



Diving Safety Lines

Fall Edition

2008

Diving Safety Lines is a semi-annual release by the Afloat Safety Directorate of the Naval Safety Center. The information contained herein is a summary of research from selected reports of diving hazards to assist you in your mishap prevention program. *Diving Safety Lines* is intended to give advance coverage of safety-related information while reducing individual reading time. This bulletin does not, in itself, constitute authority but will cite authoritative references when available. It is recommended that this bulletin be made available to all hands.

From The Diving Safety Division Head

LT S. Wilson

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Hello, and welcome to the fall 2008 edition of the Diving Safety Lines. There have been many changes over the summer. The new U.S. Navy Diving Manual is the biggest. Hopefully every diver has been reviewing it and learning how to use the new dive tables.

1. Currently, we are reviewing the safety survey check sheets to reflect the changes brought about by REV 6. If you have a survey coming up, ensure you have printed the most recent copy from the Naval Safety Center website. We will remove obsolete check sheets when the updated versions are posted.

2. Another big change has been the implementation of the new Dive/Jump Reporting System. Just to give you an idea of the scale of DJRS, all services including the Coast Guard are currently reporting using the system. This is a huge change from the problematic DRS. Even though the system is better, it is not without its flaws. There have been a few bumps along the way, but it appears units are making a fairly smooth transition to the new program. We, here at the Naval Safety Center, are fielding any questions you have about the system, as we will for a while to come. Currently, we are working on videos to help further explain the capabilities of the system. When they are complete, they will be available on our website. In the meantime, feel free to use the feedback or trouble options available through WESS. Already we are on Version 2.5.1. It includes the Seal Delivery Vehicle (SDV)/ Dry Dock shelter (DDS) module. This new module is a dive log specific to the SDV community. It cannot be used for reporting standard dives (surface supply, scuba, MK-16, etc.). The saturation module has not been completed and will not be online for several months. We ask that the commands this effects hold onto their smooth logs until the module is available. Hopefully you are finding that this system is much more user friendly than the old and there is plenty of room for growth and improvement with your feedback. We appreciate all input. Please contact us if you have any questions regarding this.

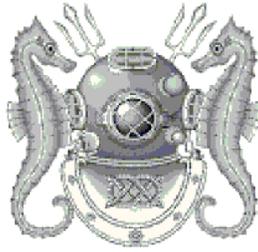
DRS V. 5.1.5-

A very important note DRS V. 5.1.5 is no longer an acceptable reporting medium for dives. We will not accept any reports from DRS. If you have dives you have not submitted, you must enter them into DJRS if you want them counted for your command and divers.

V/R,

LT Wilson

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DJRS Q & A

LT S. Wilson

Email: safe-divesalvage@navy.mil

In this edition of the Diving Safety Lines, we will be covering Frequently Asked Questions and tips that should help in the use of the reporting system until the videos are available.

DIVE/JUMP REPORTING SYSTEM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

The first thing to remember with DJRS is to **“Ask first, then Act”**. We are fielding many calls in which the user made a quick and irreversible decision. Remember, this is the new DOD diving log. The information you send should be correct to the best of your knowledge. By approving, you are putting your name to the log. It is now an official document. If you have a question about anything in the system, give us a call and we will do our best to answer your question or lead you in the right direction.

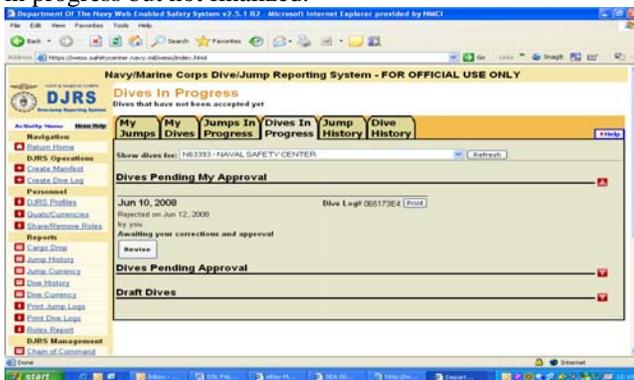
Now for those problematic areas:

