

Tasmanian Climbing Instructors Association Annual newsletter



Annual report:

It has been a big year in the TCIA, we have run 4 indoor climbing instructors courses, two assessment weekends and finally one extended TAFE accreditation course for Basic Abseil instructors. Alongside all of that work, Stuart Scott and Bill Baxter ran our first, free skills maintenance course at Freycinet National Park. We had several members attend.

We have also changed direction in regards to our training and assessment. We still accredit the following qualifications:

- Indoor climbing Guide
- Basic Abseil instructor
- Top rope and Abseil instructor
- Single Pitch Guide
- Multi pitch Guide.

For further information regarding what these qualifications endorse please see the TCIA website. <http://www.tcia.asn.au/members1.htm>.



Our strategic direction has changed. We have adopted a new series of training manuals such as the AMGA Single Pitch Guide, which you can see on the website. We have adapted the way we assess to make the process more valid, transparent and fair for both assessor and candidates. This has so far taken considerable time and energy from many members in the executive. A big thankyou to them.

When a candidate now aims to sit an assessment, they will receive the following documents:

- Assessment information (specifically what is required of them)
- Assessment documentation (the specifics of the expected tasks)
- A pre assessment assignment
- Information regarding the assessment and the technical information required.
- Assessor assessment manual. (The rules which we play to).

These points are critical at ensuring that both the candidate know exactly what is required of them and allows the

TCIA to construct similar assessments for all candidates sitting assessments. The new assessment documentation will be on the website shortly. Basic Abseil Instructor and Top Rope Instructor has almost been completed. We expect that it will take a few more months until we have similar documentation prepared for the other qualifications such as Single Pitch Guide.

Assessment changes:

In the past if a candidate failed one part of an assessment they would have to sit the entire assessment again. This has changed. Assessment will be now independent of each other. For example if you pass one BAI assessment and don't pass the other, then you are only required to re sit and pass one BAI assessment in order to gain your qualification.

All qualifications are now progressive. Meaning that everyone will sit BAI first at that standard, then sit the next accreditation level in order. If you don't pass a more advanced level of assessment then you obtain the nearest complete qualification. For example, Pass two BAI sessions, fail One TR unit. You achieve BAI.

Top Rope Instructor:

The TCIA Executive have decided to retain the top rope instructor award. This qualification has endorsed members to take school groups top rope climbing. Candidates will need to sit BAI first, then one TR session. TR instructors are endorsed to rig anchors with both natural and artificial anchors. There will be no lead climbing required of TCIA members who are assessed and hold the TRA qualification. Recertification requirements will change to suit this shortly please keep in touch with the recertification page should you need to recert. If current TRA members would like to achieve SPG they may sit the extra session to qualify at SPG. This can be done at either assessment weekends.



Current Top Rope Abseil Instructors:

I would like to acknowledge that in 2013 the TCIA sent out a newsletter stating that we are removing the TRA qualification and upgrading everyone to SPG. We would like to apologise for the lack of communication and the broken promise of giving folk a free upgrade assessment. We are keeping the TRA and SPG qualifications. We will be offering a free skills courses for our current TRA membership to demonstrate the skills needed to upgrade to a SPG on the 10th of October at Freycinet. Skills that will be demonstrated include a lead climb and rescues. Our current TRA members who would like to sit a SPG assessment can do so at Freycinet on the weekend of the 28th and 29th of November 2015. Usually this weekend will be set aside for people who have failed assessments and are being reassessed. We are also opening this weekend in November to our current TRA members who want to have their SPG assessment to give you the opportunity to get your ticket by the end of the year. Normal assessment costs will apply. Attending the training on October 10 does not guarantee that you will pass your assessment and get your ticket. The assessment to move from a TRA to a SPG will involve a lead climbing session where you demonstrate your ability to lead a client up a single pitch trad climb, perform rescues and safely manage your group. We strongly urge you to attend the free SPG training on October 10 if you wish to attempt to upgrade from a TRA to a SPG.

Assessment dates:

This year we will again be running assessments at Freycinet on the second weekend in October. The dates are October 10 and 11. Our next assessment weekend will run April 9 and 10 2016. We are introducing a new system where we will run an additional weekend 6 weeks later to give people who fail assessments the opportunity to be reassessed. The system will work by having anyone who wishes to be assessed booking into the first weekend and then if people fail and wish to be assessed again the second weekend will run.



