



# Dive Safety Protocols

June 2011



University  
of Victoria

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Guide is to set forth policy for the organization and conduct of Diving Instruction and Recreational Diving and to establish procedures for safety within the club. This guide specifically covers recreational scuba diving operations. Modes and forms of diving other than recreational scuba diving or skin diving below 10 meters fall outside the scope of the UVic Scuba Club. These protocols have been developed to ensure that all instructional and recreational diving under the auspices of the UVic Scuba Club are conducted in a manner that will protect divers from accidental injury or illness.

These guidelines are based on PADI International guidelines and should be used as a reference only. All guided club dives and instructional programs are to be led by a qualified, insured divemaster or instructor approved by the UVIC Scuba executive. It is the responsibility of the executive to ensure the dive professionals working for the UVic Scuba Club are in good standing, have at least \$1 million liability insurance and have the “UVIC Scuba Club” and “University of Victoria - McKinnon Pool” listed as “additional insured” on their insurance documents. A copy of the professionals insurance should be retained by the club executive each year and submitted to Vikes Athletics and Recreation at the end of each school year (April 30th) with all other documentation.

All professionals working for the club must adhere to the standards set out by their training organization. Good judgement based on local dive protocols must also be adhered to. If the club executive or instructional staff are unfamiliar with local diving practices, the executive or instructors should contact local dive shops or the regional manager for their training agency to ensure local practices are abided by. Deviation from the standards or high risk behaviour may result in removal from the club instructional staff by the club executive or Vikes Athletics and Recreation.

## DIVING SAFETY COMMITTEE

The club shall have a dive safety committee consisting of the club president and all insured dive professionals working with the club.

The purpose of the committee will be to ensure that all dive events and activities are properly staffed, with proper documentation filed appropriately. Prior to any event the committee must ensure the following points have been addressed:

1. Proper supervision based on local dive protocol, standards and diver experience level.
2. Current and proper liability forms and releases for the respective event (different types of events have different liability releases).
3. All equipment required is available (first aid, oxygen, rosters, etc.)
4. All diver equipment has been arranged; contact with local dive shops should be respectful and non-partisan.
5. All liability releases, student record files etc. are filed upon completion of event.

## INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

### 1. Selection of course instructors and assistants.

- a) The club executive shall select qualified personnel to instruct courses being offered by the UVic Scuba Club.
- b) The instructor(s) and assistant(s) must be certified as instructor(s) or assistant instructor(s) by the agency sponsoring the diving course.
- c) Copies of the certifications and insurance of all course personnel must be submitted to the executive prior to the commencement of the course.
- d) All supervisors must have current first aid certifications (within 2 years).

### 2. Use of facilities and equipment

- a) Dive professionals wishing to use the facilities or equipment of the University for diving instruction must arrange the use of the facilities through Vikes Athletics and Recreation.
- b) Advertising for courses may also be arranged through Vikes Athletics and Recreation.

### 3. Paperwork

- a) Training organization liability and releases for the respective course must be completed prior to course commencement.
- b) UVic liability releases must be used and filed with training organization paperwork.

#### **4. Activities not supported**

The UVic Scuba Club does not support, for recreational purposes, any of the activities listed below:

- Deep diving (deeper than 40 m / 130 feet)
- Snorkel Diving (below 10 m / 33 feet)
- Decompression diving
- Tethered SCUBA diving
- SNUBA
- Umbilical diving
- Bells (open and closed)
- Saturation diving
- Habitats
- Chamber diving
- Submersible vehicles (includes atmospheric diving systems)
- Diver lock-out vehicles
- Compressors
- Power tools
- Explosives
- Electrical equipment
- Any overhead environment
- Diving in Contaminated water
- Diving in zero visibility

**5. Activities requiring proof of certification and current experience** (training organization standards and judgement are critical; this list shall be used as a guideline only).

- Ice diving\*\*
- Altitude diving
- Night diving
- Penetration dives\*\*
- Technical diving\*\*
- Diving in currents
- Deep Diving
- Dry Suit Diving
- Enriched Air (Nitrox not higher than 40% O<sub>2</sub>)\*\*

\*\* Must have proof of certification

Experience may include proof of at least one training dive with theoretical knowledge on current protocols for diving in the respective environment.

“Current” is defined as a logged dive in the respective dive condition in cold water within the last 6 months.

## **CLUB DIVES AND NON-INSTRUCTIONAL EVENTS**

### **1. Ocean Dives**

- a) All divers participating in a Club dive must be members of the SCUBA Club and hold a valid open water certification from a recognized national agency.
- b) Where diving is done from the vessel, the vessel has a certified Divemaster, Assistant Instructor or Instructor (additional to the Master of the vessel) on board who is responsible for the overall dive including site selection, dive briefing, depth and time limitations, buddy pairings and emergency procedures.
- c) The Master of the vessel is licensed to operate the vessel according to the requirement of the Canada Shipping Act.
- d) The vessel has an emergency first aid kit including oxygen on board and the Master or a crew member has the training to manage a medical emergency including the administration of oxygen.
- e) The vessel has a current Canadian Coast Guard Inspection certification and is licensed to carry passengers equal to or exceeding the number of persons who will be on board.
- f) The vessel has a suitable swim grid and/or ladder system that will permit fully dressed divers to enter and exit the water in a safe and comfortable manner.
- g) The vessel has a means of positive communication (either VHF Radio or cellular phone) and the Master or a crew member is trained to operate the equipment.
- h) The vessel operator shall obtain and maintain in force at all times comprehensive general liability insurance and protection and indemnity insurance policies each in an amount of not less than \$1 million inclusive covering bodily injury and property damage to others.
- i) Scuba Club Membership benefits are limited to official Scuba Club dives.

### **2. Non-instructional events**

- a) All diving activities must have a qualified dive supervisor on site.
- b) Proper liability releases must be retained.