- Does every diver/jumper need a WESS account?
 - No! Only dive recorders, diving supervisors, master divers and diving officers need a WESS account. This may change in the future.
- How do I associate a WESS account with a DJRS profile?
 - First let me explain the difference. A WESS account is what you apply for to access Mishap/Hazard and DJRS. It allows you into the system. A DJRS profile is required for every diver.
 - To associate a WESS username to a DJRS profile, you have 2 opportunities. When first creating a DJRS profile, you are asked “Does person have a WESS account?” Hit yes and continue, then enter the Diver info. If a person already has a DJRS profile that needs to be associated, go to the associated WESS account and hit associate. Follow the directions and then hit save at the bottom of the profile.
- Can I delete a dive I have already routed up my chain? (i.e., a dive found in the Dive in Progress tab)
 - You cannot delete a routed dive, but you can change the information. If the dive was an invalid dive, take another smooth log and enter it. If the dive has been finalized up to the Naval Safety Center, send an e-mail to safe-divesalvage@navy.mil with the dive ID number. We will attempt to delete the dive at a later date.
- How do I remove a duplicate profile?
 - A duplicate diver can not be removed or deleted at this time. If you have already done this, deactivate the diver in their profile and hit save. Ensure two things: 1. Do not dive the duplicate and 2. Let us know that there is a duplicate in the system.
- Can I create a profile for someone not in my command?
 - Yes! There are many divers out there that are not at diving commands but need to accomplish re-qual dives. You need to search the system to make sure they do not already have a profile. Once that has been determined, create a DJRS profile under your UIC and hit save. Splash the diver, then when they leave or transfer from their command, go into their profile, hit PCS and then save. This will allow their next command to pick them up under the new command UIC.
- A Diver reported on board that already has a DJRS profile. How do I move him to my command?
 - You can do two things and in this order: 1. Call the command and tell them to PCS the diver. If you get no response, you can 2. Call the Safety Center and we will PCS them. Remember that you need to call the losing command first. It may take a few days going through NSC, as we are often on travel.

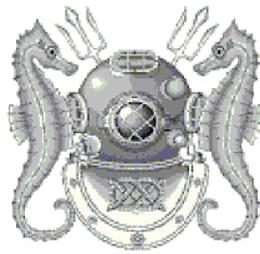
- When I log into WESS, I get a “No profile is associated with this account?” What do I do?
 - Go to the senior diver in your locker and give them your info to create your profile. If you are the first individual from your command requesting, you need to contact the Safety Center. Do not come to us first if your command has already been established. We are working with many other commands to get them started.
- Why can I not pull up reports?
 - Currently, if you have the permissions to see the report options on the left hand side of the page you know that they are not turned on. This option should become available in the next two months. This feature will give you the ability to see the currency of all the divers at your command. You can print up a dive log for all your divers and you can search different dive criteria (e.g. , how many MK-16 dives have we done in the last six months. If you do not see the options to view the reports, you do not have the permission to see them.
- When entering a chamber dive, the system asks for a standby diver but there wasn't one. What do I do?
 - In this case, use your chamber driver as standby. The only time standby plays a role in a dive is if they are splashed. So as long as your driver does not enter the pressurized chamber, you are ok for reporting this way.
- How do I change my password if I don't remember my old one?
 - On the login in page, there is a feature that says “Reset/Forgot Password”. Follow the instructions and when you are done, you should have a new password e-mailed to you within minutes.



- Can I log in without a username and password?
 - For all of those sick of passwords that expire every 90 days, there is a wonderful option for logging in called PKI Login. The first time you hit this tab, you will have to register your certificates. This will take a few minutes, but it is worth it in the long run. Once you have completed the registration, all you will have to do to login in the future is hit the PKI Login tab and then enter your CAC code. It will take about a half minute longer to log in but the CAC code never has to change. Just an option.
- How do I know what dives are already in the system or in progress?
 - You can look under the Dive History Tab to see what dives have been finalized. If the dive is not there you can look under the Dives in Progress tab. On the right next to each label there is a red and white pyramid. Hit the pyramid and it will open up Dives Pending Approval and Draft Dives. There you will find the remaining dives in progress but not finalized.



