

# Expedition Reference Manual



## Tobago Marine Expedition 2013



# Expedition Reference Manual

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# Expedition Reference Manual

## 2. Introduction

This Expedition Reference Manual is to help prepare volunteers for their expedition experience and life on site in Tobago. All Volunteers should ensure you bring a copy of this Expedition Reference Manual and any relevant expedition documentation along with them on the expedition. Important information regarding Blue Caribbean Environmental Conservation Expedition is located in this Expedition Reference Manual and should be read thoroughly and in conjunction with the BCECE Rules and Regulations.

**Blue Caribbean Environmental Conservation (BCEC) has teamed up with Environment Tobago and Speyside Eco-Marine Park Rangers.** All volunteers are encouraged to do some research into the marine environment that they will be surveying before they arrive on-site. This will help make sure that they can really get the most out of their time on site and give them a bit of a head start with the marine science MSD phase of the project.

## 3. Tobago Culture and Customs

It is essential that all BCEC volunteers are aware of and respect the local culture and customs within Trinidad and Tobago. Volunteers will be the front line image of BCEC and as such, their actions will be seen as those of BCEC. BCEC relies heavily on its good relations with the local communities without which there is no project. Some communities are particularly modest and conservative and may find certain forms of dress or behaviour offensive, for example the use of revealing swimwear, tight-fitting clothing, and public displays of affection or alcohol consumption.

Upon arrival at the expedition site, the Expedition Leader will deliver a briefing on the local culture and customs, and the BCEC rules relating to these. It is recommended that volunteers familiarize themselves with the local customs and cultures beforehand through country-specific travel guides such as the [Lonely Planet](#) and [Rough Guide](#) travel books.





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## 4. Expedition Members

There will be a dedicated team of members on site to make sure the expedition is running smoothly. During the expedition the member's responsibilities will include that all activities are being conducted in a suitable and safe manner and that all rules and regulations are being upheld.

The 6 core roles are detailed below:

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Expedition Leader (EL) | EL will have the overall responsibility for the on-site management of the whole expedition.   |
| Project Scientist (PS) | PS has the responsibility for planning and co-ordinating the surveys for the science program and preparation of scientific reports.   |
| Science Officer (SO)   | SO is responsible for the collection and analysis of survey data. This includes assisting the PS in planning the baseline surveys and provide staff and volunteers science and survey training. |
| SCUBA Instructor (SI)  | SI is responsible for the Scuba Program and providing SCUBA training to volunteers and members and ensuring that safe diving practices are adhered to.  |
| Medical Officer (MO)   | MO is responsible for the well-being and health of the expedition team and for ensuring safe and punctual medical practices.  |
| Education Officer (EO) | EO is responsible for the assistance in teaching the skills development program and working with local project partners to develop/maintain educational programs                                |

## 5. Accommodations

BCEC Expedition is located on the North tip of Tobago in a small fishing village. Volunteers and members can expect the very basic of living conditions located close to the beach. This includes shared dormitories, washing and sanitation facilities and recreational areas. Please be aware that hot water is not always readily available so you may be subject to possible bucket showers and flushes. Being prepared will ensure you have a more comfortable experience.

Please refer to **#10 Equipment Requirements Section** to see what you will need to bring. Please note that depending upon the size of the expedition group, shared accommodation provided by BCEC may be mixed-sex.



## 6. Meal Plan

To effectively manage the daily surveying activities and training classes the meals are fixed each day.

**BREAKFAST 6:00AM**  
**LUNCH 12:00PM**  
**DINNER 6:00PM**

All meals provided by BCEC are based on local cuisine and seasonal availability of locally produced food. This means the food provided such as fresh fruit and meat may be restricted depending on the availability. Volunteers must be prepared for the fact that they will be eating as the locals eat with a few extras thrown in.

Please note that on site, volunteers and staff do all the cooking. If you cannot cook BCEC **WILL TEACH YOU how!**

It is recommended that all volunteers bring vitamin supplements (suggests a high B-Multi vitamin to help repel bugs) to account for the change in diet. Please refer to the **#10 Equipment Requirements Section.**



## 7. Communications

Communication will always be maintained between BCEC Head Quarters and the Expedition Site through a combination of ways. Mobile phone systems, radio receivers, GPS and email services are available.

**PLEASE NOTE:** These communication systems are only for the purposes of relaying important information relating to the expedition activities and/or for emergency purposes only. The communication systems are not available for personal use by volunteers unless in the event of an emergency for information about communications during an expedition activity and/or at the project site. Volunteers will have limited access to e-mail and telecommunications during their stay on site and should inform friends and relatives accordingly.

It is strongly recommended that volunteers bring a mobile/cell phone with them. For international roaming, individuals will need to check with their service provider for coverage. The associated costs with this can be high, please note that when using mobile/cell phones abroad charges will likely be made for incoming calls. Local SIM cards are available but phones will need to be 'unlocked'. Blue Caribbean Environmental Conservation BCEC can guarantee that there will be local network coverage at the Expedition Site.



## 8. Expedition Daily Routine and Responsibilities

**Scientific data collection is the main focus of our daily routine. The collection and analysis of this data will take priority over all other aspects of the expedition.** And determine the everyday schedule. Expedition life is challenging but with the right attitude and work ethic will be one of the most rewarding experiences of a volunteers' life.

When first arriving on site volunteers will receive a small debriefing on the local laws, cultures and traditions of Trinidad and Tobago, BCEC will provide a brief lecture on the Rules and Regulations and a basic tour of home base and the fishing village.

You will be working and living very closely as a team and making many new friends. With such close courters it is important to distribute the daily workload fairly. The expedition team is usually divided into smaller Volunteer Work Groups. Each work group will have a responsibility on a rotational basis for certain aspects of the daily expedition work.

### Daily tasks include the following:

- Assisting in the preparation of food and Ensuring the kitchen and eating area are cleaned after meals. Ensuring that the expedition site is kept clean and that maintenance tasks are completed daily.
- Preparing survey and safety equipment for use during the day's fieldwork.
- Assisting in the loading and unloading of expedition equipment onto BCEC field vehicles or boats.



While these tasks may be simple, they are essential to the safe operation of the expedition and all volunteers are asked to complete these tasks with PRIDE. Training and schedules will be provided as needed for all tasks required.

Volunteers will start their first couple of weeks with an intensive MSD training program. For those who are not qualified to PADI Advanced Open Water or equivalent, the first week on site will be the BCEC Scuba Training Program, where our on-site instructor will take volunteers through the core dive courses. The next 1-2 weeks focuses directly on the Marine Skills Development (MSD) where BCEC staff will give lectures, workshops and practical in water species 'pointes' training to build on a volunteers knowledge and experience of the underwater marine environment. (See Science Species Training Manual)

After all training is complete volunteers will join the survey team and learn how to apply the skills they have developed and start to collect research data. As long as the weather conditions and site logistics allow, volunteers will dive twice a day. There will be days when this is not possible and so volunteers should be aware that there is no guaranteed number of dives per day.

Once every four weeks the field staff will aim to schedule a night dive. This will be a purely recreational dive and will only be for those who wish to participate. This will be a rare opportunity to see a host of creatures not normally seen during survey training.



Below is a general schedule of a typical day and week on a BCEC expedition site. Please be aware that this can, and most likely, will change depending on weather or other factors.

During MSD, lectures, training courses and tests will be fitted between the dives.

### A typical BCEC day

- 06:00 – Breakfast
- 06:45 – Chores
- 08:00 – Group (A) Dive 1 or training
- 10:00 – Group (B) Dive 2 or training
- 12:00 – Lunch
- 13:00 – Group (A) Dive 3 or training
- 15:00 – Group (B) Dive 4 or training
- 18:00 – Dinner

### A typical BCEC Week

- Day 1: Training/Surveying
- Day 2: Training/Surveying
- Day 3: Training/Surveying
- Day 4: Training/Surveying
- Day 5: Training/Surveying
- Day 6: Recreational  
Diving/Training/Surveying if necessaries
- Day 7: Day off/Community work/Training if necessaries

Over breakfast, the team discusses any final planning details for the day's activities before dispersing to prepare themselves for departure into the field, usually at 8.00am.

