

**EFFECTIVE
1 October 2004**



**MINIMUM COURSE CONTENT
FOR
Recreational Dive Supervisor Certification**

As Approved By

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Recreational Scuba Training Council (RSTC)

Minimum Course Content

for

Recreational Dive Supervisor Certification

1. Scope and Purpose

This standard provides minimum content requirements for recreational dive supervisor (Divemaster, Dive Control Specialist, Dive Coordinator, etc.) training. However, these requirements should under no conditions be considered to define a level of optimum training of a recreational dive supervisor. Instructional programs that extend beyond these requirements should, in fact, be encouraged. The requirements of these standards are meant to be comprehensive, but general in nature. That is, the standards present all of the subject areas essential for minimum dive supervisor training, but it does not give a detailed listing of the skills and information encompassed by each area. These items are simply listed in the standards; training organizations shall publish detailed course outlines that meet these standards, which would include specific techniques.

Although the information categories are outlined in what may appear to be a logical sequence, the outline should not be reviewed as a lesson plan. That is, the order in which the information is presented in the standards, while logical as a framework for the basic requirements of this standard, does not necessarily define the sequence of a class lesson plan. Similarly, the requirements presented in this standard do not indicate the emphasis that should be placed upon a particular subject area, or the manner in which subjects are to be taught. Rather, course outlines, lesson plans and other training aids prepared by training organizations responsible for training recreational scuba dive supervisor shall be used as guidelines for the sequencing and emphasis of course content requirements presented in these standards. Decisions as to sequencing and emphasis are at the discretion of the certifying training organization, to be made within the context of environmental factors, instructor characteristics, and other relevant considerations.

The intent of these standards is to provide individuals with sanctioned training as dive supervisors. The standards cover the supervision of recreational divers and assistance in the training of such divers. A certified dive supervisor is qualified to apply the knowledge and skills outlined in these standards to assist certified instructors in conducting educational and scuba skills training of recreational scuba divers, and to conduct supervised diving activities as outlined by his/her respective training organization.

2. Definitions

Certification. Document indicating that the bearer has completed all requirements of a scuba Dive Supervisor Certification Course. This verification is issued by a training organization upon the confirmation of the satisfactory completion of all course requirements, as documented in the bearer's individual log/training record and the training organization's equivalent documentation.

Current. Certification or document issued which has not reached its expiration date prior to the issuing dive supervisor certification.

Diver Rescue. Training offered by a training organization that includes diving-specific classes in emergency planning and accident management, along with open water training in the areas of selfaid, self-assist, buddy-aid, buddy-assist, locating, surfacing and egress of an unresponsive diver, diver emergency planning and accident management procedures.

Dive Supervisor. An individual who is currently qualified and sanctioned by a training organization to assist an instructor in teaching recreational scuba divers, and to conduct supervised diving activities as outlined by his/her respective training organization. Completion of formal training in planning, management and control of diving activities, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and diver-rescue techniques is required. The dive supervisor shall also have passed a written examination demonstrating dive supervisor-level knowledge, as required by the training organization. To be sanctioned, the dive supervisor must meet the annual renewal requirements of the training organization.

Dive Supervisor Course. The training course of dive supervisor training leading to dive supervisor certification issued by a training organization. Successful completion of a course which meets or exceeds this standard qualifies an individual to apply the knowledge and skills outlined in these standards to assist a certified scuba instructor in conducting educational and scuba skills training and to supervise diving activities as outlined by his/her respective training organization.

Minimum Dive Supervisor Diving System. This equipment is required to be worn by candidates while performing the skills listed in 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6. This equipment includes, as a minimum: fins, mask, snorkel, cylinder and valve, buoyancy control device with low pressure inflator, backpack, regulator, alternate air source (active scuba/air delivery system), submersible pressure gauge, weight ballast system and exposure suit (if appropriate), timing device, depth gauge, knife/diver's tool (unless prohibited by law or regulation at the dive site), dive tables, compass/direction monitor and emergency signaling device.

Out-of-Air Emergency Alternatives. Procedures allowing a diver to ascend to the surface in the event of an out-of-air situation. Dependent procedures include: alternate air source; buddy breathing; redundant air supply (provided by a buddy). Independent procedures include: emergency ascent; redundant air supply.

3. PREREQUISITES

In order to qualify for enrollment in a dive supervisor course an individual shall meet the following minimum prerequisites.