○



I have an old smooth log that was not sent in with the DRS system? The diver in the log is not longer in the Navy? Do I need to create a profile for him?

- Yes, you need to create a profile for that diver. We are responsible to recording all dives that take place under DOD and hold onto them for a minimum 40 years. This is in place so that if a diver has a disability that is related to a dive, he can get access to that dive. By not reporting that diver, you are taking away their ability to make claims and you are also submitting a false report.
- My WESS username is associated to my profile but the systems still says there is no profile associated.
 - Have your local DJRS administrator open your profile. Verify the username is correct. If it is correct, hit the change button, clear the username, and then re-enter the username. Sometimes the system glitches and it does not associate correctly. After you have successfully re-entered and saved the username, have the user log on and verify it works.

I hope this has answered the majority of your questions. If you have any more, please contact us right away. Remember **“Ask before you Act”**

Master Diver's Corner

Commitment to Diving Community

NDCM (DSW/SW/MDV) Mallet

Email: russell.mallet@navy.mil

Well it is that time again to let all who read our Diving Safety Lines in on some words of wisdom or I guess concerns from what we are seeing through out the diving commands. We will cover the majority of that with top ten hits in the spring edition. I think you will find by apparent redundancy year after of same hits. Commands are not taking it to note. I do think what stands out is a (gross) deficiency in proper maintenance procedures; ops not completed or signed and chamber logs. Once again I reiterate the importance of Chief Petty Officer's and Master Divers needing to be engaged on the deck plates with their sailors. There is no excuse for our junior Sailors to not know how to perform the required skills to be a diver and maintain the required logs and equipment. It is the responsibility and duty those of us who are supposed to be subject matter experts to teach our juniors these skill sets. I look at dive school being a benefit for sailors getting indoctrinated into our rate. I am the one expected to train individuals at their different levels, just as we are expected to mentor E-3 to E-6 Petty Officers.

I have noticed in my travels, we still have people wearing Dive pins they shouldn't be wearing. I want to caution those commands who are diving people who no longer carry a particular NEC. For example, if an individual no longer has the NEC to dive surface supplied, commands are putting themselves on report diving those individuals. Now no one may raise the flag, but I guarantee if a mishap arises Even if not pertaining to that individual you will be explaining your actions on the carpet.

On a lighter note, some or most will be glad to read that this will be my last input into Diving Safety Lines. Yes I will retire in April 09. My relief is a better man than I, NDCM (MDV) Robarts will arrive around March 09. I am honored to have such a Master Diver as he, as my relief.

Some of you out in the Pacific already know, just recently two weary travelers arrived at your commands door step. Yes, I had a cable tow on MDV Winter for the past 4 weeks assisting me on safety surveys. NDCM Winter, thank you for your professionalism and companionship through out our surveys. I think those commands that saw our Enlisted Community Manager benefited two fold. Thanks again Mike, best of luck at your next duty station.

To all the people doing good business out there, keep up the good work. To all my juniors who are out there doing the business right and are smarter than I, I applaud you. To all the officers I have worked for, I appreciate your tolerance in me and I have the upmost respect for you. Stay Safe!

Mallet, Russell NDCM (MDV/DSW/SW)



Scheduling your Diving Safety Survey

CWO3 Annon

E-Mail: jeff.annon@navy.mil

We seem to have a lot of problems contacting command's to schedule their diving safety surveys, so I would like to take this time to explain a few things that might help us all out in the long run.

Communication, Communication, Communication! I have a data base here at the office, but it is of no use to me if the phone numbers and POC E-mail addresses are outdated. If you are the new LCPO, MDV or warrant officer in a locker, drop us a line and tell us how you are doing! We are always glad to hear from commands and get updated information into our system. This also applies to all the submarine squadron representatives out there that assist us in scheduling our submariner brothers on the various boats in the fleet.

When is a good time to schedule your DSS? Well....I would say that the very best time is in preparation for the DORA. The DSS and DORA should always occur on opposite years and not be stacked on top of each other. It is pointless to be given a DORA and then three weeks later get a DSS. Additionally, we also conduct assist visits on commands that may need them in preparation for various other readiness inspections. An example would be, possibly after a long overhaul or prior to sea trials if they still fall within the two year diving safety survey requirement, but prior to a DORA. One other example would be, if a particular command did not fair too well during a prior inspection. This service can assist in getting a snap shot for the commanding officer as to where they stand as far as readiness. We are here to help those who are willing to help themselves!

