



Adventurous Activities Practice Note

Topic	Caving Risk Awareness
Discipline	Vertical – Caving
Audience	All Vertical Practitioners in NSW
Compliance	Mandatory for all Scouts NSW Members
Currency	Ongoing

AAPN 2024/001
28th November 2024
ACTIVE

Background:

Following a recent Caving accident, Scouts NSW has reviewed its practices and has committed to reminding Caving Guides of their safety obligations.

Actions:

- Caving Guides are to ensure the hazard cause "Fall from height not attached to a rope" and preventative controls "protection (via ropes), spotting, assisted climbing, belays" are included in their risk assessments for future activities.
- Caving Guides are reminded that unprotected scrambling and climbing within caves should only be used on activities where the risk of a fall from height is acceptably low and can be supported from above and/or below.
- Whilst gloves within caves can reduce other risks, Caving Guides must remind participants of the risks associated with the use of gloves for unprotected scrambling and climbing especially on smooth limestone and to advise that gloves should be removed by personnel when completing scrambles.
- Caving Guides are reminded of the need to be proactive in their management of risks for participants and seek to understand capability and confidence at the beginning and during activities. Further, there should be no expectation that participants will ask for help and assistance. Guides need to assess participant ability and assist appropriate to the location and the skill and ability of participants. Guides must place themselves within the group to manage the most significant risk.

Should you require additional resources, training, or support relating to this Notice, or you have other questions relating to this topic, then please contact Wal Waerner, State Commissioner, Rock and Rope Adventure at wal.waerner@nsw.scouts.com.au.

Walter Waerner

State Commissioner, Rock and Rope Adventure

Kenton Jurgs

Assistant Chief Commissioner, Adventure