

# National University Caving Club (NUCC) COVID Guidelines

**Adopted by the NUCC Committee on the 22-5-2020 and active from the 1-6-2020**

Following advice and permission from ANU, NUCC will recommence activities from the 1st June 2020. All club activities are required to adhere to federal, ACT, ANU, and ASF guidelines to protect club members from infection. This document exists as an outline to members of the infection controls expected during club activities. NUCC has appointed Andy Waddell as our COVID Officer, and any inquires, concerns or requests should be addressed to him via the club email address ([caving@anusra.com.au](mailto:caving@anusra.com.au)).

## **Hygiene-**

- Participants are expected to stay home if unwell, and shall not be allowed to join activities if unwell or exhibiting flu-like symptoms
- Participants should not join activities if they have travelled internationally or been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Participants are kindly asked to inform the trip leader or club COVID Officer if they become unwell after participating in a NUCC activity
- Participants are recommended to thoroughly wash their hands with soap before and after undertaking club activities
- NUCC will provide disinfection options in activities where this is not possible
- Sharing of food, water, clothing or other personal equipment is strongly discouraged during activities

## **Social Distancing-**

- Current guidelines allow outdoor activities only, with participants maintaining a distance of 1.5m from each other,
- Only one participant is allowed per 4m<sup>2</sup> area
- Group sizes should be maintained below 10 people in all activities, with smaller groups preferable
- Activities may exceed 10 people, provided the groups remain below 10 people and there is no contact or mixing between the groups<sup>1</sup>

## **Activity Recording-**

- A record of all participants in any club activities will be kept, the groups that participants are involved with noted, and provided to ANU Sport.
- In the event of a case of COVID-19 being diagnosed in the NUCC community, these records will be used for contact tracing
- ANU Sport encourages all club community members to download the COVIDSafe App, however this is not compulsory for NUCC activities

## **Camping-**

- Camping shall only occur during club activities once allowed by the relevant state/territory authorities
- All activity participants involved in camping will be required to use their own personal equipment

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<sup>1</sup> Current guidelines allow us groups of up to 20 people, however due to the nature of the activities NUCC offers, we are recommending trip leaders stick to 10 participants

- Interaction with other groups whilst camping or use of shared facilities during NUCC activities is strongly discouraged

### **Carpooling and Transport-**

- If at all possible, participants should use personal transport to get to the site of club activities
- If not possible, use of public transport is allowed, so long as the participant maintains social distancing and infection control from other public transport users
- Carpooling is allowed for club activities, as we acknowledge that this is the only method for many to access club activities
- Carpooling should only be offered by willing drivers, and not requested by the trip leader
- Ideally a carpool should be limited to 2 people, sitting diagonally apart
- A maximum group size of three people should be maintained in any carpool, unless all carpool participants agree to a 4 person carpool
- 5 person carpools are discouraged to allow for the maintenance of distance
- Carpool groups should be maintained for the duration of any activity, and previous carpool groups should be considered in subsequent activities when relevant

### **Equipment-**

- Personal equipment should be used on club activities wherever possible and practicable, and not shared between participants
- To encourage this, the club will waive the \$5 equipment hire fee for any member that substitutes part of the standard club equipment<sup>2</sup> they're using with personal kit, on an activity by activity basis<sup>3</sup>
- When club equipment is used, it should be disinfected after use, and transported and stored in a manner to reduce COVID-19 contamination
- Equipment should not be assumed to be COVID-19 free unless disinfected, and the following disinfection practices should be used:
  - **Helmets-** clean by brush and immersion with warm to touch water and mild soap for 3 minutes
  - **Headtorches-** clean by brush with warm to touch water and mild soap, remembering that not all NUCC headtorches are waterproof
  - **Metalwork-** clean in warm to touch water with mild soap for 3 minutes
  - **Rope-** cleaning is not necessary unless there is reason to believe hygiene practices have not been observed, in which case clean vigorously for 3 minutes in lukewarm water (30-50°C) with mild soap
  - **Fabric SRK kit components-** clean vigorously for 3 minutes in lukewarm water (30-50°C) with mild soap
  - **Other equipment-** Contact the Equipment Officer (Lachlan Bailey)
- Isopropyl alcohol is not a preferred disinfecting agent for equipment, and no other means of disinfection should be applied to NUCC equipment without first contacting the Equipment Officer
- Where possible, all rigging should be removed by the same individual that installed it

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<sup>2</sup> Helmet, headtorch, full SRT kit, belay belt, cave pack

<sup>3</sup> SRT sessions remain free

- Equipment can be stored without disinfection so long as it is:
  - Stored separately from other equipment,
  - Only used by the individuals who have come into prior contact with it
  - Disinfected before being returned to common use

#### **SRT Sessions-**

- Indoor SRT sessions at the Old Climbing Wall are postponed indefinitely, and are not expected until Semester 2 at the earliest
- Updated guidelines will be developed based on the existing COVID-19 risk when indoor SRT sessions are allowed
- Outdoor SRT sessions are allowed, provided that the trip leader maintains hygiene practices and social distancing protocols described above

#### **Caving Trips-**

- Caving activities are broken into four categories to describe COVID-19 risk. Activities with different classifications can occur within the same cave.
  - **Open Horizontal:** horizontal caving (no laddering, climbing or SRT) that can be undertaken whilst maintaining 1.5m distancing and observing the 1p/4m2 rule
  - **Closed Horizontal:** horizontal caving (no laddering, climbing or SRT) that cannot be undertaken whilst maintaining 1.5m distancing and observing the 1p/4m2 rule
  - **Open Vertical:** vertical caving (caving involving laddering, climbing or SRT) that can be undertaken whilst maintaining 1.5m distancing and observing the 1p/4m2 rule
  - **Closed Vertical:** vertical caving (caving involving laddering, climbing or SRT) that cannot be undertaken whilst maintaining 1.5m distancing and observing the 1p/4m2 rule
- This classification is at the discretion of the trip leader
- Caving trips must be of Open Horizontal or Open Vertical classification until social distancing is relaxed, and have simple access for cave rescue purposes.
- Caving participants should be aware that there is a possibility that COVID-19 may linger in a cave environment from previous user groups

#### **Canyoning Trips-**

- Canyoning presents less potential COVID-19 risks than caving, although has more potential group size constraints and weather issues
- Consider the difficulty of accessing anchors, and the size of landings prior to activities, as both can require participants to be in close proximity
- Canyoning should be restricted to less popular canyons in close proximity to Canberra to reduce the potential of COVID-19 spread

#### **Bushwalking Trips-**

- Bushwalking should only occur in circumstance where hygiene and social distancing practices can be observed for the duration of the activity
- Participants should be aware of the risks of shared equipment (eg, first aid kits)
- Participants should be aware of COVID-19 risks in a cave environment if the purpose of the bushwalking is surface-trogging
- Interactions with other bushwalking parties is strongly discouraged