Every year around August I send a message with the Naval Safety Center's schedule for the upcoming fiscal year. At this point, it is up to the commands and their ISIC to thoroughly review this schedule and begin to clear some time during the month they are due. Once the command has an idea of a suitable week during the month they are scheduled, they need to contact us so we can begin to firm up the dates. This is very critical for scheduling travel and so forth for the inspectors that will need to travel to your location. If you are going to be deployed during your next survey date, then please contact us and we will work around it. In some cases we could come earlier to complete the survey prior to the deployment. Here is another concept, you folks that are in highly concentrated areas such as San Diego, Hawaii, Groton, and so forth can pick up the phone and call the other lockers in your area to discuss schedules that can best support a team coming to your area. We group several commands together in these areas for the purpose of maximizing our coverage. Help us out from time to time and be proactive in getting your survey scheduled.

As stated above we try to schedule our surveys by geographical location so we can get the most bang for our buck. If we start missing two or three commands in these concentrated areas, then it begins to really mess with the schedule. We try at all costs complete these surveys and we need everyone's help in doing so. We can only afford to travel across the country and to the other side of the world once or twice a year. If we miss you the first time by, then we will make every effort to wrap you up in the next trip to your area.

Here is some rumor control. Regardless, of having a DORA, all diving commands will receive a Diving Safety Survey ever 24 months as stated in OPNAVINST 3150.27B and the COMUSFLTFORCOMINST 3501.1. It is up to your command or ISIC to see to it these two inspections do not overlap!

V/R,
CWO3 ANNON



CWO3 JEFF ANNON

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THE FOLLOWING LIST IDENTIFIES THE MOST REPORTED DISCREPANCY FOUND DURING DIVING SAFETY SURVEYS TO DATE. THE % INDICATES HOW MANY COMMANDS RECEIVED THESE HITS TO DATE.

ADMIN

IS THE COMMAND USING THE DIVE REPORTING SYSTEM (DRS) AND ARE THEY SUBMITTING THE INFORMATION TO THE NAVAL SAFETY CENTER AT LEAST SEMI-ANNUALLY? **20.9 %**

AIR SYSTEMS AND STOWAGE

HAVE APPLICABLE FILTER HOUSINGS BEEN TESTED AND TAGGED AS REQUIRED? **42.2 %**

WEIGHT HANDLING

DO THE WEIGHT HANDLING EQUIPMENT/POINTS HAVE TEST DATA PLATES, AND ARE ALL TESTS CURRENT? **25 %**

DIVE BOAT

ARE SHORE POWER CABLES IN SATISFACTORY CONDITION AND HAS ALL APPLICABLE MAINTENANCE BEEN PERFORMED IAW PMS? **12.8 %**

EXO-26

DOES A SUPERVISOR PRE-DIVE INSPECTION CHECK OFF SHEET EXIST FOR THE EXO-26? **25 %**

MK-16

ARE PERSONNEL QUALIFIED TO WORK ON O2 SYSTEMS AND DO THEY REQUALIFY EVERY 3 YEARS? **25 %**

MK-20

ARE BOTH THE TEST KIT AND REPAIR TOOLS AVAILABLE? **15.1 %**

MK-21

ARE PREMISSION, PREDIVE, POSTDIVE, POSTMISSION AND DIVING SUPERVISOR'S CHECKLISTS BEING USED? **14.5 %**

MK-25

ARE REENTRY CONTROL (REC) SHEETS COMPLETED FOR ENTRY INTO THE OXYGEN SUBSYSTEMS? **7.9 %**

RECOMPRESSION CHAMBER

HAS EXHAUST VALVE BEEN CALIBRATED AND VENTILATION BILL ESTABLISHED FOR VENTILATION REQUIREMENTS IN EVENT OF O2/CO2 MONITOR FAILURE? **33.3 %**

