

**EFFECTIVE**  
**1 January 2004**



**MINIMUM COURSE CONTENT**  
**FOR**  
**Recreational Scuba Instructor Trainer Certification**

As Approved By

		
		
		

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**Recreational Scuba Training Council (RSTC)**  
**Minimum Course Content**  
**for**  
**Recreational Scuba Instructor Trainer Certification**

**1. Scope and Purpose**

These standards provide minimum content requirements for a new instructor trainer (Course Directors, etc.). These requirements should not be considered standards for optimum training of an instructor trainer. Instructional programs which 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 training of a recreational scuba instructor trainer, but they do not give a detailed listing of the skills and information encompassed by each area. These items are simply listed in the standards; it is assumed that detailed course outlines, which meet these standards, would include specific techniques. For a list of the training organizations, which have published highly, detailed course outlines that meet the standards, see Appendix A.

Although the information categories outlined are given 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 does not necessarily define the sequence of a class lesson plan. Similarly, the requirements presented in the standards presented in this document do not indicate the emphasis that should be placed upon a particular subject area, or the manner in which these subjects are to be taught. Course outlines, lesson plans and other training aids prepared by training organizations responsible for recreational scuba instructor trainer training are to be used as standards. Decisions as to sequencing and emphasis are at the discretion of the training organization and are to be made within the context of environmental factors, instructor characteristics, and other relevant considerations.

Instructor trainer certification qualifies a certified instructor trainer to engage in the training of recreational scuba instructors. It is the intent of these standards that such candidates will have received sanctioned training in the fundamentals of training recreational scuba instructors. A certified instructor trainer is qualified to apply the knowledge and skills outlined in these standards to conduct educational and scuba skills training for recreational scuba instructor candidates through his/her respective training organization.

## 2. Glossary of Terms

**certification:** The bearer has completed all requirements of a recreational scuba instructor trainer certification course. This verification is issued by a training organization upon the instructor trainer evaluator's (usually a headquarters staff member of the training organization) written authorization confirming the satisfactory completion of all course requirements (as documented in the bearer's candidate log/training record).

**certified recreational scuba diving instructor trainer:** An candidate currently qualified and sanctioned by a training organization to conduct instructor-level training for that organization. (Note: The instructor trainer certification does not necessarily authorize the instructor trainer to conduct all course levels for a training organization. To teach some courses, further training and/or experience may be required, depending on the standards of candidate training organizations). In order to be sanctioned, the instructor must meet the annual renewal requirements of the training organization, as well as meet any other requirements required by that organization to maintain the instructor trainer credential, such as attending periodic updates.

**instructor trainer course:** The initial course of instructor trainer training leading to instructor trainer certification issued by a training organization. Successful completion of a course, which meets or exceeds these standards qualifies an candidate to apply the knowledge and skills outlined in these standards to conduct educational and scuba skills training for recreational scuba instructor candidates through his/her respective training organization.

**qualified instructor trainer diving system:** An individual currently qualified by the training organization to teach instructor trainer courses, and evaluate and certify instructor trainers.

**minimum instructor trainer diving system:** 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, 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.

**current:** Certification or document issued which has not reached its expiration date prior to the issuing of instructor trainer certification.

**dive rescue:** Training offered by a training organization that includes diving specific classroom and water training in the areas of self aid, self assist, buddy air, buddy assist, locating, surfacing and egress of an unresponsive diver, diver emergency planning and accident management procedures.

**instructor counseling techniques:** The methodology of instructor candidate counseling. Instructor trainer candidates learn counseling techniques used to create a positive learning environment for instructor training by guiding and providing useful, individual critique to instructor candidates in all aspects of diver education, including academics, pool/confined water and open water training.

### 3. Prerequisites

(1) **Age.** The candidate shall be at least 21 years of age; there is no upper limit.

(2) **Medical examination.** The candidate shall have a current medical examination and approval for diving by a licensed medical practitioner as required by the certifying training organization prior to engaging in scuba water skills.

(3) **Dive Experience.** An evaluation conducted by the instructor trainer/evaluator of the candidate's dive and teaching experience that includes, but is not limited to:

1. At least 2 years of teaching experience
2. 200 logged dives.
3. Broad based teaching experience (e.g. open water, specialty, advanced, leadership levels as required by the individual agency) having taught a minimum of 150 students.