Over lunch, the morning's work is discussed and reviewed by the team and the data is transferred onto recording forms before returning to the project area in the afternoon. Throughout the day, **volunteers will be asked to assist with routine maintenance of the site camp and the expedition equipment.**

The day's activities are reviewed over dinner and into the evening and the collected data is entered into data recording forms and a computer database.

In the evening the team generates plans for the following days surveys and activities, then discusses any issues they may feel require attention. Further 'advanced' lectures and training may be provided in the evenings as required. As can be seen in the schedule above, day 6 of the week is reserved for recreational activities, which may include SCUBA diving or participation in advanced training courses; however, this is under the assumption that the weekly targets for data collection have been met.





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## Expedition Daily Routine and Responsibilities #8 Cont'd...

**There are routine site camp chores to be completed each morning and from time to time volunteers may be required to assist with various infra-structural development projects at the site camp.** The seventh day of the week is reserved for equipment maintenance, additional training and visits to local communities. Diving is not permitted on day seven in order to allow for off gassing.

Although life on site is busy there will be periods of 'downtime' where volunteers will be able to relax. During these times volunteers over the age of 18, will be given the option of leaving the confines of the expedition site so that they can explore the local villages.

***Please note a waiver form is required for all volunteers when they leave the expedition site on their own and BCEC will have no responsibility.***

BCEC staff will also organize activities within the local community to give volunteers the chance to engage with the villagers. During these times volunteers must dress and behave accordingly with local customs and cultures, as BCEC's relationship with the community is vitally important for the success of the project.

### **IMPORTANT:**

Although alcohol is available on site, due to the nature of dive expedition, there are strict rules in place regarding the quantity that can be consumed. There is the opportunity to socialize over a drink at the end of the day and the evening of day 6 is usually reserved for an end of week organized social event at the expedition site. Alcohol consumption is moderated at all times, and drinking games involving the use of alcohol are strictly forbidden. Excessive alcohol consumption is not permitted as this may lead to a volunteer putting either himself or herself or another team member at risk, and may offend our local project partners. Furthermore, accidents occurring while 'under the influence of alcohol' may prejudice the volunteers' medical insurance cover and is a major factor in dehydration related decompression illness.

Except on the evening of day 6, the bar is open between 18:00 and 22:00 and the maximum permitted alcohol consumption is two bottles of beer (330ml) per evening or one large glass of wine (250ml); the consumption of spirits is strictly not permitted during these days.





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## 9. Dive Courses and Standards

To participate in the Science Program Volunteers must have PADI Advanced Open Water (AOW) or equivalent however, those who are not qualified will be classified as a DIVE TRAINEE (DT) and will require a dive-training week. During that week the on-site PADI SCUBA Instructor will conduct the necessary dive training courses and dive practices prior to the start of the Marine Skills Development (MSD).

Additional Dive Courses are available for Volunteers that stay 4 weeks or more can apply for additional dive courses. Please note all volunteers will have to supply their own training materials and PIC's in addition to the course fee. Any additional dive courses will be at an extra cost and are not included in the expedition fee. These will only be open to volunteers who are staying for extended periods of time, as the focus of the expedition is on the scientific training and surveying and so for those staying only a few weeks there will simply not be enough time to offer them. Volunteers staying longer than four weeks will have the option of undertaking the PADI Rescue Diver course and those staying longer than 12 weeks can apply to undertake their PADI Dive Master Course.

### Dive Courses and Standards

BCEC cannot guarantee the completion of any additional dive courses as surveying takes priority and dive courses will have to be fitted in around the survey schedule at the discretion of the Expedition staff.

Please refer to the **#10 Equipment Requirements Section** for more information on this.

Please note that the following is a cut down version of the BCEC Dive Standards.

It is imperative that all dives are conducted within the following standards. Individuals who endanger themselves and others by knowingly diving outside of these standards will be required to leave the expedition immediately. Instructors proven to have broken these guidelines will be dismissed immediately and reported to PADI.

The following regulations are based upon the principle that BCEC personnel will be diving a maximum of two times a day, six days a week, with one day non-diving. However, BCEC personnel may undertake fewer dives than this dependent upon weather, logistical and other limitations.

All BCEC volunteers and staff must be trained to a minimum of PADI Advanced Open Water or equivalent before they are able to take part in any marine based BCEC activities. Any staff or volunteers who do not meet this level will be given the appropriate training by the on-site Scuba Instructor. The phrase 'volunteer' relates to anyone participating on a BCEC expedition under the guidance of the expedition staff.

### Golden Rules:

- Never exceed the depths or times outlined in the BCEC Diving Standards.
- Never exceed the number of dives detailed in these standards.
- All diving must be planned in advance and approved by the Expedition Leader (EL) and SCUBA Instructor (SI). Dive plans may not be amended without first referring to the EL and SI.

## SCUBA Training:

- All SCUBA training must be conducted in the immediate vicinity of a designated BCEC expedition site or pre-approved site and under the direct consent of the EL and SI.
- Under no circumstances may any SCUBA training courses be conducted at any other location without prior written consent from BCEC HQ.
- All SCUBA training takes place through the PADI training system and must follow the standards laid out in the PADI Instructor Manual.
- The BCEC Diving Standards remain in-force throughout all PADI training courses and volunteers must at no time dive outside of these standards.
- All volunteers and staff undertaking first aid training will additionally complete module one and two of the Rescue Diver course (RD).
- During PADI training courses confined water dives of five meters or less are permitted in between and after the final dive. This will be at the discretion of the SI and EL.
- During the PADI SCUBA training courses, the SI only (NOT volunteers) may extend the dive times and number of dives undertaken by himself/herself to facilitate the required training courses but only under the following circumstances:
  1. The dives do not exceed the no-decompression limits on the PADI Recreational Diver Planner (RDP) Table Version.
  2. The dives do not exceed the recommendations in the PADI Instructor Manual.



## General:

- All science related diving must be properly planned and managed by an appointed Science Officer (SO) or Project Scientist (PS) under the direct supervision of a qualified SI and the EL. No diving is permitted without the prior consent of the EL.
- All dives must be pre-planned and the EL and SI must sign off every Dive Plan. Subsequently, the Dive Plan must not be altered without re-approval by the EL and SI
- All divers that exceed the depth/time of the dive plan must be immediately referred to the EL and SI. Over profile dives will be discussed with the individual. For further action on over profile dives, consult the Over Profile policy.
- All BCEC volunteers and staff must be trained to a minimum of PADI Advanced Open Water or equivalent before they are able to take part in any marine based BCEC activities. Any staff or volunteers who do not meet this level will be given the appropriate training by the on-site PADI Instructor.
- Volunteers and staff are required to show documentary proof of their diving qualifications to the SI upon arrival at the expedition site.
- All volunteers and staff must have been declared fit to dive by the Blue Caribbean Environmental Conservation (BCEC) before they can partake in any diving with BCEC. Confirmation of this will be given from BCEC HQ.
- On arrival at the expedition site, already qualified divers must do a check dive and

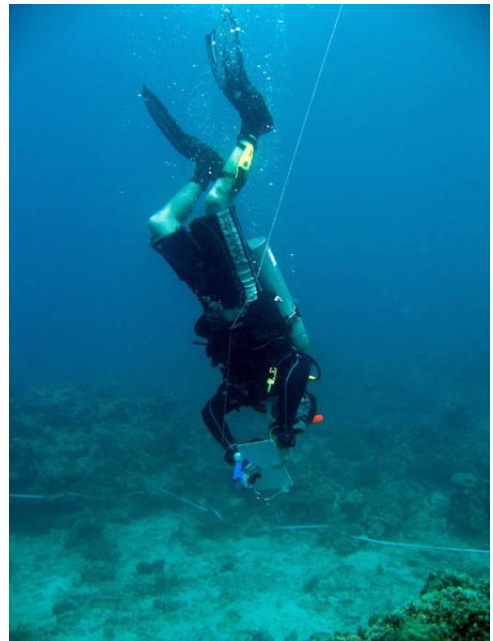
demonstrate to the SI that they are familiar with safety procedures and are able to achieve neutral buoyancy.