SCUBA

IS THE FIRST STAGE OF THE SINGLE HOSE REGULATOR SET AT THE MANUFACTURER'S PSI SETTING OR IS IT PART OF PRE-DIVE CHECKLIST? **14.1 %**

UNDERWATER TOOLS

ARE QUICK-DISCONNECT FITTINGS CAPPED OR CONNECTED TOGETHER TO PREVENT CONTAMINATION OF HOSE? **22.2 %**

UNDERWATER WELDING

IS THE OXYGEN ARC CUTTING TORCH THE APPROVED TYPE? **4.5 %**

SUBMARINE DIVING:

ADMIN

IS THE COMMAND USING THE DIVE REPORTING SYSTEM (DRS) AND ARE THEY SUBMITTING THE INFORMATION AT LEAST SEMI-ANNUALLY? **69 %**

TRAINING

HAS DIVER PQS BEEN IMPLEMENTED FROM APPLICABLE SECTIONS OF THE DIVING SALVAGE WARFARE SPECIALIST (DSWS) PQS PROGRAM, AND HAS IT BEEN TAILORED TO MEET THE COMMAND'S MISSION? **16 %**

MARINE DIVING:

ADMIN

DOES EACH DIVER HAVE A CURRENT DIVING PHYSICAL APPROVED BY A QUALIFIED DIVING MEDICAL OFFICER? IS THE PHYSICAL CURRENT AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MANUAL OF MEDICAL DEPARTMENT P-117 CHAPTER 15 ARTICLE 66. **22.2 %**

TRAINING

ARE UNIT DIVERS CPR QUALIFIED, AND ARE QUALIFICATIONS IN TRAINING RECORDS? **16.7 %**



Preparing for your Diving Safety Survey

CWO3 JEFF ANNON

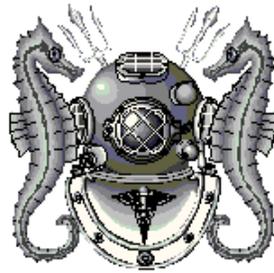
E-mail: jeff.annon@navy.mil

The diving safety survey should not be perceived as just one more of those inspections that interrupts the daily routine of your command. The diving safety survey is to give your command leaders a true assessment of how safe and efficiently its dive teams are while conducting diving operations. It is an important event and some time and effort should be given to prepare for it. It is very apparent to those of us who travel around conducting Diving Safety Surveys and DORA 's, who has prepared and who has not. If your dive locker is "doing the business" then it should be a fairly simple inspection to prepare for. It is also an awesome tool to get junior personnel involved, which, in turn provides a sense of ownership.

Start by downloading the latest safety check sheets from the Naval Safety Center Web page and reviewing your programs. I recommend starting this a few months in advance so you have plenty of time to correct any deficiencies found during your initial review. Pay particular attention to outdated instructions, tech manuals and so forth. Clean out your binders of old useless paperwork and make it look professional. A neat and organized command diving binder with all the up to date instructions is a step in the right direction. This at least gives the inspectors the feeling that some time and effort on your part has been made in order to improve your locker. When inspectors are forced to search for things, it just leads to a longer day for all involved. Organize your binders of information in the order of the checklist. After all, this is basically an open book test for everyone involved, so make it flow nice and easy for them.

Conduct a thorough review of maintenance and REC logs and ensure they have been reviewed and signed. Put your hands on the gear and conduct spot checks. More times than not, someone who looks at this gear every day will overlook something as simple as a torn mouthpiece or a crimped hose. Get your divers involved in looking over each others programs and have them provide their hit lists to the senior divers for review and then track the corrective actions as they begin to correct their deficiencies. This routine in time will become the norm of everyday business. On the job we always state that everyone on the side is a safety observer and if you see anything unsafe, sound off. That is from the most junior guy to the senior man on station, so why should it be any different during routine day-to-day functions of the dive locker.

My last input is get involved! We all have a responsibility to each other and to our families to bring everyone home safe at the end of the day. Take the extra minute at the end of the work day to discuss lessons learned with the troops. Discuss maintenance and REC procedures that involve the LSS we all rely on to conduct our jobs safely. You never know what you might say to someone someday that may just save a life or prevent a serious mishap. Preparation is everything and is in keeping with the old saying, ("Plan the dive and dive the plan"). HooYah Deep Sea!



