

Victoria University of Wellington Diving & Boating Committee - Terms of Reference

Preamble

Purpose: The Diving & Boating committee provides operational oversight, develops policy and monitors performance in all areas of scientific diving and boating within the University on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.

Victoria University of Wellington is a member of the American Academy of Underwater Sciences (AAUS). The VUW Diving & Boating Safety Committee members are co-listed as a Diving Control Board Member or Diving Safety Officer (DSO) of Victoria University of Wellington by the AAUS. The AAUS provides technical advice to the University in accordance with AS / NZS 2299.1:2015 Occupational diving operations- standard operational practice and AS/NZS 2299.2:2002 Occupational Diving Operations-Scientific Diving. For the purposes of the AAUS procedures, this committee will fulfill the same role as a Diving Control Board (DCB).

Terms of Reference

1. To oversee the implementation and operation of the University's scientific diving and boating programmes following internationally accepted best-practice techniques, and to monitor safety performance of policies and arrangements to ensure satisfactory legislative compliance.
2. To develop policies and procedures for safe practice of VUW scientific diving and boating activities.
3. To ensure that key risks have been identified and that appropriate control measures are implemented.
4. To investigate any University diving and/or boating accidents/incidents to identify immediate and underlying causes and contributors. Any violations of the University's policies and procedures will be reported to the relevant senior officers of the University and VUW Health & Safety Committee, and further appropriate recommendations will be made to prevent a similar event.
5. To recommend appropriate actions in the event of unsafe diving or boating activities by any individual or group within the University – if necessary, actions may include immediate suspension of scientific diving/boating projects, or revocation any individual's certification as a Scientific Diver or Boat Operator within the University (via appropriate line management pathways; appeals may be made to the committee in writing and/or escalated to the Vice Chancellor).
6. To consider any other problems that may be encountered by affiliates of VUW while diving or operating under the auspices of the University's Diving Safety Manual and Safe Ship Manuals.
7. In order to fulfill its remit, the Committee may obtain external professional advice if necessary.
8. The Terms of Reference for the Diving & Boating Committee shall be reviewed every two years.

Meeting Protocol

The Committee meets as required, but in any case will meet at least twice per year. Decision making is determined by majority of voting members; quorum for decision making is 5 voting members; the Diving Safety Officer (or delegate) is the only key person required for voting on diving-related matters; the Boating Safety Officer (or delegate) is the only key person required for voting on boating-related matters. Co-opted members may be called upon for advice, but are not voting members. Agenda items and associated documents will normally be circulated by the Committee Chair in advance of scheduled meetings; non-contentious (or urgent) matters not on the agenda may be considered at meetings subject to the agreement of committee members present. All committee members are expected to declare any potential conflicts of interest. The Chair of the Diving and Boating Committee reports to the Vice Chancellor of the University or to their nominee.

Membership of the Committee:

The Diving & Boating Committee of Victoria University of Wellington is appointed by the Vice Chancellor. To meet the AAUS requirements for a Diving Control Board, the majority of the members on this committee shall be active scientific divers (preferably with additional familiarity in small boat operation). If required, additional members with specific boating expertise may be appointed. The preferred committee size is ~8 people, with representation from all Schools within the University that have significant scientific diving and/or boating activity. Beyond this, the committee shall comprise:

1. A senior member of the University's academic staff to serve as Chair; the Chair should be active in scientific diving and boating.
2. The University's Diving Safety Officer, who provides broad technical expertise and routine operational authority related to diving.
3. The University's Boating Safety Officer, who provides broad technical expertise and routine operational authority related to boating.
4. The Director of the Victoria University Coastal Ecology Laboratory, who has knowledge and operational oversight for a large proportion of the University's diving and boating activities.
5. A member of the VUW (or an appropriate School) Health and Safety Committee, with general knowledge of H&S best practice.
6. Other academic staff members to represent the breadth of scientific diving and boating activities from across the University, as appropriate.

Some of these roles may be fulfilled by the same individual.