- (1) **Age.** The individual shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age; there is no upper limit.
- (2) **Dive Experience.** An evaluation conducted by the instructor of the candidate's dive experience that includes, but is not limited to:
 1. 20 logged dives
 2. Additional experience (e.g., advanced, night, deep, navigation, and search and recovery) since entry-level certification, as documented in the candidate's individual log book/training record or equivalent documentation.
- (3) **Minimum Candidate Diving System.** The candidate shall possess (the minimum dive supervisor candidate diving system.
- (4) **Minimum Candidate Certification.** The candidate shall have completed the requirements and be certified beyond open water diver, at an advanced diver level, as required by the training organization.

4. ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTIFICATION

(1) **Medical Examination.** The candidate shall have, within the past year, a medical examination and approval for diving, without conditions or restrictions, by a licensed medical practitioner prior to engaging in water activities. In no event shall medical approval be accepted, wherein the medical practitioner signing the approval is the participating candidate.

(2) **Physical Conditioning and Watermanship Evaluation.** The candidate shall effectively demonstrate basic watermanship ability by performing to a certified instructor the watermanship evaluation required by the training organization. This watermanship evaluation shall include a 300 yard (275 metres) or greater surface swim without the use of mask, fins, or snorkel, or other swimming aids (exception permitted for eye protection, e.g. swim goggles).

(3) **Acknowledgment and Assumption of Risk.** Candidates shall be informed of the inherent risks of scuba and shall agree to sign appropriate forms acknowledging and assuming those risks prior to participating in water activities. These forms may include, but are not to be limited to: liability release; waiver and release of liability; affirmation and liability release; assumption of risk; limitation of liability; safe diving practices; standards for safety; statement of understanding; etc.

(4) **Knowledge.** The candidate shall demonstrate dive supervisor-level knowledge of scuba diving by taking and passing a written examination. Documentation of the examination shall be permanently retained by the training organization. This examination shall test dive supervisor knowledge of equipment, physics of diving, physiology of diving, medical problems related to diving, decompression theory, use of the dive tables, dive computers, diving environment, group control, accident management, dive planning, dive supervising and training standards as specified by the training organization and as outlined in 5.2 and 5.3.

(5) **Scuba Skills.** The candidate shall satisfactorily demonstrate, to a certified instructor dive supervisor-level scuba skills required by the training organization, and as outlined in Section 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6, covering pool/confined water and open water scuba skills, respectively.

(6) **CPR.** At the time of certification, the candidate shall complete and have current, training in CPR as required by the training organization. CPR may be taught during the dive supervisor course, but may not be

counted towards the 40 total training hours.

(7) First Aid. At the time of certification, the candidate shall complete and have current, training in First Aid as required by the training organization. First Aid may be taught during the dive supervisor course, but may not be counted towards the 40 total training hours.

(8) Diver Rescue. The candidate shall complete training in diver rescue skills as required by the training organization and outlined in 5.6. The candidate shall also satisfactorily demonstrate, to a certified instructor, at least one complete rescue as required by the training organization. Diver rescue may be taught during the dive supervisor course and may be counted toward the 40 total training hours.

(9) Practical Application. The candidate shall complete training in planning, management, and control of diving activities and shall satisfactorily demonstrate to a certified instructor the ability to solve in-water and out-of-the-water diver problems as required by the training organizations.

(10) Training Hours. The candidate shall complete at least forty (40) hours of specialized training/evaluation. A minimum of thirty (30) hours of this training/evaluation is to occur under the supervision of a certified instructor and include the topics outlined in Section 5.2. The remaining hours are to include, but are not limited to, the training outlined in 5.3, 5.4 and 5.6.

(11) Dive Experience. At the time of certification, the candidate shall have at least 40 verifiable open water logged dives.

5. MINIMUM COURSE CONTENT

The course shall consist of the topics and scuba skills required by the training organization and as outlined in this section.

5.1 Introductory Information. The following information should be made available to candidates before, or during the first class meeting.

- (1) Certification requirements (see section 3 and 4)
- (2) Scope of course
 - (a) Content
 - (b) Limitations of eventual qualification
- (3) Equipment requirements
- (4) Course procedures

5.2 Course Topics. The candidate shall complete training under the supervision of a certified instructor. Training is to include the topics as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section.

- (1) Preparation, planning, and control in dive management and diving activities
- (2) Pool/confined water and open water procedures
- (3) Pool/confined water and open water problem solving
- (4) Delivery of at least five (5) appropriate dive management or diving activities
- (5) The training organization's training standards
- (6) The training organizations' requirements for dive supervisor certification
- (7) Professional and ethical responsibility of a recreational dive supervisor
- (8) Dive supervisor-level knowledge of equipment, physics of diving, physiology of diving, medical problems related to diving, decompression theory, use of dive tables, dive computers and dive environment

5.3 Knowledge Development. The candidate shall demonstrate to a certified instructor planning and control in dive management, and the knowledge required for certification from the topics outlined in this section as required by the training organization.