- It is the responsibility of the volunteer to present himself/herself fit for diving (i.e. well rested, well hydrated with no pre-existing injuries or illnesses). If volunteers have any doubt as to their fitness to dive they must refer themselves to the Medical Officer (MO).
- If volunteers are proven to have misled BCEC or its appointed MO regarding medical issues they will not be allowed to dive until they are certified by BCEC representative to be safe for diving again. If an individual has willfully misled any of the above they will be dismissed from the expedition site.
- The MO's decision on an individual's medical suitability to dive is final once confirmation from BCEC is obtained.
- Cave diving, cavern diving, wreck penetration or any other form of diving presenting a 'no clear surface' environment is not permitted at any time.
- Recreational diving will only be conducted on the allocated 'recreational dive day'. Recreational diving on any other day needs to be pre-approved by BCEC HQ.

## Dive Profiles:

- The maximum depth permitted for any dive is 28m.
- The maximum depth for divers qualified to only PADI Open Water Diver (or equivalent) is 18m
- Those undertaking SCUBA training are restricted to the depths outlined in the PADI Instructor Manual and at no time greater than 28m.
- The longest Bottom Time (BT) employed by BCEC is 60 minutes under the condition that this does not exceed the No Decompression Limit (NDL) limits set out on the PADI RDP. BT is defined by PADI as:

"The total time in minutes from the beginning of descent until the beginning of the final ascent to the safety stop".



- Only during PADI SCUBA training courses, and only under the direct instruction of the SI, divers may re-descend during a dive. These training dives must follow the guidelines laid out in the PADI Instructor Manual.
- At the end of the no-stop BT, divers must make a direct ascent to the safety stop, following the PADI recommendations regarding ascent rates.
- A three-minute safety stop at five metres is mandatory on all dives deeper than five metres.
- Dives that require decompression stops are strictly not permitted at any time.
- The maximum number of dives permitted per day is two.
- Where repetitive dives take place the deepest dive is carried out first, with each successive dive to the same or a shallower depth. The second dive must never exceed a depth of 18m.
- NB: Any dives shallower than ten metres shall be treated as a ten metre dive and so can be followed by a dive of up to ten metres.

## Dive Profiles Cont'd:



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- During the PADI training courses only, confined water training dives of five metres or less may be followed by deeper open water training dives as outlined in the PADI Instructor Manual.
- During the PADI Advanced Open Water Deep Dive only, an exact surface-to-surface time will not be implemented but rather the bottom time agreed upon with the instructor ensuring that a safe ascent time is implemented.
- A mandatory 24-hour tissue de-saturation period (i.e. “no diving day”) is required during one day in every seven.
- Confined dives of five metres or less may be carried out on the ‘non-diving day’ but strictly only for the following purposes:
  1. During the course of the Marine Skills Development (MSD)
  2. To conduct advanced training courses such as PADI RD
  3. To provide remedial training for PADI Open Water Diver and Advanced Open Water Diver courses.

## Dive Tables:

- BCEC utilizes the PADI RDP - Table Version to plan and implement all diving, excluding computer diving (see below).
- The maximum depths and no-stop BT’s, which BCEC adheres to on all dives excluding multilevel computer dives (see below), are outlined in the BCEC Standard No-Stop Bottom Times and Maximum Depths (see table below).
- The use of the **PADI eRDP ML** for multi-level diving or any other decompression tables for any single level or multi-level diving is not permitted.
- Survey dives (and recreational dives where computers are not used) are planned and conducted using the dive profiles detailed on the BCEC Standard No-Stop Bottom Times and Maximum Depths (see table below).
- After every dive the ‘Pressure Group’ of each volunteer must be calculated on the PADI RDP Table Version using the ‘actual’ depth and bottom time for the dive.
- When ‘repetitive’ dives are being undertaken, the ‘Pressure Group’ of each volunteer must be calculated to ensure that they are re-entering the water in the ‘A’ Pressure Group.
- Volunteers are personally responsible for ensuring that they are aware of their own Pressure Group (as per the PADI RDP Table Version) at all times.
- The minimum surface interval between dives is determined by the requirement of re-entering the water in the ‘A’ pressure group. This will be in accordance with the PADI RDP Blue Caribbean Environmental Conservation Standard no-stop bottom times & maximum depths.
- **Do not exceed at any time unless on a pre-planned computer dive**





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## Night Dives:

### Standard Profiles Computer Dive

Maximum depths (Metres)

12 8 12 18 20 25 28 28

### Maximum No-stop

Bottom time (Minutes)

37 60 60 37 29 20 14 37

### Max surface-to-surface

Time (bottom time + ascent time) (mins)

45 68 68 45 37 28 23 45

## Emergency Measures Only:

If a diver over profiles then they should abort their dive, ascend no faster than 18m per min and perform a mandatory five minute safety stop. The divers must refer to the PADI RDP Table Version to establish whether an extended decompression stop is required, and if necessary undertake the indicated decompression stop. Decompression time must be calculated utilizing the 'actual' depth and bottom time.

If an emergency safety stop is required the divers should undertake no further diving for 12 hours. If a decompression stop is required the divers should undertake no further diving for 24 hours.

## Explanatory Notes:

- BCEC has adopted the following PADI recommendation: "When planning a dive in cold water or under conditions that might be strenuous, plan the dive assuming the depth is four metres deeper than actual". The 'BCEC Standard No-Stop Bottom Times & Maximum Depths Table' takes into account these additional four metres.
- The BCEC Standard No-Stop Bottom Times and Maximum Depths provide a set of maximum depths and no-stop bottom times to enable dive profiles to be pre-planned and adhered to during each dive (excluding computer dives – see below).
- The maximum depths must not be exceeded at any time.
- The bottom times may only be extended in the following circumstances:
  1. By the SI only when conducting SCUBA training
  2. During computer diving (see below)



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## Computer Diving:

- Computer diving is restricted to recreational diving only.
- Diving computers MUST NOT be shared between divers.
- If computers are going to be used to conduct recreational dives, they must also be worn as 'data-loggers' on all previous dives during the week (i.e. since the last previous 24 hour break from diving).
- Computer dives requiring decompression stops are not permitted at any time.
- Total Dive Time (TDT) (time from the start of the descent until reaching the surface at the end of the dive) must not exceed 45 min for dives deeper than 12 metres or 68 min for dives shallower than 12 metres.
- The maximum depth for computer diving must not exceed 28m.
- The minimum 'NDL time' indicated by the computer during the dive must not be less than five minutes at any time.
- When using dive computers to conduct dives, each of the divers in a buddy pair must have a dive computer. Computers may be used as 'Bottom timers' only during survey dives.
- The minimum surface interval between computer dives is three hours, except when planning to undertake night dives (below) when the minimum surface interval is 2.5 hours or for instructors undertaking dive training as outlined in the PADI Instructor manual and within PADI dive tables.
- A three-minute safety stop at five metres is undertaken on all dives deeper than five metres and must be included in the TDT.

## Disclaimer:

Volunteers wishing to use computers to conduct recreational dives must recognize that this is a discrete skill and that they must ensure that they do not undertake a multi-level computer dive until they are familiar with all aspects of the diving computer which they intend to use (including a detailed review of the manufacturers instructions). They must also ensure that they are familiar with the relevant skills and knowledge necessary to conduct a multi-level computer diving.