(4) **Minimum Instructor Trainer Diving System.** The candidate shall possess the minimum instructor trainer diving system.

(5) **Minimum Instructor Certification.** The candidate shall have completed the requirements of and be certified, at least as a recreational scuba instructor. In addition, the candidate shall have been a current instructor for at least two years, with no verified quality assurance complaints on file in the last 12 months.

(6) **Demonstration Support.** The candidate shall have demonstrated support of his/her training organization by conducting training and imparting philosophy consistent with that organization's standards and methodology as outlined in the organization's instructor manual. In addition, the candidate shall have used his/her training organization's complete system of diver education, which includes the use of that organization's training materials.

### 4. Eligibility for Certification

In order to be certified as an instructor trainer, a candidate shall meet the following minimum eligibility requirements.

(1) **Knowledge.** The candidate shall take and pass, according to criteria established by the training organization, a written examination of his/her certifying training organization's training standards and procedures, and documentation for the examination shall be retained by the certifying training organization.

(2) **Scuba Skills.** The candidate shall satisfactorily demonstrate to a qualified instructor trainer evaluator, demonstration-quality scuba skills required by the training organization and as outlined in Section 5 of these standards. Documentation of successful scuba skills performance shall be retained by the certifying training organization.

(3) **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 instructor trainer course, but may not be counted toward the 100 total training hours.

**(4) 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 instructor trainer course, but may not be counted toward the 100 total training hours.

**(5) Diver Rescue.** The candidate shall satisfactorily demonstrate to a qualified instructor trainer evaluator, Instructor trainer-quality simulated diver rescue skills by completing at least one open water rescue as required by the training organization and as outlined in section 5.3 of these standards. Documentation of successful diver rescue performance will be retained by the certifying training organization.

**(6) Teaching Presentation.** The candidate shall demonstrate to a qualified instructor trainer evaluator Instructor Trainer-quality lesson preparation, planning and delivery of lecture, pool/confined water skills and open water skills teaching presentations as required by the training organization and including topics as outlined in Section 5 of these standards. Documentation of successful teaching presentation performance will be retained by the certifying training organization.

**(7) Teaching Presentation Evaluation.** The candidate shall demonstrate to a qualified instructor trainer evaluator the ability to evaluate instructor candidate teaching presentations as required by the training organization and including : delivery of lecture, pool/confined water skills and open water skills teaching presentations. Documentation of successful teaching presentation evaluation performance shall be retained by the certifying training organization.

**(8) General Attitude and Professionalism.** The candidate shall demonstrate an appropriate, positive attitude and appearance, and maintain a role-model image for his/her recognition training organization.

**(9) Training Hours.** The candidate shall complete at least 100 hours of specialized training/evaluation and is to include the topics outlined in Section 5, as well as Section 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.11 under the direction of a qualified instructor trainer and/or evaluator.

**(10) Training Records.** Appropriate Instructor Trainer course records are to be retained by the training organization.

**(11) The candidate shall have staffed at least one instructor training course for his/her training organization.**

## **5. Minimum Course Content**

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

- (1) Certification Requirements (see section 3 and 4)
- (2) Scope of course
  - A. Content
  - B. Limitations of eventual qualifications
- (3) Equipment requirements

- (4) Course Procedures
- (5) Course materials requirement

**5.2 Course Topics, Exercises and Practicums.** The candidate shall complete training under the supervision of a qualified instructor trainer/evaluator. Training is to include the topics, exercises and course practicums as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section.

- (1) Lesson preparation, planning, and delivery.
- (2) Instructor Trainer-quality scuba skills as required by the training organization and as outlined in Section 5.5
- (3) Delivered at least two Instructor Trainer-quality lecture teaching presentations, two pool/confined water skills teaching presentations and two open water skills teaching presentation taken from the certifying training organization's scuba training program as required by the training organization and selected by the instructor trainer/evaluator.
- (4) Deliver lecture-teaching presentations taken from the certifying training organization's instructor training course.
- (5) Evaluate lecture teaching presentations, pool/confined water skills teaching presentations and open water skills teaching presentations taken from the certifying training organization's scuba training program as given by other instructor trainer candidates or instructor candidates.
- (6) Discussion of the training organization's requirements for diver certification.
- (7) Review and discussion of the training standards and procedure of the training organization .
- (8) Discussion of the role of the instructor trainer, including professionalism and ethical responsibility.
- (9) Indication of knowledge as outlined in 4.1
- (10) Practice instructor counseling techniques

**5.3 Diver Rescue.** The candidate shall demonstrate to a qualified instructor trainer evaluator Instructor Trainer-quality performance of diver rescue skills as required by the training organization and including open water rescue of a victim simulating unconsciousness/non-breathing at the surface.