New DMT/IDC on Board

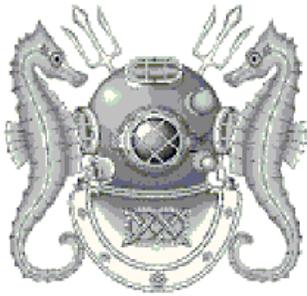
HMC (DSW/EXW/FMF) Ron Nading

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I am HMC (DSW/EXW/FMF) Ron Nading. I have just transferred here to the Naval Safety Center from Mobile Diving Salvage Unit One. I have relieved HMCS Brad Stewart in the Diving Division. As Navy divers, we all know how important it is to keep up on training, and the Diving Safety Lines is an essential part of that. I would like to also encourage you all to check out the Naval Safety Center's website. There is a vast amount of information that could be used for reference or training opportunities. For the DMT's, update your primary and secondary kit inventories IAW the new REV 6, make sure all drugs and medical gear is within date and supplies are not contaminated by water. I have noticed in a couple inspections that zippers and batteries in the Otoscope / Laryngoscope are corroded by sea water. Take care of your gear and it will take of you. I am available at ron.nading@navy.mil. I would also like to welcome your inputs for how we can make our website more efficient. I have updated many of our diving instructions so it may serve as a one stop shop. Also, I just wanted to add as a reminder that a current PHA is required along with a current diving physical to be PQ for diving duty. I look forward to seeing you in my travels around the fleet and serving all of you in the community with your diving/medical needs and requests.

V/R,
HMC NADING





Traffic Safety

Revised Navy Traffic Safety Program

We here at the Naval Safety Center are concerned about more than just diving safety out in the fleet. Our job is to be able to answer all questions the diving community has on safety. Lately we have been asked a lot of questions about traffic safety with focus on the new motorcycle safety program.

As we all know traffic safety affects mission readiness. The loss of a trained and ready diver to a motorcycle or four-wheeled vehicle crash affects more than just the family and friends of the victim – it impacts our ability to complete the mission during a time of war.

The revision of the Navy Traffic Safety Program contains changes geared toward reducing the number of crashes our Sailors and Navy civilians are having on motorcycles and in four-wheeled vehicles. The instruction applies to all military personnel at all times and on-duty Navy civilians on or off base. The complete revision is contained in OPNAV Instruction 5211.12H Change-1, released June 25, 2008.

While the four-wheel personal motor vehicle (PMV) mishap rate is trending down slightly, the motorcycle mishap rate is on the rise. With the drastic increase in gas prices, the number of Divers riding motorcycles is not likely to decrease anytime soon. The new revision addresses the reality that motorcycles are here to stay, while also acknowledging the increased risk involved with riding these machines. Specifically:

- All Sailors, whether they ride on or off base, and all DON civilians, who ride motorcycles on base, must take the Basic Rider Course (BRC).
- Those who ride sport bikes are also required to take the new Military Sport Bike Rider Course (MSRC). So far this fiscal year, 29 out of 33 Navy motorcycle fatalities have occurred on sport bikes. In the Marine Corps, 22 of 25 motorcycle fatalities were sport bike riders.
- Refresher training is required for all Sailors and DON civilians every three years. This requirement can be fulfilled by taking an Experienced Rider Course or retaking the BRC or MSRC. A one-year waiver is being granted for this requirement so we can focus our training efforts on the inexperienced riders (BRC) and Sport Bike Riders (MSRC).
- Commanding officers are required to identify all motorcyclists within their commands and ensure they get trained. Training should occur during duty hours and Sailors should not be required to take leave. Training must be documented in the Sailors' training record. Also, COs should identify Sailors who pose the greatest risk and provide additional training opportunities.

Commanding officers shall also educate their Sailors about the importance of driving and riding sober. This will be achieved through a close working relationship with local authorities dedicated to preventing impaired driving.

I hope this clears up some of the questions you might have about the revision of the Navy Traffic Safety Program. Also remember because PMV mishaps can have such a detrimental effect on readiness, violation of the provisions in the revision may be punishable under the UCMJ.