## Equipment Required for Dive Standards:

- The following equipment is mandatory on all dives:
  1. BCD\*
  2. Regulator fitted with octopus and contents gauge\*
  3. Digital Depth gauge (or dive computer)
  4. Compass
  5. Mask and snorkel\*\*
  6. Open foot fins and booties
  7. Knife
  8. Watch
  9. Whistle
  10. PADI RDP Table Version\*\*\*

\* **Loaned free to all volunteers undertaking the SCUBA Training Program with BCEC.**

\*\* **The snorkel does not have to be attached to the mask but must be in the divers possession throughout the dive**

\*\*\* **Loaned free to all volunteers**



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## Dive Courses and Standards Cont'd

- The 'buddy system' is strictly adhered to on all dives for pre-dive equipment checks. Buddy checks are mandatory before each dive, following the Buoyancy-Weights-Releases-Air-Final (BWRAF) order of equipment checks.
- All divers must be in possession of a snorkel at all times.
- Dive teams are required to carry at least one, surface marker buoy (SMB) on each dive to permit the boat cover to track their movement from the surface. If divers are doing a recreational dive in a group of two – six divers they must carry at least one SMB between them and must remain as a close group throughout the entire dive. There should be no more than six divers in one group sharing one SMB. The SI may use their discretion should they feel inexperienced groups/survey teams need to carry more than one SMB.
- The wearing of gloves is not permitted at any time during a dive and divers are not permitted to touch marine life unless under instruction from science staff during science training. The use of underwater cameras are not allowed except on recreational dives or with permission of the Project Scientist (PS) under the conditions detailed below:
  1. Underwater cameras can be used, with permission from the PS, for specific science dives such as coral disease or bleaching surveys. Where possible divers should only use their own cameras to minimize chances of damage to other people's cameras.

## Diving Procedure:

The following summary provides an overview of the key diving procedures that must be adhered to at all times:

- When shore diving, a SM must be appointed to supervise the diving activities and track each SMB. S M must have with them, or be within one minute of, the following items:
  1. Mask, fins and snorkel
  2. Hand-held radio, mobile phone or satellite phone (site dependent) to communicate with the expedition site
  3. Emergency oxygen kit
  4. Emergency first-aid medical kit & stretcher
- In the event of a surf entry from the shore, divers should enter the water with their buddy, with their masks fitted to their face and snorkel or regulator in their mouths. They should then move beyond the surf zone before attempting to fit fins.
- When boat diving, a BM must be appointed. See separate BCEC BM Duties for the details of what is expected.
- When travelling in boats to or from a dive site, all personnel in the boat must wear a properly fitted life jacket or buoyancy aid.
- When diving from boats, divers must not exit or enter the boat unless instructed to do so by the person in charge of the boat (the Boat Captain). Upon entry into the water, the divers must give an 'OK' signal to the (BC).
- Before entering the water, all divers need to have given the SM/BM their tank pressure in BAR.



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## Diving Procedure Cont'd:

- Cylinders must have a minimum of 180 BAR pressure before conducting an open water dive. For confined dive training of less than five metres the SI can, at their discretion only, allow themselves or a dive trainee to start a confined dive with a cylinder that has less than 180 BAR.
- Divers must always be assigned to a buddy pair and must remain in this pairing for the duration of the dive.
- The only exception to this is MSD where buddy pairs can be changed by the science staff during a dive. This must however be clearly signaled and all divers must show that they understand and know who their new buddy is.
- Divers may only be assigned to dive in a group of three in the following circumstances:
  1. Numbers prevent a buddy pair being formed
  2. A 'dive leader' is assigned who will lead the other two divers
  3. The 'dive leader' must hold at least a PADI Dive Master or equivalent certification (see PADI Qualification Comparison) , or higher (e.g. PADI Instructor) If the individuals professional annual subscription is not paid then they are no longer a diving professional and so cannot be a 'dive leader'.
  4. The SI and EL approve the dive plan in advance.
- While on the surface it is recommended that divers keep their mask fitted to their face at all times and keep either their regulator or snorkel in their mouth.
- During any dive, the buddy pair must not separate more than a few metres from each other and must not attempt any dive that might require them to become separated. Should a diver become separated from their buddy, they should search for no longer than one minute before returning to the surface. In such cases, the diver should return directly to the surface and not undertake a safety stop at five metres.
- Buddy pairs and/or survey team must descend and ascend together. Should any member of a buddy pair or survey team experience any difficulty in descending BEFORE reaching five metres, ALL of the divers must ascend together to the surface and exit the water. Once the Boat Marshal has verified that the divers did not exceed five metres, the divers who experienced no problems during the descent may undertake a buddy check and restart the dive. If ANY of the divers descended below five metres NONE of the divers may restart the dive. Any of the divers who descended deeper than five meters must not undertake a subsequent dive until they are in PG A and to a depth no greater than ten metres.
- Divers must abort their dive and begin their ascent once they reach 70 BAR pressure and return to the surface with a minimum of 50 BAR pressure remaining in their cylinder. If they return to the surface with less than 50 BAR pressure the boat/SM must be report it to the SI who must monitor the diver's air use over subsequent dives and take action if the incident reoccurs.
- Masks and snorkels must not be removed until the diver is safely inside the boat/on the shore. Fins must not be removed until the diver has physical contact with the boat or is in water shallow enough to stand.
- For Advanced Open Water deep dive training a hang tank (full tank with reg on it) should be hung five metres below the boat. This should only be done if the boat is moored and not drifting. If it is not possible to moor the boat then no hang tank should be used.





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## Diving Procedure Cont'd:

- Should the need arise to recall the divers the following signals shall be implemented:
  1. Three tugs on the SMB/three revs of the boat engine: Upon receiving this signal; all divers should get the attention of their buddy/dive leader, abort the dive and make their way to the surface making a three minute safety stop at five metres.
  2. Continuous tugging of the SMB/revving of the boat engine: Upon receiving this signal; all divers should get the attention of their buddy/dive leader, abort the dive and make their way to the surface without making a safety stop. (This signal should only be used in a serious emergency).
- All divers must return to the expedition site with at least one hour of daylight remaining.

## Night Dives:

- One night dive will be scheduled during every four-week expedition (site dependent).
- Night dives are undertaken for recreational purposes only and must not be included in any program of survey or training dives. Night dives may only be conducted at the discretion of the FBM.
- Prior to each night dive, the SI must provide all divers with a detailed briefing on the relevant night dive procedures and the signaling procedures used by BCEC for night diving (below).
- Any diver who cannot provide logged evidence of night diving experience is to complete the PADI Night Dive knowledge review from the PADI Adventures in Diving Manual before going on a night dive. The subsequent dive will be directly supervised by a PADI professional.
- The PADI RDP will determine the minimum surface interval between the night dive and the previous dive undertaken by the diver. The divers must have had sufficient time to return to category A.
- The maximum permitted depth for night diving is 12m.
- Night diving may only be conducted at a location previously agreed upon with the SMT. This will either be a well know shore diving site or a secured boat mooring.
- Where night dives have been authorized from the shore a Cox and boat must be immediately on-hand in the case of an emergency.
- For night dives from a secured boat mooring, during daylight hours, two strobe lights and two cyalume sticks must be fitted (and activated) to the mooring buoy as follows: One strobe and one cyalume stick attached to the buoy at the surface (and clearly visible to boats at a distance); and one strobe and one cyalume attached to the mooring line at a depth of five metres.
- During the night dive, the boat must be moored to the mooring line at all times, and divers should ascend at the end of each dive only up the mooring line. The boat must be securely attached to the mooring line before and during each dive. In the event that the boat needs to detach from the mooring line during the course of a dive (i.e. only in an emergency) then those divers concerned should maintain hold of the mooring line until the boat returns to collect them.
- For night dives from the shore, a mixture of strobes and cyalume sticks should be laid on the appropriate substrate to guide divers back to the water entrance.