**5.4 Lecture Presentations.** The candidate shall demonstrate to a qualified instructor trainer evaluator Instructor Trainer-quality lesson preparation, planning and delivery of at least two lecture teaching presentations, evaluate at least two lecture teaching presentations, and practice instructor counseling techniques for these presentations taken from course topics as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section and selected by the instructor trainer/evaluator.

- (1) Equipment
- (2) Physics of Diving
- (3) Medical problems related to diving
- (4) Use of diving tables, decompression theory, dive computers
- (5) Dive 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
- (7) Communications, both underwater and on the surface
- (8) Diver assistance (self/buddy)
- (9) Recommended safe diving practices
- (10) Boat diving procedures

In addition, the candidate shall demonstrate to a qualified instructor trainer evaluator lesson preparation, planning and delivery of at least three lecture teaching presentations from instructor training course topics as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section.

- (1) Instructor-level continuing education
- (2) Diving industry overview
- (3) Entry-level course overview
- (4) Continuing education courses overview
- (5) Dive tables, decompression theory, and dive computers
- (6) Academic lessons planning
- (7) Pool/confined water skills teaching workshop
- (8) Open water skills teaching workshop
- (9) Standards and procedures, quality assurance

**5.5 Pool/Confined Water Scuba Skills.** The candidate shall demonstrate to a qualified instructor trainer evaluator Instructor Trainer-quality personal diving skills as outlined in this section, in addition to Instructor Trainer quality lesson preparation, planning and delivery (including briefing and debriefing), group control and supervision and problem solving for at least two pool/confined water skills teaching presentations from the course topics as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section. Candidates shall also evaluate at least two teaching presentations on topics listed below and practice instructor-counseling techniques for these presentations.

- (1) Diving system assembly and disassembly
- (2) Equipment inspection
- (3) Entries and exits
- (4) Proper weighting
- (5) Mouthpiece clearing (snorkel and regulator)
- (6) Regulator retrieval
- (7) Regulator/snorkel exchanges at the surface
- (8) Controlled descents and ascents
- (9) Underwater swimming
- (10) Buoyancy control exercises
- (11) Buddy system techniques
- (12) Underwater problem solving
- (13) Surface snorkel swimming with full diving system
- (14) Weight/ballast system removal and replacement
- (15) Scuba system removal and replacement
- (16) Out of air emergency exercises



**5.6 Open Water Training.** The candidate, wearing an instructor trainer diving system, shall demonstrate to a qualified instructor trainer evaluator in the open water, Instructor Trainer-quality lesson preparation, planning and delivery (including briefing and debriefing), group control and supervision, and problem solving for at least two open water skills teaching presentations as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section. The candidate shall also evaluate at least two presentations from topics outlined in this section and practice instructor counseling techniques for these presentations.

- (1) Diving system assembly and disassembly
- (2) Equipment inspection
- (3) Entries and exits
- (4) Proper weighting
- (5) Mouthpiece clearing (snorkel and regulator)
- (6) Regulator retrieval
- (7) Regulator/snorkel exchanges at the surface
- (8) Controlled descents and ascents
- (9) Underwater swimming
- (10) Mask clearing
- (11) Buddy system techniques
- (12) Buoyancy control exercises
- (13) Diver assistance techniques
- (14) Surface snorkel swimming
- (15) Weight/ballast system removal and replacement
- (16) Scuba system removal and replacement
- (17) Out of air emergency exercises
- (18) Equipment care and maintenance

**For more information, contact:  
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# Appendix A

## RSTC Members

### IDEA

International Diving Educators Association  
P.O. Box 8427  
Jacksonville, FL 32239 USA  
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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