Remember your friends here at the Naval Safety Center are here to help answer all your questions on safety. For assistance from the Naval Safety Center do not hesitate to contact us at E- Mail: SAFE-Divesalvage@navy.mil



From The Fleet

A Submariner's Concern for Collateral-Duty Diving

LT Gorecke

On August 17, 2006, the diving community was saddened by the loss of LT Jessica Hill and BM2 Steven Duque, two divers attached to the U. S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy (WAGB 20). While conducting cold-water familiarization dives during “ice liberty” approximately 490 nautical miles north of Barrow, Alaska, these divers descended uncontrollably to depths in excess of 180 feet. Regardless of military branch or platform, all divers know what it’s like to be in the dark, cold, and wet, and, we mourn the loss of these members of our community.

The Coast Guard investigation report on the incident was released on January 10th, 2007. In the report, several precursors were cited which together led to this tragic accident. These deficiencies included a lack of procedural compliance, insufficient training, insufficient manning, and inadequacies in equipment used. The number of deficiencies found in the CGC HEALY’s diving program has motivated the Coast Guard to fully readdress their diving programs, seeking a new and safer approach to diving.

Similar to the Coast Guard, the U.S. Navy SSN and SSGN submarines also maintain collateral-duty dive lockers. Primarily used for force protection security swims prior to leaving foreign ports, these small groups of Navy scuba divers also gain experience performing hull-inspections, sonar sensor inspections, and towed array handling evolutions. Submarine scuba divers also provide topside safety swimmers while entering and exiting port.

I believe that the deficiencies found on the CGC Healy are not unique to that vessel, or to the Coast Guard. It would be unwise to assume that it is just “their problem,” or that deficiencies like these are not present elsewhere. To some extent deficiencies in manning, training, and equipment can be found in all collateral-duty dive lockers.

MANNING

Scuba diver manning has been difficult for submarines for several years. While some boats benefit from having five or six divers onboard, others struggle to have just one or two. Without the required four divers to safely conduct a scuba dive, submarines are forced to “borrow” divers from other boats, both for deployments and diving inspections. While borrowing divers from other boats may temporarily meet the requirements of the U. S. Navy Diving Manual, it does little to foster unity or cohesion in the dive team, let alone maintain a viable continuing training program. Since all submarine scuba divers are collateral-duty divers, it is a challenge for the scuba diving officer to find an athletic submariner who is sufficiently qualified in rate-specific knowledge, qualified in submarines, with sufficient time left on board and the command’s approval to be “worthy” of dive school. Once this mythical diver candidate is identified from the 130 crewmembers, the time must be set aside to prepare this candidate properly. Over the past few years, one boat has sent seventeen candidates to different scuba courses in Panama City, only to have seventeen submariners return not qualified. Unlike Submarine Base New London,

which has its own scuba preparatory course, there are no other off-hull programs to set scuba diver candidates up for success in Panama City. It has become apparent that as a force, our in-hull methods of training scuba diver candidates are inadequate.

TRAINING

Continuing training for submarine scuba divers is another challenge. If the divers onboard are a junior officer, a nuclear-trained mechanic, a torpedoman, a sonar technician, and a culinary specialist, it's nearly impossible to find a single time when all of these divisions will support losing their token diver. Additionally, if the person giving the training is the junior officer, he has received the same initial six-week scuba training as the other divers. While simultaneously leading one or more divisions, working on submarine qualifications, standing duty, standing watch, getting underway, and conducting deployment missions, scuba diver continuing training often takes a back seat. Even proficiency dives can be difficult, as the entire ship's maintenance schedule often revolves around hanging and clearing diver's tags as quickly as possible. Every training opportunity, whether it is proficiency dives on another submarine, or knowledge-based training given by another dive-locker or the Naval Safety Center, must be taken advantage of. Unfortunately a large amount of training is occurring at the bi-annual DORA and Naval Safety Center Inspections, instead of the event that it is supposed to represent.

