

Safety Briefing

DIVE PLANNING

- If relevant, check with dive operator or boat crew regarding any local knowledge, current conditions and dive plans.
- Lead team to undertake the Risk Management process.
 - Review the risk assessment for the relevant site and re-evaluate the site, conditions and changed factors on-site using the 'on the day' risk assessment template.
 - Ask the team: *"Are there any additional hazards or risks that you can think of?"*
 - Discuss perceived hazards, mitigation strategies and risks.
 - It is the responsibility of all team members to actively participate in the risk assessment and to verify that they feel comfortable to dive.

Are all team members comfortable to carry out planned activities?

DIVE BRIEFING

- Deliver a dive brief prior to any Reef Watch in-water activity with ALL participants present
- Review of environmental, physiological, activity, task-related and other considerations (including unique factors identified in the Risk Management Guide process)

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Dive site entry and exit points & considerations
- Depth of site (divers should not go beyond 12 m)
- Details of expected 'in water' conditions, including currents, visibility, seafloor conditions, etc. and potential impacts on diving activities
- Visibility: buddy and Reef Watch dive officer proximity to be closer in reduced visibility
- Marine life: site specific hazardous marine life to consider particularly shark risk; inform volunteers of any sightings in the vicinity of the dive location in the previous 24 hrs. Volunteers can abort at any time.
- Water temperature: divers can abort at any time if they feel cold
- Hot conditions: if there is a need to walk a considerable distance in full kit in hot weather (higher than 32°C), volunteers can choose to opt out of the activity; reminder to drink plenty of water.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

- Remind volunteers via email prior to a dive about pre-dive fitness (prior dives, prior physical exertion, fatigue, hydration)
- Dive planning (maximum dive time, reminder for slow ascent 18 m/min, where dives exceed 12 m it is recommended to do a 3 min safety stop at 5 m where practical)
- Air consumption (regularly monitor air levels in air cylinders at the end of every 5 m during LIT at a minimum, keep your buddy informed, and at the end of every fish and invertebrate transect, leave the bottom with no less than 50 bar, taking into account the depth of the dive and exertion levels, e.g., when diving against a current)
- Exertion required to reach dive site or conduct task (Are all divers comfortable with surface swims, currents, swell, etc?)

TASK-RELATED

- Tasks: Objectives of the survey and the assigned tasks, roles, equipment of each team member—ask does everyone feel comfortable with their role? Does anyone have questions?
- Buoyancy control: be mindful while hovering near the reef; no-one goes deeper than 12 m
- Task loading: be aware of your survey role, but also be alert to your surroundings and buddy
- Communication techniques: review of hand signals, use of dive slates
- Other reef users e.g. boat traffic, reef tourists

- Dive termination procedures (aborting dives: option to safely abort dive AT ANY TIME, tell the Reef Watch dive officer, consider low air/minimum air limits, time in water, fatigue, cold) **CONSIDER SAFETY FIRST!**

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- Lost contact procedure (buddy or team) – search for 1 min underwater by looking 360° searching for diver and/or bubbles at the last location the buddy/group was sighted, if no contact, surface to reunite
- Dive recall signal
- Location of emergency action plan (does everyone know where it is?)
- Review of tasks of each dive team member and relevant equipment — ask does everyone feel comfortable with their role? Does anyone have questions?
- Buddy pairs shall perform a thorough, pre-dive buddy check

EQUIPMENT CHECK

The Reef Watch dive officer is responsible for all first aid.

- Location of First Aid kit
- Location of mobile phone and charger, or radio in remote locations
- Location of oxygen cylinder and associated equipment. Only the Reef Watch dive officer is authorised to administer oxygen.

CONFIRMATION OF SAFETY BRIEFING

Each dive volunteer must sign the dive log to indicate they have heard and understood the briefing.

The Reef Watch dive officer will sign the dive log to verify that all survey team members were present and heard and understood the briefing.

This must be completed before each dive.

DIVE DEBRIEF

- Team members to report their dive information and sign the dive log as soon as practicable
- Reminder to divers that they should keep a record of their dives
- Check the health of divers and record details of any issues or incidents, including discussions of risk controls
- Review activity outcomes and check underwater data collection sheets to ensure completeness
- Check that there are no further questions from volunteers about findings
- Post-dive reminders regarding including altitude, heavy work, exercise or showering restrictions
- The Reef Watch dive officer will check that all Reef Watch survey equipment is accounted for
- Thank relevant dive operator crew