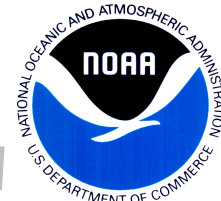




TOPSIDE



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The NDP Newsletter for NOAA Diving Supervisors and Divers

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TRAINING SCHEDULE

The **April/May 2002 Working Diver and Divemaster** courses are full and training requests are no longer being accepted. Diver candidates enrolled in the Working Diver course should immediately submit (fax preferred) a NDC training request and a SEP Measurement form to NDC. Completed diving physicals should be submitted to NDC by no later than April 01, 2002 (no foolin'...!). All required forms are available on the NDC web site or by request.

Training requests are being accepted for the **September 2002 Working Diver and Divemaster** courses. Please contact Laurie Barber if you have any questions about diving class requirements or enrollment procedures.

A Diver Refresher course for working divers and scientific diver candidates is tentatively scheduled for August 2002. Training dates will be determined by the NDC schedule as well as prospective student's schedules. Please contact LT Bill Cobb for more information about the refresher course. [K]

The following classes are scheduled for 2002:

Mar 26 - 29	Diver Refresher	Seattle, WA
Apr 29 - May 17	Working Diver	Seattle, WA
May 13 - 17	Divemaster	Seattle, WA
Aug - TBD	Diver Refresher	Seattle, WA
Sep 09 - 27	Working Diver	Seattle, WA
Sep 23 - 27	Divemaster	Seattle, WA

2003:

Jan 13 - 31	Working Diver	Key West, FL
Jan 27 - 31	Divemaster	Key West, FL

COMPUTER QUESTIONNAIRE

Field Testers - A reminder to please fill out and submit the Dive Computer Questionnaire e-mailed to you by Dave Dinsmore on Feb 27, 2002. This questionnaire is due to NDC on or about April 01, 2002. The NOAA Diving Safety Board will use these questionnaires in order to make a decision on which dive computer to designate for NOAA use. Thank you for your participation in this project, and yes, NDC will expect the computers back after the testing is complete.... [K]

TOPSIDE DISTRIBUTION

To better facilitate distribution of the TOPSIDE newsletter, it is now being e-mailed to all individual shore-side divers as well as to the ships. The file is a .pdf file and can be viewed with Adobe Acrobat. At present time, hard copies will continue to be mailed to all persons on the original mailing list. Past and present copies of TOPSIDE are also available at the NDC web site under "Reports & Publications". [K]

DIVING MANUAL CORRECTIONS

Corrections to the NOAA Diving Manual, 4th Ed., are available from the Best Publishing web site. Corrections can be viewed and printed at the following address:

<http://www.bestpub.com/noaa.asp>

Please contact the Diving Center if you have any questions about these changes or further edits to report. [K]

DIVE LOCKER INSPECTIONS

Thank you to all ships/units who submitted their Diving Safety Inspection Checklists to NDC in a timely manner. [K]

USCG DIVING REGULATIONS

After correspondence and careful review of USCG diving regulations by Mr. Martin Freeman (NOAA legal counsel) and USCG representatives, it was determined that **NOAA divers are not required to comply with these regulations.** These regulations are essentially identical to OSHA regulations and are in affect from 3 - 9 nm (depending upon location) out to approximately 200 nm from the U.S. coast. Please contact the Diving Center if you have any questions regarding this policy change. [K]

FIELD OPERATIONS

NDC diving staff are looking for opportunities to participate in or observe diving operations of different NOAA ships/units. NDC hopes to use this experience to better understand unit operations, techniques used, and any associated problems. This experience may also be used to tailor working diver training to better meet the real world demands of our divers. Currently, NDC is looking for 2 - 7 day operation windows during the months of June - August for 1- 3 staff divers. NDC would cover the associated costs of its diver's travel. Please contact Dave Dinsmore or LT Bill Cobb if you would be able to assist with this project or would like more information. [K]

ALTERNATE AIR SOURCES

The February 2002 TOPSIDE reported that alternate air sources (in the form of an additional secondary regulator) would be required equipment for NOAA divers in the future. An inline regulator is currently being tested at NDC. This regulator would attach to the low pressure inflator whip and connect to the BC auto-inflator. It could also be used with a dry suit (an additional LP whip would be connected to the 1st stage regulator) and has a velcro strap to secure it to a backpack harness. It's a pretty slick, compact unit that holds good promise. More to follow as the testing progresses. [K]

NDC WEB SITE/DATABASE

Occasional hiccups are encountered by users of the NDC web site or Online Diver Database and associated monthly UDS report (The UDS report is generated by NDC and distributed to diving supervisors). Efforts to correct these problems are made by our good web site/database people as time and resources permit. Please report any problems with the web site to NDC or Ken.Long@noaa.gov. Please report any problems with the online database (dive log) or associated UDS report to LT Bill Cobb. Thank you for your patience and your assistance with identifying problem areas. A few comments about recent problems are noted below:

WEB SITE

- **Unable to download/view forms on the web site** - Forms on the web site are .pdf forms and can be viewed using Adobe Acrobat Reader (free download from www.adobe.com). You may need to update your AA Reader if it is already installed on your computer and you are still unable to view all forms. Download the latest version from the same Adobe web site.

DATABASE / UDS Report (sent to diving supervisors)

- **Monthly UDS report shows old last dive date** - This is a problem with the UDS report that can be temporarily solved by online dive log users. The bottom line is Divers should log dives online in chronological order if possible. So last Thursday's dive would be logged before today's dive. The UDS report currently identifies the last entered log as the most recent dive. That may not be the case if you didn't log them that way.
- **Wrong physical due date shown on UDS report** - Again, the UDS report program is at fault. If in doubt about when you or your diver's next physical is due, consult the online database, diver profile section. Occasionally the UDS report will calculate an incorrect next due date. As with the above problem, trust the database if there is a discrepancy between it and the report. This error appears to occur for divers in a "transition" age for different physical frequencies. [K]