# Expedition Reference Manual

## Night Dives Cont'd:

- Should a buddy pair become separated during a night dive, both divers should search for the other for no longer than 30 seconds before returning to the surface without doing a safety stop.
- Divers must provide their own underwater torch plus safety marker lights (e.g. cyalume stick). A safety light/ cyalume stick must be attached to the top of their SCUBA tank and another to the top of the SMB.
- Each buddy pair must have one SMB between them when doing a night dive.
- Each buddy pair must have an emergency back-up torch between them, which will be provided by BCEC. In the event that a torch fails during the dive, the emergency back-up torch should be turned on and the dive immediately aborted with a three-minute safety stop at five metres.
- If night diving from the shore in an area with changeable currents, the boat should be prepped and ready to move should divers get into trouble.
- Night dives should not take place or should be aborted if strong currents mean that divers cannot descend or ascend safely. The SI prior to nightfall should first assess the state of the currents and other sea conditions.

## Snorkelling:

- No duck diving to a depth greater than five metres is allowed at any time.
- Snorkeling can only be conducted with the permission of the EL and in the designated area as agreed beforehand.
- Snorkelers must be in a minimum of one buddy pair and have an SMB.
- More than six people must not share one SMB.
- Snorkelers can snorkel within the pre-defined area (as agreed by the EL) without an SMB. This must be an area that is well known and has no boat traffic or strong currents.
- Snorkelers must have a SM, watching them at all times, who is no more than one minute away from O2, first aid kit mask, fins and snorkels.
- Snorkelers must at all times be within visual and oral contact with the SM.

## 10. Equipment Requirement Section

Please remember that although Trinidad and Tobago has most necessities it is vital that all volunteers have the items detailed on the **Necessities List** provided. It could be extremely problematic to procure them once in the country.

## Equipment Requirement Section Cont'd

Volunteers are strongly encouraged and BCEC recommends:

- To print out and study the Necessities List, the Science Species Training Manual and this Expedition Reference Manual, which will be an essential part of the booking process with Blue Caribbean Environmental Conservation Expedition. The Training Manual contains a comprehensive outline of the MSD in addition to the species they will be required to learn during the course. **There is also a recommended reading list on the website which contains a selection of website links, books and ID guides.**
- Volunteers take a credit card for emergency use. Depending on the individual's insurance policy, payment for medical treatment may have to be made up front and then reclaimed at a later date.

Below are a few notes on the equipment needed but volunteers must read the full Necessity list below. Volunteers will not be able to take part in certain aspects of the expedition if they do not have the necessary equipment.

### Clothing



Clothes required on a marine-based expedition are a few pairs of shorts, swimwear and t-shirts will be mostly what the volunteers are likely to need for everyday use.

A pair of lightweight trousers and a long sleeved shirt is essential to keep the sun and biting insects off. Volunteers should also ensure that they bring a hat, sunglasses and a sturdy pair of shoes or sandals (please note that the wearing of footwear is compulsory when on the expedition site).

A warm top (e.g. sweatshirt) is recommended for the occasional chilly evening, and a cheap lightweight waterproof top is recommended to protect against showers and wind. Volunteers should bring with them a set of presentable but casual clothing and shoes in the event that they are invited as a guest to a local function (e.g. a polo-shirt and clean trousers). There are basic facilities for hand washing clothes on-site but washing powder may not always be available. Volunteers are therefore advised to bring a small amount of environmentally friendly washing powder or purchase some while in Tobago.

### Toiletries

Volunteers should bring adequate supplies of toiletries and cosmetics (including contact lens solution, razor blades, tampons, etc.) to last the duration of their expedition. It may be possible to purchase certain items in country (shampoo, soap) but these items can be difficult and/or expensive to obtain during the course of the expedition. Wherever possible, please ensure that these items are biodegradable and environmentally friendly (i.e. low in nitrates and phosphate-free).



# Expedition Reference Manual

## Equipment Requirement Section Cont'd

### Bedding

Unless otherwise stated, dormitory style sleeping accommodation will be provided, including a mattress and mosquito net (or a room with mosquito netting fitted to doors and windows). Volunteers should bring a pillow, two bed sheets or light blanket.

### BCEC Necessities List

*\*Volunteers must read these documents before they leave for the expedition*

The following list is a summary of recommended items that volunteers should bring with them on expedition. Those items in bold are considered essential.

- **Passport & visas**
- **Travel & medical insurance certificate**
- **Local currency**
- **Airline tickets**
- **Credit Card**
- **Expedition Reference Manual**
- **Rules and Regulations**
- **Toiletries (preferably eco friendly)**
- **Insect repellent**
- **Sun cream**
- **Vitamin supplements**
- **Camera**
- **Spare batteries (rechargeable)**
- MP3 player
- **Universal Electrical converter**
- **Recommended Medical Kit List** (personal medication)
  1. Rehydration salts
  2. Diarrhea medication
  3. Vitamin B 100-Complex
  4. Zinc-oxide tape
  5. Micropore tape
  6. Plasters/Dressings (range of sizes)
  7. Antiseptic wipes/Ointment
  8. Antihistamine cream
  9. Non drowsy antihistamine tablets (on recommendation by a doctor)
  10. Ibuprofen/Paracetamol (on recommendation by a doctor)
  11. Antibiotic ear drops (on recommendation by a doctor)
  12. Sudafed (on recommendation by a doctor)
- **Hat**
- **Sunglasses**
- **Towel**
- **Small pillow**
- **Set of smart clothes (Polo shirt/skirt/smart trousers)**
- **Sandals**
- **Swimwear**
- **Sheet**
- **Thin sleeping bag or liner**
- **Shorts**
- **T-shirts**
- **Underwear**
- **Fleece/Sweatshirt**
- **Sturdy pair of shoes**

BCEC is not in a position to advise volunteers with regards to prescribed medications and immunizations required for their expedition. Volunteers should seek advice from their local doctor.





# Expedition Reference Manual

## Dive Equipment

BCEC will provide all volunteers with weight belts, weights and SCUBA diving cylinders at the expedition site. In addition, volunteers joining the BCEC SCUBA Training Program will be provided with a Buoyancy Compensator Device (BCD) and Regulator for use during their expedition. Please note that all expedition equipment (including items of SCUBA equipment) is provided on a shared basis with other volunteers. BCD's and Regulators will be available for rent for those volunteers who are not on the BCEC SCUBA Training Program but this will be at an extra cost of **CAD\$80.00** per item/per week.

### **\*\*IMPORTANT\*\***

**Volunteers must inform HQ PRIOR to their departure if they wish to hire their BCD and Regulators from BCEC.**

### **BCEC Marine Necessities List**

The following list is a summary of recommended items that volunteers should bring with them on their marine expedition. Those items in bold are considered essential, volunteers arriving without these items will not be allowed to dive until they have purchased the relevant equipment.

- **Relevant PADI manuals and PIC cards (Essential for those undertaking SCUBA courses. See PADI Dive Courses' section below)**
- **Regulator, fitted with an Octopus & contents gauge (recently serviced)\***
- **BCD (Buoyancy Compensation Device) (recently serviced) fitted with a whistle and PADI Recreational Dive Planner slate\***
- **Mask & snorkel**
- **Fins (open foot)**
- **Wetsuit booties**
- **Dive compass**
- **Diving log book**
- **Diver's knife**
- **Dive computer (preferable) or digital depth gauge with bottom timer**
- **Dive slate (A4 size)**
- **Wetsuit (a 3mm long suit is ideal)\*\***
- **Rash vest & board shorts\*\***
- **Underwater torch (not required for those staying for two weeks or less, or for those who do not wish to participate in night dives)**
- **Cyalume light sticks (two per night dive, not required for those staying for two weeks or less or for those who do not wish to participate in night dives)\*\*\***

Volunteers who are classed as 'Dive Trainees' (those doing PADI Open Water and/or PADI Advanced Open Water) will be provided with these items (on a shared basis) for the duration of their expedition at no cost. 'Main Group' volunteers can hire these items for **CAD\$80.00** per item/per week.

**Volunteers must inform HQ prior to their departure if they wish to hire their BCD and Regulators from BCEC.**



# Expedition Reference Manual

## **BCEC Marine Necessities List Cont'd**

\* BCEC recommends that volunteers ensure that their own equipment has been recently serviced before arriving on expedition.