Free Skills Courses:

The TCIA will be running free skills courses for current members. These courses are only for members of the TCIA and they are not designed to replace our training courses. Our first free skills will be for TRA members and will run on October 11 2015 at Freycinet and will demonstrate SPG skills. The next free skills course will run on the weekend of April 9 and 10 2016 it will be for BAI members and above and will cover all the current BAI skills including new rescues. Attending a free skills course will earn you three days for your log book. For example if you attend one day of a BAI skills day in 2016 you will earn 3 days for your log book.

New Executive:

This year the AGM was held at the Republic bar on Monday the 20th July. A good turnout was present. We have had some changes with the TCIA executive.

President: Alex Wilson

Secretary: Stuart Scott and Felicity Ogilvie

Membership secretary: Mark Savage

Public Officer: Stuart Scott

Executive members: Kim Ladgies, Garry Phillips.

Many Thanks:

I would like to thank two members in particular for their tireless work with the TCIA over the past 10 -25 years.

Bill Baxter:

Bill has formally retired from the TCIA and stepped down from board duties. Over the past 20 years Bill has performed many roles from president through to secretary. We have made Bill an honorary life member of the TCIA and thank him for all his hard work. I wish him all the best in his own climbing time from now on.



Nick Hancock:

Nick has been the secretary for the TCIA for 10ish years. He has worked really hard to ensure our members are well catered for and has decided to step back for a year or two. Thankyou Nick for your efforts.

Next year's progression/tasks:

We are working very hard to ensure that our training and assessment is transparent and consistent. There is much work to do: So far we have completed BAI and TRA requirements. Below is a list of the projects for this year:

- Ongoing newsletters
- Sort out requirements for SPG, MPG and Indoor climbing guide.
- Upload all info onto website for easy access by both candidates and assessors
- Refine recert requirements for all accreditation levels.

Technical Information:

Notes on when, and when not, to retire gear by Kim Ladgies

Deciding when to retire gear can be a difficult decision. Below are a few pointers:

Carabiners: We've all heard that carabiners can develop micro fractures when dropped. There is no evidence to suggest this happens and drop tests from 7,15 and 30 metres do not show a significant reduction in strength. Falls can however damage the gate mechanism or deform the carabiner so inspect all carabiners for gouging or improper action of the gate. No company will 100% guarantee that your dropped carabiner is fine, but Black Diamond go as far as to say:

"If only light scratching is visible and gate action is still good, there is a good chance it is fit for use"

More important is to check the inside edge of the carabiner for nicks and large scratches which will wear your rope out.

Any carabiner that has a groove with either a sharp edge or is more than 1mm deep should be retired. To avoid grooves forming try and use steel carabiners for the central attachment point of tope rope set-ups.

Cams: Any bend in the axle significantly reduces strength so should be retired. Inspect slings for wear.



Stoppers: Stoppers that have a bend in the wire greater than 45 degrees or have loose strands should be retired.

Ropes and stuff...: In Australia ropes are made from Nylon which means that they all have some degree of stretch. Even 'static' ropes are only semi static and will stretch up to 5% under extreme loads. Some slings are made from spectra or dyneema. These have almost no stretch and any kind of shock-loading will generate enormous forces.

According to Beal the maximum working lifetime of nylon gear is 10 years. Nylon gear can be stored for 5 years before first use without reducing the working lifetime of the rope. Therefore the maximum lifetime of nylon gear from date of manufacture is 15 years. This includes the sewn slings on cams and harnesses. This is a maximum lifetime, a rope may last less than a year if used heavily. Any bulges, flat spots, significantly soft areas or sections of core showing should be cut off.



Nylon is seriously damaged by strong acids. Ropes should never be placed anywhere that a car battery may have been. Nylon is not damaged by DEET, Motor Oil, Shellite or Methylated spirits. Phew!

My rope says it can take 9 falls what does this mean? This is referring to how many factor 1.77 falls a rope can take. This kind of fall can only be generated in a multi-pitch setting so don't worry if you've fallen 10 times on your rope sport climbing, it's fine. Spectra has a very low melting point so be careful of hot belay plates touching your slings. Spectra is damaged by heavily chlorinated water so don't take your quickdraws to the pool...

This has been a long newsletter but we are endeavouring to communicate better with our members.

Sincerely,

Alex Wilson

TCIA President, MPG