

DAN AP News

New Zealand Water Safety Conference

Each year in New Zealand there are several deaths involving recreational diving and snorkelling and, as a result, diving featured at the recent water safety conference in Wellington, New Zealand.

Dr Simon Mitchell, a DAN Medical Advisor, presented an interesting lecture on technical diving, highlighting some potential safety issues with rebreathers. Based on data that he emphasised was 'soft', Dr Mitchell suggested that 1-2% of divers who had bought a rebreather died in a related accident within 5 years of doing so. This is a sobering thought and good reason for all rebreather users to be constantly vigilant and to ensure they are trained to the highest possible standard.

DAN Dive Safety Seminar in Melbourne

In conjunction with the Alfred Hospital, DAN Asia-Pacific is holding a large Dive Safety Seminar in Melbourne on 21 February 2010. This event provides a unique opportunity for divers to hear from experts in diving health and safety. Speakers include:

- Dan Orr, President DAN America
- Dr. Alessandro Marroni, President, DAN Europe
- Dr. Frans Cronje, President, DAN Southern Africa
- John Lippmann, Executive Director, DAN Asia-Pacific
- Dr. Ian Millar, Director, Hyperbaric Medicine, The Alfred
- Dr. Andrew Fock, Hyperbaric Consultant, The Alfred
- Dr. Lisa Gershwin, Jellyfish Expert
- Dr David Wilkinson, Co-ordinator Divers Emergency Service

The International DAN (IDAN) meeting is being held in Melbourne at that time and we are taking the opportunity to utilise this collection of great speakers. Numbers are limited so we encourage you to register early if you are interested in attending.



Dr. Simon Mitchell talks at the N.Z. Water Safety Conference.

To reserve your place, call +61-3-9886 9166 to register your details over the phone with the DAN Team; or send an email to communications @danasiapacific.org with your Name, Member Number, Phone Number, and Credit Card Details. Payment is required to confirm booking (AUS\$30 for a DAN Member).

Lotion with protection against jellyfish stings?

A company in Thailand has recently begun marketing a product, known as Safe Sea®, a lotion which was created to provide a degree of protection against jellyfish stings. Although the manufacturers have provided reports of some testing conducted with certain less dangerous species of jellyfish, there appears to be no evidence that this product has been tested on potentially deadly species of jellyfish, such as the Chironex box jellyfish or Irukandji. Chironex, Irukandji and other dangerous tropical species do exist in Thai waters and have been responsible for a number of deaths and life-threatening stings there over many years. (They are also present in northern Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and other tropical areas of the Asia-Pacific, as well as the Caribbean).

DAN AP is involved with a group of expert consultants on dangerous jellyfish who are very concerned that some tourists to Thailand, as well as locals, could be lulled into a false

sense of security by using this lotion, which has not been proven effective against the potentially deadly Chironex-type and Irukandji-type box jellyfish instead of measures that have been proven to be effective, such as wearing protective clothing such as lycra or wetsuits in higher risk areas. This group believes that it is very risky to rely on any product not fully tested on lethal species, including this product, and we have expressed our concerns in writing to the distributor in Thailand.

We continue to encourage people to send in photos of any jellyfish sightings. Please send these to johnl@danasiapacific.org.

First E-Issue of Alert Diver. Did You Receive Your Copy?

If you did not receive *Alert Diver* via email in September we either do not have an email address for you or do not have a current/correct email address.

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