\*\* During some periods of the year some volunteers will find the water warm enough to dive without a wetsuit and only use a rash vest and board shorts. While BCEC will always advocate the use of wetsuits for better protection, it is appreciated that volunteers may want to take these items to offer more flexibility.

\*\*\* Please note that BCEC recommends the use of battery powered (non-strobe) light sticks for use on night dives, as they are more environmentally friendly. If two of these are purchased they can be used them for every dive.

## **PADI Dive Course Requirements**

PADI requires all PADI students to have in their possession, a personal set of PADI manuals. Volunteers undertaking the PADI Open Water course will need to bring the PADI Open Water ultimate crew pack and Open Water Personal Identification Card (PIC).

Volunteers undertaking the PADI Advanced Open Water course will need the PADI Adventures in Diving manual and Advanced Open Water PIC. Every volunteer will be given the Emergency First Response (EFR) first aid training but volunteers who wish to gain the official certification at the end will need to bring the EFR manual and EFR PIC. To undertake the PADI Rescue Diver course, volunteers will need the PADI Rescue Diver manual and Rescue Diver PIC. Volunteers who wish to undertake the PADI Dive master course then will need the PADI Diver master crew pack. NB: All the above manuals and PIC's can be purchased directly through BCEC, contact

## **11. Medical Information**

All volunteers are required to complete and return the BCEC Medical Form to BCEC HQ for approval. A doctor must sign and stamp these forms. This information is kept in strictest confidence. Medical statements are forwarded for confidential independent review to the Diving Disease Research Centre (DDRC). Based upon their advice, BCEC reserves the right to refer a volunteer to a specialist for further medical examination and/or reject and/or cancel any volunteers expedition application/offer of an expedition placement with BCEC.

### **It is therefore essential that all volunteers:**

- Provide accurate information on all medical statements requested by BCEC. BCEC will not accept any liability in the event that a volunteer has not fully disclosed all details on the medical statements and/or forms provided by BCEC. (Note: failure to disclose this information may invalidate medical health insurance).
- Submit their completed BCEC Medical Statements and/or Forms as soon as possible after receiving confirmation of their placement.



# Expedition Reference Manual

## Medical Advice

The following notes have been compiled to help ensure volunteers safety during the expedition.

Volunteers must consult their doctor on all aspects relating to their personal health prior to participating on the expedition. BCEC cannot offer medical advice. On a BCEC expedition a MO (usually a doctor, nurse or paramedic) may be present. Casualty evacuation procedures have been devised for the expedition in the event of a serious injury or medical problem.

Please note that volunteers are personally liable for any expenditure incurred in relation to medical treatment that BCEC cannot offer at the expedition site (e.g. referrals to a doctor or specialist, medical evacuation, hospitalization, etc.) It is therefore essential that volunteers obtain suitable medical insurance prior to arrival at the expedition site.

## Inoculations

Volunteers should consult their doctor to ensure that they obtain the recommended inoculations for travelling to Trinidad and Tobago.

## A few useful suggestions

- Every effort is made to ensure that balanced meals are provided at the expedition. Diet may vary due to seasonal availability of local produce and logistics of supply.
- Volunteers should make sure that they see a dentist before departure. There are no dental facilities on expedition sites. But one can be provided for a cost. Dental problems may exclude people from diving.
- BCEC provides first aid medical kit, however, volunteers should bring a good personal first aid kit. Volunteers should bring more than adequate supplies of any medication that they normally use. A good rule of thumb is double the amount.
- In some locations, the mosquitoes and other biting insects can be prevalent; volunteers should bring abundant supplies of insect repellent. Please note that repellents containing high concentrations of DEET (above 55%) are not recommended as they may irritate existing insect bites and other skin wounds. Volunteers with sensitive skin should consult their doctor on the most suitable insect repellent for them. Volunteers should bring a lightweight pair of long trousers and a long-sleeved shirt for added protection.
- Rabies exists in some countries, but not in Tobago. If volunteers are going to be travelling widely in these areas they may wish to consider a 'pre-exposure vaccination' – they must discuss this matter with their doctor.
- Avoid excessive exposure to the sun. There is an epidemic of malignant skin disease worldwide, caused by over-exposure of fair-skinned people to the sun. Acute over-exposure is highly dangerous, most sun-screens block UVB (ultraviolet) radiation but are largely ineffective against UVA (different wavelength): both UVA and UVB cause skin cancer and skin ageing, so slapping on loads of sunscreen and remaining in the sun can be potentially dangerous. Lightweight clothes reduce both! Volunteers should ensure that they bring plenty of high-factor waterproof sun block and lip-salve.
- Water requirements increase enormously in the tropics. It is recommended that volunteers drink plenty of water throughout the day. Until volunteers have made the physiological adaptations to extreme heat it is very easy to get sunstroke and dehydration - both can be life threatening. We strongly advise volunteers to bring a good supply of Dioralyte (or other make of rehydration salts) with them.



# Expedition Reference Manual

## Medical Advice Cont'd

- Personal hygiene is crucial in the tropics. Without proper hygiene, bacterial infections are easily caught, and the price volunteers pay for not washing their hands after going to the toilet may be a severe bout of diarrihea - enough to put them out of action for several days. When travelling overland, volunteers should be sensible about what they eat and drink.
- A good SCUBA diver is one that does not come into contact with coral. There are also a few poisonous reef species and to avoid any nasty surprises, divers should keep their hands well away from marine organisms.
- Ear infections caused by continued exposure to the sea can be a problem. Volunteers are recommended to rinse their ears out with clean, fresh water after each dive. Bring ample supplies of a suitable anti-biotic eardrop in the event that an infection develops (consult a doctor first).
- One of the most common expedition injuries are foot wounds, these usually take a long time to heal and can seriously disrupt a volunteers expedition. Simply remembering to wear footwear can avoid a lot of discomfort and disappointment! Please note that wearing footwear around the expedition camp is mandatory on BCEC expedition.
- 'Nappy rash' is not restricted to babies! Working in hot, humid environments and/or the constant exposure to salt water can have very painful consequences. Take lots of medicated talcum powder and avoid wearing wet swim-wear and diving wet suits any longer than necessary. And finally.... remember that prevention is always better than a cure. So please be sensible! In all cases volunteers should consult their doctor before departure.



# Expedition Reference Manual

## 12. Code of Conduct

Please note that this code of conduct is a simplified list of the expectations for volunteers participating on a BCEC expedition. Participation in the code of conduct is necessary for all individuals to ensure the safety, professionalism and harmony of our expedition sites. It is BCEC's aim that its expeditions are safe, enjoyable, inoffensive and non-threatening for all expedition participants.

Racism, Sexism, homophobia, Discrimination BCEC has a zero tolerance approach to racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory behaviour. All are expected to accept volunteers as equals regardless of background, beliefs or sexual orientation.

### **Training**

All expedition participants are expected to apply themselves fully to the training provided. BCEC will not allow individuals to partake in activities if they are not suitably qualified or have not achieved minimum requirements in training. BCEC will however continue to teach and train an individual until they achieve this minimum requirement or their expedition time is completed.

### **Policy**

All expedition participants are expected to adhere to BCEC policy and actively involve themselves in ensuring that they meet it and other participants achieve this aim.

### **Safety rules**

Expedition participants are expected to strictly adhere to policy relating to the safety of themselves and/or others. It is BCEC's ethos that participants be involved in the risk reduction and mitigations process.

### **Behaviour**

BCEC expects expedition participants to act in an appropriate way towards each other and outside individuals. BCEC does not accept the following as acceptable behaviour and will dismiss volunteers without notice from the expedition site:

- Violence to the person, another individual(s) or property. This seriousness of such action is in no way diminished by the influence of alcohol.
- The use (or attempt to gain/use) of narcotics and pharmaceuticals of a controlled nature without permission of a medical professional.
- The use of drugs illegal for use in the UK.
- Extreme cultural insensitivity as an individual act or sustained behaviour offensive to cultures or beliefs.
- Threatening or offensive behaviour towards another individual/s or property.

