

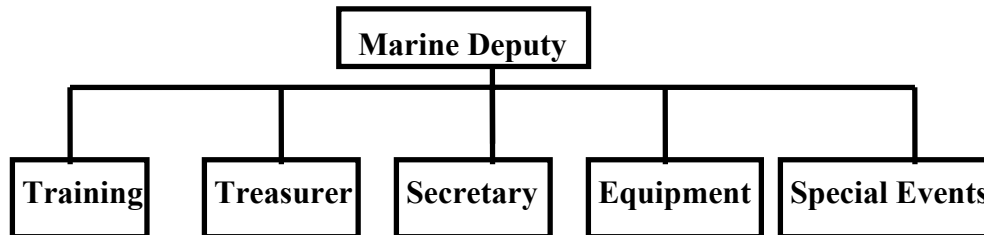
GENERAL OPERATING GUIDELINES

1. **PUBLIC SAFETY DIVING GUIDELINES** – The intent of the Public Safety Diving guidelines is to **help** ensure that all Public Safety Diving is conducted in a manner that will maximize the safety of the Spokane City/County Water Rescue Team (WRT) members.

2. **SEARCH and RESCUE GUIDELINES** – The intent of this document is to set minimum guidelines for the establishment of Public Safety Diving programs, the organization and basic guidelines to conduct these programs.

3. **LIABILITY** – This document is intended solely as a guide to appropriate procedures to be employed when dealing with specific Public Safety Diving situations. It is not intended as a statement of the standards of care required in any particular situation since circumstances and conditions can widely vary. It is not intended that this document shall in any way advise emergency personnel concerning legal authority to perform procedures discussed. These determinations should only be made with the aid of counsel. No manual can replace (nor is the manual intended to replace) comprehensive instructions under the supervision of a competent instructor(s). Individuals engaging in diving, particularly the adverse conditions present during rescue or other circumstances must realize that the activity they are participating in is inherently dangerous. Each member must be presumed to be voluntarily participating in the activity in which they are undertaking and assume the liability and risk for negligent or willful malpractice.

4. **DIVE TEAM ORGANIZATION** – The Marine Deputy assigned to Department of Emergency Management (DEM) supervises the dive team. The diagram below describes the WRT officer positions;



a. **Training Coordinator:** This person is the WRT contact person to DEM. Person responsible to facilitate meetings. Responsible for training props, sites, and instructors (either professional or informational). Keeps team records on individual training accomplishments. Officer member for perspective team member interviews. Emergency purchase voting member.

b. **Treasurer:** This person is responsible for all credits and debits for WRT. Maintains records of submissions for reimbursement. Submits invoices to DEM. Maintains WRT checking and savings accounts. Officer member for perspective team member interviews. Emergency purchase voting member.

c. **Secretary:** This person is responsible for taking and maintaining WRT business meeting minutes. Maintains and records updates to the Operating Procedures and team Bylaws. Facilitates business meetings when Training Officer is absent. Officer member for perspective team member interviews. Emergency purchase voting member.

d. **Equipment:** This person is responsible for all WRT owned and County owned WRT equipment inventory. Maintains an inventory list of all assigned member equipment. Reports communication short falls to DEM. Ensures maintenance of all WRT owned/assigned and issued inventory. Officer member for perspective team member interviews. Emergency purchase voting member.

e. **Special Events:** This person is responsible to coordinate all special events that WRT has involvement. Responsible to ensure adequate manpower and/or equipment is present to adequately represent WRT. Officer member for perspective team member interviews. Emergency purchase voting member.

f. **Bylaws** - The team Bylaws is a separate document; its intent is to define specific organizational requirements for WRT. The Bylaws will be reviewed annually by the WRT Officers.

5. **AUTHORITY** – The Spokane County Sheriff and the Department of Emergency Management have the ultimate authority over all SAR functions. The team will follow the locally accepted Incident Command System when performing missions. Team members have the final word on whether they will participate in a mission.

