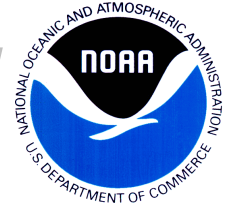




# TOPSIDE



Volume 3, Number 28

The NDP Newsletter for NOAA Diving Supervisors and Divers

March 2003

Director - Dave Dinsmore, (206) 526-6705, dave.dinsmore@noaa.gov

Operations Manager - Bill Cobb, (206) 526-6460, bill.cobb@noaa.gov

Equipment Coordinator - Steve Urick, (206) 526-6223, steve.urick@noaa.gov

SEP Technician - Bill Gordon, (206) 526-6450, bill.j.gordon@noaa.gov

SEP Technician - Lisa Glover, (206) 526-6446, lisa.glover@noaa.gov

Budget/Program Analyst - Laurie Barber, (206) 526-6695, laurie.barber@noaa.gov

Office Automation Secretary - Sondra Huber, (206) 526-6623, sondra.huber@noaa.gov

Fax - 206-526-6506

Web site address -

<http://www.ndc.noaa.gov>

Mailing Address -

NOAA Diving Center

7600 Sand Point Way NE

Seattle, WA 98115-0070

## TRAINING SCHEDULE

A **Diver Refresher** course is scheduled for April 29 - May 02, 2003. This course can be used to re-certify NOAA Working Divers who's proficiency has lapsed for a year or more. It can also be used by active NOAA divers (Scientific or Working) to certify in the use of a NOAA dry suit or for NOAA employees to complete their Scientific Diver certification.

Training requests are being accepted for the **May/June Working Diver and Divemaster** courses.

**Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Diver Medical Technician (DMT)** courses have been scheduled for 2003.

Please contact Laurie Barber if you would like to enroll in any of the above courses. [K]

**The following classes are scheduled for 2003:**

Apr 29 - May 02	Diver Refresher	Seattle, WA
May 19 - Jun 06	Working Diver	Seattle, WA
Jun 02 - Jun 06	Divemaster	Seattle, WA
Sep 15 - Oct 03	Working Diver	Seattle, WA
Sep 29 - Oct 03	Divemaster	Seattle, WA
Dec 1 - 12	EMT	Seattle, WA
Dec 15 - 20	Diver Medic	Seattle, WA

## NDC STAFF

Steve Urick, Bill Gordon, and Bill Cobb will be in Hawaii conducting a Working Diver Cross-Over course from March 20 - April 05, 2003. While these poor souls are away on this arduous assignment, please contact another NDC staff member for immediate assistance. [K]

## SCHEDULED TRAINING

The Diving Center has received several inquiries about scheduled training classes and the effect of the present NOAA budget shortfalls and travel/training restrictions. **At the present time, training courses will be offered as scheduled** with no changes anticipated. To help defray the cost of training in Seattle, lodging is **typically** available on one or more NOAA ships located at the Marine Operations Center - Pacific (located on Lake Union) at NO COST. This Lake Union location is within easy commute to the Diving Center at the Sand Point facility on Lake Washington. As always, there is no dive training charge for NOAA employees. Please contact Laurie Barber if you are interested in ship-board lodging during diver training or diver medical courses. [K]

## NDP STRATEGIC PLAN

To better meet the needs of our NOAA diving units now and in the future, NDC has developed the **"NOAA Diving Program Strategic Plan: 2003 - 2008."** This document is available for review on the NDP web site at [www.ndc.noaa.gov](http://www.ndc.noaa.gov), under the Reports & Publications section. It maps out a 5 year strategy to improve and expand the capabilities of the NOAA Diving Center, and Diving Program as a whole. Also contained in this same section is the **"NOAA Diving Program Needs Survey & Assessment"** and an associated description document. This survey will be distributed in the near future to help direct implementation of the strategic plan. [K]

## UNIT DIVING INSPECTIONS

**Important** - Annual dive locker inspections are required by NAO 209-123 (the Regs). Unit Diving Inspection Checklists, used to conduct these inspections, were distributed to all units and ships in November, 2002. These checklists are important to better ensure that unit/ship dive lockers are evaluated with a critical eye with regard to equipment condition and maintenance, organization, resource availability, etc. Completed checklists were due from all units/ships to their LODO/FDO by January 15. **Units/ships failing to submit dive locker inspections to their LODO/FDO by March 31, 2003 will result in the suspension of diving certifications for all divers in that unit.** Inspection checklists are also available online at the NDC web site. Those ships/units/sub-units who have already performed this inspection and submitted their checklists, THANK YOU. [K]

## ANNUAL MEDICAL HISTORY

Annual Medical History Report forms (**NOAA Form 56-59**) are due from all NOAA divers age 59 and younger by March 01 of each new calendar year. Forms may be faxed or mailed directly to the NOAA Diving Center, and are available online from the NDC web site or by request from NDC. Divers should note any health changes from their last medical history form submitted to NDC. These forms do not require the signature of a physician nor anyone else besides the diver. **Failure to submit this form by March 01 will result in the suspension of the diver's NOAA certification!** [K]

## NDSB MEETING

A meeting of the NOAA Diving Safety Board was held at the AOML facility in Miami, Florida on January 06 - 08. This annual (and sometimes more frequent) meeting is held so that pertinent safety, regulation, training, operational, administrative, etc. topics may be discussed. The Board is comprised of Dave Dinsmore (Chairman), DNDP; Bill Valley, NOS LODO; Jules Craynock, OAR LODO; Frank Parrish, incoming NMFS LODO; Ian Workman, outgoing NMFS LODO, and LT Bill Cobb, NMAO FDO. Additional attendees were Steve Urick, NDC; and Martin

Freeman, NOAA Office of General Counsel. Notes from this meeting will be mailed to all unit diving supervisors. Items of importance that were discussed included the following:

- **Dive Injury Reporting** - Board consensus to continued reporting only "duty" dive injuries in NDP injury statistics. Information from non-duty diving injuries to NOAA divers will continue to be collected and submitted to the NOAA Diving Medical Review Board for evaluation.
- **Technical Diving Standards** - A more standardized approach to NOAA technical diving standards to be developed.
- **Diver's Handbook** - A combination NOAA/U.S. Navy field reference handbook is due out from Best Publishing during 2003. The nearly complete format and content was reviewed by the Board.
- **AP Valve BCs** - Several models of jacket BCs with integrated alternate air source were introduced and later pool-tested by the Board.
- **CCR Report** - The Board was updated on the status of closed-circuit rebreather testing by the Navy for NOAA. Final reports are due from the Navy to NOAA in early 2003.
- **Diver ID Cards** - Diver ID cards will NOT be issued in the future to non-NOAA divers who are certified by NOAA because of reported abuses. Also, an effort will be made by NDC to increase recognition of NDP diver certification cards at dive shops around the country. Efforts will be made through dive magazine articles and flyers mailed directly to dive shops.
- **Diving Regulations** - The nearly complete "new" NOAA diving regulations were reviewed by the Board with minimal changes.
- **Legal Issues** - A variety of legal issues involving OSHA, volunteer divers, NOAA contracted divers, etc. were discussed with Martin Freeman.
- **Technical Diving Medical Standards** - NOAA technical divers will need to pass a one time exercise stress test to 13 METs.
- **SCR Demonstration** - Two Draeger Dolphin semi-closed rebreathers were tested by Board members at a local pool. Potential applications were discussed. [K]