### **Cultural Considerations**

BCEC expects all participants to embrace the ethos of treating all as equals and working together as a team. All participants are briefed on arrival at expedition site on cultural considerations for the host country. Individuals with cultural or religious needs are responsible for discussing issues with HQ before arrival on site. BCEC aims to accommodate all and believes in equal opportunities in so far as physical ability is not a barrier to safety of the individual or others.





# Expedition Reference Manual

## Code of Conduct Cont'd

### **Environmental Considerations**

BCEC expects all participants to reduce their impact on the environment to the minimum possible. Information is available to assist with this and relevant advice will be provided at pre-departure meetings and during time in country.

### **Breaches Of Code of Conduct**

Serious breaches of the code of conduct will be treated as gross misconduct and dismissal will be immediate. Where behaviour has been willful or dangerous volunteers will be asked to leave. Where breaches are made by mistake, the EL who will explain the reason for the particular policy will talk to the individual. BCEC operates a policy of single verbal and written warnings before dismissal from site in less serious cases, such warnings can only be issued with the consent of a Director of the organization. It is important to note that the warnings do not necessarily have to be issued for similar breaches of the code. It is also important to note that BCEC reserves the right to accelerate the disciplinary process should it feel it necessary to prevent danger, harm or offence to other expedition participants.



# Expedition Reference Manual

## 13. Rules and Regulations

The following are the conditions relating to the booking of an expedition with Blue Caribbean Environmental Conservation and are required to be read in close conjunction with and reference to the following documents:

**BCEC Expedition Reference Manual**  
**BCEC Medical Forms**

### 1. Interpretation

The following expressions shall have the meanings as set out below:

BCEC shall mean Blue Caribbean Environmental Conservation, a company incorporated in Trinidad & Tobago (**Company Registration No.** whose registered office is at: Man O War Bay, Charlotteville, Tobago, West Indies. BCEC Expedition Reference Manual shall mean the document entitled "BCEC Expedition Reference Manual" which is available from the Blue Caribbean Environmental Conservation Website.

BCEC Expedition Reference Manual shall mean the document entitled "BCEC Expedition Reference Manual" specific to the expedition for which the volunteer has made a booking, and which is available from the BCEC Website. BCEC Website shall mean the official BCEC website which can be found at [www.BlueCaribbeanConservation.org](http://www.BlueCaribbeanConservation.org)

Deposit shall mean the deposit of **CAD\$250.00** payable at the time of making a booking and which shall form part of the total Expedition Fee payable.

Expedition shall mean the expedition organized by BCEC upon which the volunteer has expressed a wish to participate or has been accepted to participate.

Expedition Fee shall mean the total sum payable by the volunteer to participate on the expedition for which they have made a booking and for which that booking has been accepted by BCEC.

Expedition Leader shall mean the leader of the expedition appointed by BCEC.

In writing shall mean by letter, fax or email.

Volunteer shall mean the person who has made a booking and received written confirmation from BCEC that their booking has been accepted by BCEC.

### 2. Bookings & Payment

Volunteers are strongly advised to submit a booking as early as possible prior to the published start date of their chosen expedition.

BCEC Expedition bookings and payments may only be made electronically. Directions can be found on our website, which is located at [www.BlueCaribbeanConservation.org](http://www.BlueCaribbeanConservation.org) Please contact us for further information.

A non-refundable deposit of **CAD\$250.00** is payable at the time of the initial booking. The deposit is accepted as part-payment of the expedition Fee and will be refunded only if the booking is not accepted by BCEC.



# Expedition Reference Manual

## Rules and Regulations Cont'd

A booking is deemed as accepted only upon receipt by the volunteer of confirmation in writing by BCEC.

BCEC reserves the right to decline any booking within 14 days from the date of the booking, in which case the deposit will be refunded.

The balance of the expedition Fee is payable no later than 8 weeks prior to the published start date of the expedition.

Where a booking is made less than 8 weeks prior to the published start date of the expedition, the balance of the expedition Fee is payable no later than one week following the initial booking and payment of the deposit.

Failure to pay the balance of the expedition Fee by the due date entitles BCEC to treat the booking as cancelled and retain the deposit paid.

BCEC shall be entitled to charge interest at the rate of 3% above the base rate of Scotia Bank, Scarborough, Tobago on any late payments owing to BCEC by the volunteer.

### **3. Expedition Fee**

Full details of the expedition Fee to join a BCEC expedition are provided on the BCEC website.

Full details of what is included and excluded in the expedition Fee are provided in the BCEC Expedition Reference Manual, which can be obtained from the BCEC website.

### **4. Charges**

The expedition Fee may be subject to surcharge in the event of the alteration of circumstances arising beyond the control of BCEC such as adverse fluctuations in currency exchange rates or substantial increase in the costs of local commodities, services or taxes.

Any notification of a surcharge will be made in writing by BCEC to the volunteer and by no later than 4 weeks prior to the start date of their expedition. Such notification will include a brief explanation by BCEC to the volunteer of the reasons for the surcharge.

If the alteration results in a surcharge of 15% or more of the expedition Fee the volunteer shall either pay the surcharge in full by no later than 10 days prior to the start date of their expedition or terminate their booking by notifying BCEC in writing within 10 days of the date of the notification by BCEC. Should the volunteer elect to terminate their booking, BCEC shall offer a full refund of the expedition Fee paid and BCEC shall not be liable for any loss or damage suffered as a result of such termination by the volunteer.



# Expedition Reference Manual

## 5. Cancellation By Volunteer

Cancellation of a booking must be made in writing. The date of cancellation for the purposes of the cancellation provisions below shall be the date of receipt of notification in writing of the cancellation.

If the cancellation is made more than eight weeks before the published start date of the expedition, the deposit and 50% of the balance of the expedition fee paid shall be retained by BCEC.

If the cancellation is made eight weeks or less before the published start date of the expedition, all monies paid to BCEC by the volunteer shall be retained by BCEC.

BCEC will not be liable to pay the volunteer any other losses, costs or expenses (including any consequential or indirect losses) arising as a result of cancellation by the volunteer.

In view of the above strict cancellation provisions, BCEC strongly recommends that appropriate cancellation insurance is obtained by the Volunteer at the time of booking, and the Volunteer acknowledges the importance of securing such insurance coverage.

## 6. Cancellation By BCEC Other Than For Force Majeure

BCEC will exercise all reasonable care to ensure that the volunteer participates on the expedition to which they have booked and been accepted by BCEC. However, the volunteer acknowledges and accepts the right of BCEC to change the published start date of the expedition or provide an alternative expedition location or to make other changes as BCEC in the circumstances deems necessary.

BCEC reserves the right to cancel the expedition and provide notice in writing to the volunteer. If the cancellation is made prior to the published start date of the expedition and no alternative expedition is provided by BCEC, BCEC will refund the expedition Fee less the non-refundable deposit, which the volunteer shall accept in full and final settlement of all claims which they may have against BCEC.

The volunteer acknowledges that certain medical conditions, psychological or physical, as declared by the volunteer on all medical forms submitted to BCEC by the volunteer may be contra indicatory to safe participation on the expedition by the volunteer.

BCEC reserves the right to cancel the volunteer's booking based upon the medical advice of the BCEC appointed medical advisor(s) and in so doing the volunteer accepts that BCEC shall not be liable to refund any money already paid to BCEC by the Volunteer or be liable to the volunteer for any other losses, costs or expenses (including any consequential or indirect losses) arising as a result of cancellation on medical grounds.



# Expedition Reference Manual

## 7. Force Majeure

BCEC shall have no liability to the volunteer to make any refund or in respect of any other loss or damage suffered by the volunteer as a result of the curtailment, suspension, alteration or the cancellation of the expedition caused by any event of force majeure occurring.