SUPPLY

Finally, deficiencies in the methods we use to supply our submarine scuba diving lockers make equipping our divers another challenge. While the money used to provide submarine repair parts is relatively large, the funds allotted for scuba diving gear is nearly non-existent. These funds, which are acquired through the open-purchase system, are very minimal for submarines, and are often preferentially designated for other needs. An open purchase chit routed to provide wetsuits for a new diver might sit with the onboard supply department for several months, and then with the submarine's squadron supply department for several more months, awaiting additional operating target augment request (OPTAR) money. Many pieces of required equipment must wait until the end of the fiscal year, when additional funds are available. If a diver graduates dive school in November, but is unable to receive wetsuits until the end of the fiscal year in October, proficiency dives in colder climates become a much larger obstacle to overcome.

While the Coast Guard has taken positive action to counteract the deficiencies found on the CGC Healy, I fear that the Navy is not learning from other's lessons learned. I encourage both the Navy diving and the submarine communities to reevaluate how we support our submarine scuba diving lockers. We owe it to the safety of our collateral-duty divers to proactively set them up for success, and not reactively assess another diving mishap. While a few submarine squadrons (Squadron 2 for example) have squadron diver billets, these jobs are designed to support Special Warfare and DDS divers, not submarine scuba divers. Additional support at the squadron level would be a major benefit for submarine scuba diving officers as they overcome the challenges to maintain their dive lockers.

LT Gorecke served as a junior officer and scuba diving officer on both the USS Dallas (SSN 700), and the USS Toledo (SSN 769). He is currently stationed in Naples, Italy, working for Command Sixth Fleet.



Visual Inspections

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I would like to take a moment to talk about the importance of conducting a thorough visual inspection. In the time I have been here at the Naval Safety Center, I have had the opportunity to visit a lot of commands and look at an extremely large amount of equipment. In the vast majority of the equipment we have seen, the overall appearance is, as you would expect of consummate professionals (ready for issue). However, there have been isolated cases where we show up to do a survey and the gear looks as if it has just been used to plow the back 40 so to speak. I am not talking about gear being used on a current job or that has returned from deployment in the last 72 hours, but equipment that in our opinion, appears as though it has been forgotten about. Remember that every piece of equipment is related to divers life support (DLSS) is some fashion and that the ability of that equipment to function properly could be the difference in you or a member of your team getting back safely. One of the first steps in any evolution is to inspect the gear prior to use. Below are some pictures sent to me by Mr. John Boeckman (CWO RET) of helmet and dress at NDSTC. These picture help to illustrate why there will always be a need for that hard visual look. The personnel that caught this discrepancy in their equipment prior to diving may have just avoided a situation that no diver should ever want to experience... a **MISHAP**. So don't shortcut you visual inspections they are a crucial step in mission success. Hoo-Yah and stay Safe!!!





Hunters Education and Safety

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Well I started this article last fall and since there was such a good response I thought we would add this topic again for fall of 2008. I stated previously in the fall 2007 safety lines there are a large number of personnel in our community that look forward to or crave if you will the coming of fall. The ones I am speaking of our those of us that long for some time in the outdoors hunting, fishing, and riding ATV's. You know the ones that have ten camouflage hats and are always talking about the one that got away last season or the one they saw over the weekend. I am a self confessed hunting fanatic and long for this time of year as many of you do. Along with this enthusiasm it's important to remember that these activities just like any other off duty recreational hobby has inherent risks. Therefore below I have listed some helpful hints that you can hopefully use to ensure all our personnel return home safe this season.

Helpful Hints:

1. Do a good visual on the equipment you will be using this season
2. Try to get some quality range time in
3. If it has been a while since your last Hunter's Safety course take one (They're Free) and regulations change so why not get a refresher and some up to date information.
4. Before you head out let someone know your location
5. Carry a cell phone. Most people have one glued to their ear all day anyway so keep it in your pocket turned off to save the battery in case you need need.
6. Many areas offer ATV rider safety courses and they are always a great source of information.
7. If possible try to take a buddy along just in case.
8. Know what's behind your target. You are most likely not the only in the woods that day.
9. Make sure of what you're shooting at. Some people like to crawl through the woods during hunting season without thinking about the risk and shadows can be deceiving.
10. Be sure of your shot!!! Once you let that arrow go or pull that trigger there is no getting it back.

I hope this little bit of information helps or at least cleans o

A good source of information on hunting safety can be fou

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