6. **RESCUE/RECOVERY** - Most bodies of water in Eastern Washington are considered cold water year round. Cold water is defined as temperature below 70 degrees Fahrenheit. The human body reaction to cold water immersion is hypothermia and the Mammalian Diving Reflex, where the body essentially restricts the blood flow from the peripheral body functions to the major organs, the brain, lungs, and heart. Because of this reaction, persons who have drowned in water colder than 70F have been successfully revived after being submerged for 60 minutes. Many conditions determine a person's survivability after submerging, i.e. age, clothing, water temperature, physical activity and fitness level, and cleanliness of the water. The WRT uses the 60 minute rule when determining whether a situation is a rescue or recovery. If the time of submersion is 60 minutes or less the WRT will treat the situation as a rescue. For times greater than 60 minutes the operation may be treated as a recovery or at the discretion of the IC.

7. **PUBLIC DISCLOSURE** – Team members will not discuss specific dive team operations with anyone outside the dive team. Disclosure of sensitive information will result in disciplinary actions and may subject you to personal liability.

TEAM MEMBERSHIP

1. **PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS** – Each new member requires an interview. The interview will be conducted with a majority of officers present and at the earliest convenience. Team officers can add or subtract from the questions listed below. The intent of the interview is to expose the prospective member to the teams mission and requirements. Minimum of 18 years of age.

- 1) How would you define teamwork?
- 2) Why are you a good team worker?
- 3) What will you gain personally from being a dive team member?
- 4) What is your availability and are you willing to train and respond without being paid?
- 5) Are you available for calls during the day and night?
- 6) How do you deal with situations involving death and remains?
- 7) Give some examples of stressful situations that you have experienced?
- 8) How does your family feel about your participation with the dive team?
- 9) Do you get along well with others?
- 10) Do you have any diving experience? If so, please describe.
- 11) Do you participate in any sports or do you have any hobbies?
- 12) Why should you be accepted on the dive team?

After the officers feel they have asked sufficient questions, the prospective member will be asked to leave. The officers will make their decision and inform the prospective member. The following information will be discussed during the interview process:

Team participation – Attendance requirements for call outs, training's, and meetings.

Types of calls and different hours of the calls

- Evidence Recoveries
- Vehicle Recoveries
- Body Recoveries
- Rescues
- Alcohol and Drug Usage

Explain the different levels of team member's status – New Members, Member in training, etc. The new member will also be informed that DEM will perform a background check, due to possible evidence handling.

2. **REQUIRED TRAINING** – Team members are required to maintain the following training.

- a. CPR
- b. Basic First Aid or higher
- c. County Blood Borne Pathogen

Other required training (DR1/and or Rescue 3 International Swiftwater) will be accomplished when available and financially feasible. Ice Rescue for all members and Ice Diving for Divers are required prior to participating in the ice operations.

3. **MEMBERSHIP STATUS** – Members fall into one of the following categories;

a. **Inactive** – Member who doesn't maintain the requirements set forth in the By-laws. Member on voluntary LOA, or a member involuntarily removed from the team.

b. **Active** – Member who meets the requirements set forth in the Bylaws. Divers will have 25 logged dives before diving with the team on missions. Dive Team training's can count toward the 25 dives;

1) **Prospective member** – Comes to meeting, is interviewed, and voted by officers to set up a pool session. May not participate in any WRT activity other than meetings.

2) **Novice** – Completed a pool session, activity level reviewed by officers every three months or as need requires. May not participate in training's until passing the water skills evaluation however, may actively participate in non-water related training sessions. Upon completion of the following the member may be reclassified as support after review of team officers:

- a. water skills evaluation
- b. three training's and three meetings
- c. 1st Aid/CPR/Bloodborne pathogens
- d. basic helicopter course
- e. completion of diver or tender training checklist

3) **Support** - May attend meetings, actively participate in team training and are issued (dependent on availability) a pager, radio, and charger. Support members may actively participate in non-emergency operations. On notification and response to emergency calls, support members are not to take an active roll in any water related activity (shore base or on-water) until such time as the mission is deemed to be reclassified as a non emergency by a Marine Deputy or the Incident Commander. Once a Support member has completed the following, and upon final approval of the Marine Deputy they may be reclassified as a Field responder:

- a. completion of Dive Rescue I or Rescue 3 Swift Water
- b. attendance of no less than six training's
- c. active participation in no less than ten non-emergency operations

4) **Field** – May actively participate in all Water Rescue Team's meetings, training's, non-emergency and emergency operations.

