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# British Cave Rescue Council

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The representative body for voluntary underground rescue in the British Isles

Registered Charity 1137252

## **MEDIA BRIEFING NOTE – 13 July 2018**

### **BCRC team welcomed home from Thailand**

Update for teams and media compiled 12.00 BST, Saturday 14 July 2018

Peter Dennis, BCRC Chairman, surrounded by most of the BCRC team, addressed the Press assembled at Heathrow Airport, London at 8.30am on Friday morning.

He formally welcomed back the BCRC team returning from supporting ‘one of the most extraordinary cave rescues ever seen’. He thanked all involved and said that the international collaboration had been an inspiration. He also mentioned the tragic loss of Saman Kunan.

He explained that the Thai authorities had asked for assistance from the BCRC, which was a voluntary organisation, formed from cavers and rescue teams with decades of experience. He said that the skilled cave diving team present, was in a class of its own, drawn from the UK caving community and that it had been at the forefront of ‘this unique success story. He noted that the youngsters rescued had shown great inner strength and bravery.

The BCRC team members were then asked to introduce themselves to the Press, Rick from Coventry, Chris from Cheddar, Jim from Belgium, Mike from Shropshire, Connor from Somerset, Josh from North Wales and Gary from Mid Wales.

In answering Press questions, Rick told of their initial excitement and relief on finding that the boys were still alive and had counted them all as they came down the slope towards them. The boys had managed to conserve some of their torches so still had some light. The team’s relief was soon replaced by the uncertainty of the best way to get them out. This proved to be the most difficult part of the mission. There were doubts, as it was uncharted territory. Nothing like this had ever been attempted before anywhere in the world but they had the best team possible. The boys were given full-face masks with positive pressure to help them to breathe. There was some chaos around them, but the team was entirely focused on their task. It was a big responsibility and the divers that were brought in were there because they were experienced enough to take that responsibility. Rick, John, Chris and Jason transported the boys under the water during the rescue. The challenges were poor visibility, some awkward constrictions and the responsibility for another human being’s life. The team was delighted to have played a part in the successful outcome of the international effort by just using their unique skills to give something back to the community.

Point of contact:

Please direct any enquiries about the cave rescue operation to: [comms@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:comms@caverescue.org.uk) or visit BCRC on the newly created Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/BritishCaveRescueCouncil/>).

Briefing prepared by BCRC Officers, 14 July 2018.