- (1) Equipment
- (2) Physics of diving
- (3) Medical problems related to diving
- (4) Use of diving tables and dive computers
- (5) Diving environment
- (6) Dive planning
 - (a) Planning and preparation, with emphasis on the prevention of out-of-air situations and emergencies
 - (b) Emergency procedures
 - (c) Accident management/prevention
- (9) Communications, both underwater and on the surface
- (10) Diver assistance
- (11) Recommended safe diving practices
- (12) Boat diving procedures
- (13) Night diving procedures

5.4 Pool/Confined Water Scuba Skills. The candidate shall demonstrate to a certified instructor personal scuba skills as outlined in this section and as required by the training organization. In addition the candidate shall demonstrate preparation and planning (including briefing and debriefing); group control and supervision; problem recognition and solving for at least one pool/confined water diving activity from the topics outlined in this section, and as required by the training organization.

- (1) Diving system assembly and disassembly (at the water's edge)
- (2) Equipment inspection (at the water's edge)
- (3) Entries and exits
- (4) Proper weighting
- (5) Mouthpiece clearing--snorkel and regulator
- (6) Regulator retrieval
- (7) Controlled descents and ascents
- (8) Underwater swimming
- (9) Mask clearing, including removal and replacement
- (10) Underwater exercises--with and without mask
- (11) Buddy system techniques
- (12) Underwater and surface buoyancy control
- (13) Underwater problem-solving (regulator recovery/retrieval, etc.)
- (14) Surface-snorkel swimming with full diving system
- (15) Surface operation of the quick release/emergency functions of the weight system Underwater removal and replacement of the weight/ballast system (when wearing a scuba unit with an integrated weight system, may be performed in conjunction with 5.4.16)
- (16) Removal and replacement of scuba system
- (17) Out-of-air emergency alternatives
- (18) Equipment care and maintenance (at the water's edge)

5.5 Open Water Scuba Skills. The candidate shall demonstrate in open water, to a certified instructor, preparation and planning (including briefing and debriefing), group control and supervision, problem solving for at least three (3) open water diving activities, from the topics outlined in this section, one of which is to include problem recognition and solving as required by the training organization.

- (1) Diving system assembly and disassembly (at water's edge)
- (2) Equipment inspection (at water's edge)
- (3) Entries and exits
- (4) Proper weighting
- (5) Mouthpiece clearing--snorkel and regulator
- (6) Regulator/snorkel exchanges at the surface
- (7) Controlled descents and ascents
- (8) Underwater swimming
- (9) Mask-clearing
- (10) Buddy-system techniques
- (11) Underwater and surface buoyancy control
- (12) Diver assistance techniques (self/buddy/group)
- (13) Surface-snorkel swimming with full diving system
- (14) Underwater Problem-solving (regulator recovery/retrieval, etc.)
- (15) Underwater removal and replacement of the weight/ballast system (when wearing a scuba unit with an integrated weight system, may be performed in conjunction with 5.5.16)
- (16) Removal and replacement of scuba system
- (17) Out-of-air emergency alternatives
- (18) Equipment care and maintenance (at the water's edge)
- (19) Underwater navigation

5.6 Rescue. The candidate shall demonstrate in open water, to a certified instructor, at least one complete rescue as required by the training organization.

**For more information, contact:
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Appendix A

RSTC Members

IDEA

International Diving Educators Association
P.O. Box 8427
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1-904-744-5554 Fax: 1-904-743-5425
Email: info@ideascuba.com

PADI

Professional Association of Diving Instructors
30151 Tomas Street
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688-2125 USA
1-949-858-7234 Fax: 1-949-267-1266
Email: Julie.taylor.sanders@padi.com or jeff.nadler@padi.com

PDIC

Professional Diving Instructors Corporation
1015 River Street
Scranton, PA 18505 USA
1-570-342-9434 Fax: 1-570-342-6030
Email: info@pdic-intl.com

SDI

Scuba Diving International
18 Elm Street
Topsham, ME 04086 USA
1-207-729-4201 Fax: 1-207- 729-4453
Email: worldhq@tdisdi.com

SSI

Scuba Schools International
2619 Canton Court
Ft. Collins, CO 80525 USA
1-970-482-0883 Fax: 1-970-482-6157
Email: wdevore@divessi.com

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