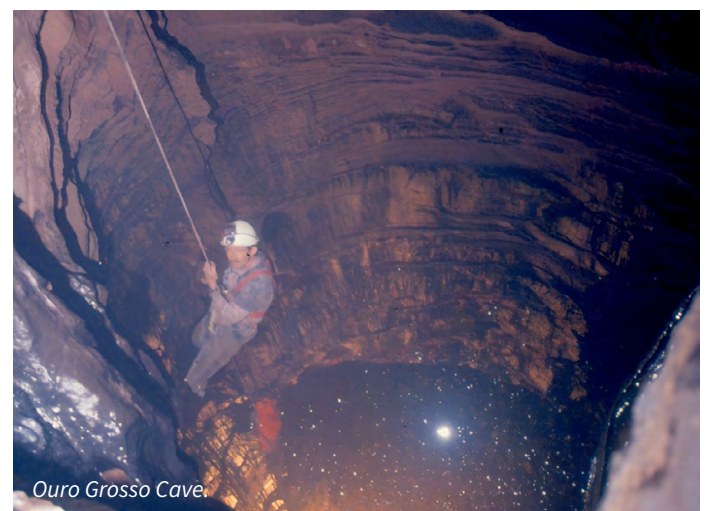
Crossing the Ouro Grosso Cave.

Day 6: Pre-Congress, July 18 - Post-Congress, August 2

Crossing the Ouro Grosso Cave.

Day 7: Pre-Congress, July 19 - Post-Congress, August 3

Transfer to Campinas Airport (340 km) and end of both the pre-Congress and post-Congress itineraries at 13h00.



Ouro Grosso Cave.

PHOTO BY JOSÉ AYRTON LABEGLINI



PREREQUISITES

Health and fitness for light, medium and heavy hikes of up to 12 km, swimming ability in short sections of some caves; rugged trails usually in the open forest, outside temperatures that can vary from 0°C to 25°C (32°F to 77°F) at this time of year.

EQUIPMENT FOR PERSONAL USE

Complete equipment for vertical caving, a hat for hiking and a helmet with headlamp for caving. It is recommended to wear a backpack for hiking and quick-drying synthetic clothing for water between 15°C and 17°C (50°F and 63°F).

INCLUDED IN THE PACKAGE

- Transportation by van and/or car airport-tours-airport.
- Entrance to attractions.
- 6 overnight stays with breakfast.
- Food: lunch, trail snacks, and dinner every day.

REQUIREMENTS

Minimum age of 18 years old.

WEBSITES

- [Petar Online](#)
- [Diabo's Cave State Park](#)
- [Nature Tourism](#)



Casa de Pedra Cave.

PHOTO BY DANIEL MEZUN



Instructions for the information required for the web presentation of pre- and post-congress excursions

(It is recommended to consult the attached presentation of an excursion offered at the International Congress of Speleology in Brazil (2025) as a reference model)

To present excursion offers on the congress website, we need the following information from each excursion coordinator:

1. Excursion Description

A short description in English (approx. 150–250 words), accompanied by:

- a simple map showing the location of the region within the country;
- a maximum of 3 representative photos of the proposed objectives.

2. Excursion Coordinator(s)

- Full name(s)
- Email
- Phone / WhatsApp

3. Number of Participants

- minimum and maximum number of participants for each excursion.

4. Duration and Type of Excursion

- duration (number of days);
- type: pre-congress or post-congress;
- date, time, and meeting location.

Pre-congress excursions:

- preferably 5–6 days, Monday to Saturday before the congress (21.07.2029).

Post-congress excursions:

- 5–7 days or longer camps, starting the day after the congress (30.07.2029).

5. Transportation

Specify the main means of transport:

- minibus
- cars
- train
- other means

6. Excursion Program

A tentative daily program indicating main speleological or karst objectives.

7. Participation Conditions

Include:

- approximate route length (per day);
- average duration (hours);
- difficulty level;
- total relief (m);

- whether swimming or special activities are required;
- underground temperature;
- other useful information.

8. Required Equipment

Specify necessary equipment, especially for vertical caves or active caves.

Clearly state whether:

- participants must bring full equipment, or some equipment is provided.

9. What is Included in the Price

For example:

- transport
- entrance fees
- accommodation
- meals (number per day)
- lunch packs / water / others

10. Additional Requirements

If applicable:

- minimum age;
- required physical condition (\pm personal health insurance) or speleological experience.

11. Relevant Websites

Include official pages of caves or karst areas if available.



March 15, 2026,

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the ***Organizing Committee of the 20th International Congress of Speleology***, which will take place in Cluj-Napoca, Romania in July 2029, we would like to invite your organization(s) to consider proposing pre- and post-Congress field trips to karst areas and caves in your country.

The International Congress of Speleology traditionally includes a diverse program of field excursions that allow participants to explore important karst regions and strengthen collaboration within the international speleological community. Given Romania's location and the exceptional karst landscapes throughout the region, we believe that field trips organized in neighboring countries would represent a valuable addition to the Congress program.

To facilitate the planning and promotion of these excursions, we kindly ask interested organizations to submit a brief proposal using the attached template, which outlines the basic information needed for advertising each field trip on the Congress website. This includes, among other details, a short description of the excursion, duration, maximum number of participants, logistical considerations, and an estimated cost.

Please send your proposed field trip descriptions by ***October 1, 2026***, so that we can include them in the initial planning and promotional materials for the Congress.

We sincerely hope that your organization will consider contributing to this effort and helping us showcase the remarkable karst heritage of our region to the international speleological community.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

With best regards,

Bogdan P. Onac
President of the ICS 2029 Organizing Committee

On behalf of the Organizing Committee
20th International Congress of Speleology, July 2029
Cluj-Napoca, Romania