

Welcome to the Matienzo Caves Expedition!

The aim of the expedition is to **explore and document caves within the permit area**. Documentation includes description, photos, videos and surveys, as appropriate.

There is a large amount of information available which has been built up over 60 years. This includes maps with entrances and cave centre lines, cave descriptions, logbooks, cave surveys, photographs and videos. You are welcome to browse and search through all of this and print out maps and surveys.

As a member of the expedition, following the points below will help to ensure the Matienzo Caves Project information is kept up-to-date. It is not expected that everyone goes underground every day – you should set time aside to properly document finds.

On arrival

- 1) Please ensure that your up-to-date contact information is written down on a Matienzo Caver sheet (blue binder).

When walking / prospecting on the surface, a member of the team should:

- 2) Obtain a **map printout** of the area with cave centre lines and known entrances marked. Take a pen or pencil!
- 3) If possible, use a **GPS** or, preferably, an **Android device** with *Orux Maps* with a database of entrances installed. A paper map is still useful. (Use UTM/UPS and the ETRS89 or WGS84 datum)
- 4) Take a **digital camera**.
- 5) When finding a **new site** (shaft, cave, dig, sink, resurgence)
 - a) Take a **GPS reading** as close to the entrance as possible and / or **mark the position** on the map.
 - b) Take at least 2 **photos**: one close up and one from a distance.
 - c) Jot down a short **description**: identifying features; possible depth, draught, etc
- 6) On return,
 - a) Write up an account in the **logbook** or on a logbook sheet that evening. This needn't be more than a few sentences (and can be typed up) but must comprise the **area visited**, the **team members** and, for each site found:
 - i) **Grid reference** from the GPS reading or the map
 - ii) A **description** taken from your notes
 - iii) It may also be useful to stick in the **map** you used.Even if nothing is found, the activity should be written into the log book.
 - b) Download any relevant **photos** or **videos** into the expedition network-attached storage (NAS). Talk to the expedition organiser so that a new site number can be allocated and the **photos renamed** appropriately.
 - c) The **new entrance will be plotted** on the QGIS map.
- 7) When prospecting with a ladder / line or rope, aim to also take photos underground and document in the logbook the exploration including if there is any draught and chance of pushing / extensions / digging, etc.

When exploring new cave,

Before going underground, the team should:

- 1) Prepare **personal caving equipment**, food and backup items.
- 2) Equip themselves with **surveying equipment**: compass, clinometer, tape, survey booklet and pencils or ensure a DistoX is calibrated and that this and a PDA have batteries with a reasonable charge.
- 3) Pick out and sign for the appropriate **tackle** from the tackle store. (See Steve Martin)
- 4) **Talk the trip through** with the expedition organiser then write on the **white board** in the Matienzo Office with the non-permanent marker provided, the **cave** to be visited, the **names** of the people on the trip, the **time** going underground, the expected **time out** and the **call-out time**.
- 5) It may be appropriate to gather photographic equipment, but **photography / video** may be the aim of a separate trip.

While underground, the team should:

- 6) Aim to **survey all or most** of the new passage that has been or is being explored.
- 7) Exit the cave in good time before the call out time.

On leaving the cave, the team should:

- 8) Ensure that the entry on the whiteboard is wiped off, either in person or by phoning the expedition organiser.

- 9) Organise themselves so that all of the following documentation tasks are carried out that evening or, at the latest, the day after:
- a) Write up an account in the **logbook** or on a logbook sheet. This needn't be more than a few sentences (and can be typed up) but must comprise the **cave visited**, the **team members** and a **description** of the trip, eg who did what, what was found, etc. The account should be written so that it includes a description of the passage(s) explored and surveyed, or the description can be a separate file.
 - b) **Transfer survey data** into the Matienzo expedition NAS. This is done with the expedition organiser so that data is saved in an appropriately named folder in the Surveys file structure. Data can be transferred and **worked on** in two ways:
 - i) **Traditional**
 - (1) Data is read from a survey booklet and **typed into a text editor** with appropriate commands and comments to be a script for the Survex programme. A **centre line** (with passage widths) is produced for onscreen viewing.
 - (2) The centre line is **printed out** at a suitable scale on A4 paper and one of team draws the **passage outline** and **details** from the survey notes onto this page.
 - (3) The survey notes, Survex file printout and hand-drawn sheets are **archived** in a plastic wallet.
 - ii) **DistoX / PDA**
 - (1) Data (the .top file) is **transferred off the card** and converted to Survex data with appropriate commands and comments added in a text editor. A **centre line** is produced. The drawing carried out underground is **printed out** for viewing.
 - (2) Various files (dxf, txt) are printed out and **archived** in a plastic wallet.
 - c) With the expedition organiser, the centre lines produced can be **combined with earlier surveys** in the cave or other caves and viewed on the screen or transferred into the on-screen area map.
 - d) **Download any relevant photos or videos** into the NAS. Talk to the expedition organiser so that a new site number can be allocated (if required) and the photos renamed appropriately. The (re-)naming procedure is shown on a label on each computer. Once renamed, a text file of photo captions / descriptions should be added.
 - e) **Clean expedition tackle**: the ropes and other bulky items should be washed in the river. Please aim not to use the campsite water supply for washing caving equipment.

When on a digging trip (surface or underground) or a familiarisation trip, the team should

- 1) Write up an account in the logbook or on a logbook sheet. This needn't be more than a couple of sentences (and can be typed up) but must comprise the **site / cave visited**, the team **members** and a **description of any activity**.

On rainy days or when back home the team should

- 1) Ideally, organise and carry out the final drawing up of the survey. Current programmes in use are *Therion*, *Tunnel*, *Corel Draw* and *Inkscape*. *Inkscape* (v1.2) is free, works with layers very much like *Corel Draw*, and is well suited to producing the majority of small to medium size surveys. The end product is likely to be a pdf file for printing out and passing on to the website organiser. The archivist should receive all items (hard copy and digital) for archiving.
- 2) Realise that the collected data ends up in a report to the permit provider and the Matienzo website. With this in mind, it is very useful to type up (and file in the correct place with the appropriate file name) passage descriptions that are suitable for copy-and-paste into a report and/or website pages.

Finally

- 1) You must have appropriate expedition caving insurance, e.g. Snowcard, or BCA.
- 2) Please follow the "Country Code". This means leaving gates in the state you find them, ensuring that any dig is either re-filled or made stock-proof and, if you need to cross field which has long grass, walk around the edges – the farmer will not thank you for trampling down a hay crop.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

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