For the purposes of “force majeure” shall mean war, threat of war, riot, civil strife, coup, industrial dispute, terrorist activity, threat of terrorist activity, hijacking, health risks, outbreak of infectious disease, quarantine, natural, manmade or nuclear disaster, fire, lightening, explosion, earthquake, storm, tempest, hurricane, flood, landslide, adverse weather conditions, bureaucratic obstacles, government or other official intervention, inability to obtain, or shortage of, fuel, power, gas, equipment transportation or product, loss, theft or damage to strategic equipment, or any other event or circumstance arising which is beyond the control of BCEC.

## 8. Acknowledgement Of Nature Of The Expedition

The volunteer acknowledges and accepts that the expedition is designed to be primarily of scientific and educational benefit of Trinidad and Tobago, and not a traditional package holiday where timetables, itineraries and arrangements are clearly defined in advance. Flexibility of expedition timetables, itineraries and arrangements should not only be anticipated but also expected. In agreeing to join and participate on the expedition the volunteer agrees to accept this flexibility and to be prepared for variation which may arise with little or no prior notice, and acknowledges the right of BCEC to make alterations and variations which shall not be regarded as a cancellation for the purposes of Rules and Regulations #6.

The volunteer acknowledges and accepts that there is a significant element of personal risk and potential hazard involved in undertaking an expedition of the nature organized by BCEC and while BCEC aims to safeguard the volunteer's safety, it can not be held responsible for damage or injury caused by risks or hazards beyond its control.

BCEC shall not be liable to the volunteer for any claim arising from discomfort or disappointment suffered from participation on the expedition.

The volunteer warrants that he/she has read the BCEC Expedition Reference Manual that it forms part of any contract between BCEC and the volunteer and that he/she will comply with all obligations of volunteers referred to in those documents.





# Expedition Reference Manual

## 9. Brochure & Website Information

All information published by BCEC, including the BCEC brochure and website, contain statements representing BCEC's honest belief that the facts as shown are correct. Every reasonable effort has been made to describe fully, and as honestly as possible, the expeditions and other products offered and every reasonable attempt will be made to supply what had been described.

BCEC reserves the right to make changes to its published information prior to confirming the volunteer's booking and, provided such changes have been notified to the Volunteer prior to the volunteer submitting a booking or accepted by the volunteer after submission of the booking prior to BCEC's confirmation, then such changes shall be binding on the parties.

## 10. Insurance

The volunteer agrees to effect full personal medical and travel insurance and agrees to be personally responsible and liable for ensuring that such insurance cover fully meets their personal requirements and the minimum requirements as recommended in the BCEC expedition guide.

The volunteer acknowledges the importance of insurance provision in respect of their spouse, dependent children and/or relatives and accepts responsibility for assessing their own personal circumstances and arranging any additional insurance cover that they personally deem to be necessary.

The volunteer further agrees to ensure that their insurers are aware of the type of travel and work to be undertaken during the expedition and accepts the insurance proposal upon such basis.

## 11. Passports, Visas & Vaccinations

The volunteer must be in possession of a valid passport and all visas, permits and certificates required for the entire duration of the expedition and must also arrange to obtain whatever vaccinations are normally recommended for the countries through which the expedition is scheduled to travel.

Any information given by BCEC about visas, healthcare, vaccinations, climate, clothing, baggage, special equipment and other matters are given in good faith but without responsibility on the part of BCEC.

## 12. Compliance With Legal Requirements

The volunteer agrees to comply with all legislation, visas, immigration, customs and foreign exchange regulations of Trinidad and Tobago. In the event of a contravention by the volunteer of the laws of any country, the expedition leader shall have the right to require the volunteer to leave the expedition within 24 hours notice and no liability on the part of BCEC shall arise whatsoever.



# Expedition Reference Manual

## 13. Participation & Behaviour

The volunteer acknowledges that the expedition aims to obtain useful information to assist the preservation of the natural environment under observations during the expedition and that therefore the volunteer expects to work under the supervision of the Expedition Leader in a conscientious manner in order to assist in the compilation of this information.

The volunteer agrees to fully abide by all reasonable rules, regulations and instructions issued by BCEC, including but not limited to those stated in the BCEC Expedition Reference Manual and those from the Expedition Leader.

The volunteer agrees to abide by the authority of the expedition leader and to follow all of his/her reasonable instructions.

The volunteer will indemnify BCEC against any damage or loss whether suffered or incurred by BCEC, its staff, other volunteers, members of the local community or otherwise, arising from the volunteer's actions or omissions.

BCEC reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to terminate the volunteer's expedition placement if the volunteer commits any illegal act on the expedition or the volunteer's behaviour is likely, in the opinion of BCEC or its employees or agents, to cause distress, damage, annoyance or danger to its employees, other volunteers or to any third party or their property.

In the event volunteers placement has been terminated, the expedition leader may require the volunteer to leave the expedition within 24 hours notice and BCEC will have no further responsibility or liability for the volunteer whatsoever, including any arrangements for travel or accommodation, and will not provide any refunds of monies paid by the volunteer to BCEC. Furthermore, BCEC will be under no obligation whatsoever to pay the volunteer compensation or cover any costs the volunteer may incur as a result of having to make alternative arrangements.

## 14. Complaints

In the event that the volunteer wishes to make a complaint in relation to the expedition, the volunteer will first ensure that the matter has been brought to the immediate attention of, the expedition leader who will respond by seeking to resolve the complaint as soon as reasonably possible.

In the event of an unresolved serious complaint, the volunteer must first complete a full written report detailing the nature of the complaint before departure from the expedition. This report must be signed and dated by the volunteer and the expedition Leader and a copy provided to the volunteer prior to departure. The volunteer should then notify BCEC of their complaint by letter within 28 days of their return and include a copy of the report made prior to their departure from the expedition. The volunteer acknowledges that it is unreasonable to take no action or fail to report their complaint to the expedition leader whilst on the expedition but then to write a letter of complaint upon return.



# Expedition Reference Manual

It is therefore a condition of booking that the volunteer communicate any problem to the expedition Leader and follow the procedures as laid out above. If the volunteer fails to follow these procedures, the volunteer accepts that BCEC cannot be held responsible or liable as the volunteer will have deprived BCEC of the opportunity to investigate and rectify the problem during the course of the expedition.

The volunteer agrees that under no circumstances shall BCEC be liable for damages or compensation arising from that part of any claim related to the assessment of inconvenience, discomfort, disappointment, loss of enjoyment or as a consequence of any event of force majeure occurring.

## **15. Data Protection & Copyright**

The volunteer acknowledges and accepts that all information and data collected by the volunteer during the expedition is for the exclusive use of BCEC and that BCEC retains full and exclusive copyright, publishing and commercial rights in, and complete editorial control over, all the information and data.

The volunteer waives all rights in relation to the data and information collected by them during the expedition and agrees not to duplicate in any form, publish, render public or make use in any other way of data and information they have collected during the expedition, unless expressly permitted to do so in writing by a serving director of BCEC. The volunteer agrees that any written, video, film or photographic works they may be asked to make by BCEC during their expedition shall be copyright to BCEC and may not be duplicated or used for any purpose whatsoever by the volunteer unless expressly permitted to do so in writing by a serving director of BCEC. The volunteer waives any right to be identified as the author or creator of any such works.

The volunteer authorizes and permits without charge BCEC to use, publish and sell any information, reports, data, video, film and photographic works collected by the volunteer during the expedition, including any video, film or photographic images that may include the volunteer.

## **16. Variation, Conflict & Jurisdiction**

No servant or agent of BCEC can vary or waive these rules and regulations and no variation of these conditions will be effective unless a serving director of BCEC has signed it.

In the event that any of the provision of these rules and regulations is held to be invalid under any applicable statute or rule of law, such provisions will be omitted without affecting the validity or enforceability of anything remaining in the rules and regulations.

In the event of any conflict between any of these rules and regulations and any other document issued by, or on behalf of, BCEC these rules and regulations shall prevail, unless otherwise stated in writing.

These rules and regulations, and any matters arising from them, are governed by and construed in accordance with Trinidad and Tobago Law and are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Trinidad and Tobago.