EMERGENCY WORKER CARD - Every member and perspective member shall complete and maintain an Emergency Worker Card approved by the Department of Emergency Management. No person may participate in any function other than meetings until such time the card is completed.

4. **WATER SKILLS EVALUATION** - The purpose of this evaluation is to provide team members an opportunity to practice, refine, and demonstrate basic water safety, basic water skills, and try new equipment in a controlled environment.

REFERENCE: Team Bylaws. Team members will not be able to participate with the team on training or missions until they have satisfied this requirement. This is an annual requirement but suggested that every member participate whenever offered.

NON-DIVER

Swim 100 yds
Tread water 15 min
Don PFD

DIVERS

Swim 100 yds
Tread water 15 min
Swim 15 - 25 yds underwater
Don PFD

Perform the following Basic SCUBA Skills:

Don/Doff BC
Don/Doff mask
Retrieve regulator
Emergency Swimming Ascents
Controlled Buoyancy Ascent
Air Share

Technical Training - may include but not limited to:

Entanglement Drills
Blackout Conditions
Manual Dexterity Drills

The pool session should also include the use of equipment/skills that are used infrequently. For example, Mustang Suits, PFDs, Stokes litter, Surface Rescue, First Aid in the Water, Flying Divers, New equipment Try-out, and Throw Bags. Any new skill must be tried in a controlled environment prior to being used on a mission.

A make up **water skills evaluation** may be scheduled to allow team members or new perspective members the opportunity to complete this phase in a timely manner. This session may be in a pool or in an open water environment. The make up session may be administered by an experienced member who has fulfilled the follow:

1. Is an active member of WRT.
2. Has been an active member for a minimum of two years.
3. Has been approved by the WRT team officers to administer the water skills evaluation.
4. **A diver Field Member who has successfully completed Dive Rescue 1.**

SKILLS: Skills are judged on a go/no go basis. Either the person can or can't perform the skill. Members will not be able to participate as a diver unless they are proficient at the basic SCUBA skills.

5. READMITTANCE OF PRIOR TEAM MEMBERS – Team Members who were on LOA or other voluntary absence can be readmitted to the team after the following: a majority vote from the team officers and they have completed a pool session. They will be reinstated to a level based on where they were when they left and the time span from when they left to re-admittance. Members who violated the teams Bylaws will only be allowed back on the team after approval from the Deputy assigned to the team.

6. MEMBERSHIP TERMINATION/SUSPENSION – A member's dive team status can be suspended or terminated by a majority vote from the team officers or by the team members present. The punishment will be equitable to the offense. A termination vote will be forwarded to Department of Emergency Management Director for request for removal of volunteer status.

5. TRAINING RECORDS – The assigned Marine Deputy will maintain record of completed certificate SCUBA and water rescue courses and maintain meeting and training attendance rosters. The Training Officer shall keep record of the member's status in CPR, 1st Aid, Blood Borne Pathogens and Pool Session attendance. Each member shall maintain their own personal log book and present it upon request to the Training Officer or Marine Deputy for review, if needed.

WATER OPERATIONS

1. **SOLO DIVING** - Solo diving is defined as diving without a backup diver or other team members present. Solo Diving is only permitted if the following conditions are met;

- a. This is a Rescue situation.
- b. This isn't considered to be an overhead environment, i.e. ice dive, or penetration dive.
- c. The body of water doesn't have a current. The only exception to this is Boulder Beach.
- d. Good visibility is present to the divers comfort level.
- e. The diver feels comfortable with the idea of diving without backup. It is the divers judgment as to whether to solo dive or not and only if the aforementioned conditions are met.
- f. **Team rated as a Field member.**

2. **GENERAL SAFETY** - The intent of this paragraph is to spell out general safety practices that are in place each and every dive. Again, these apply to all diving situations.

a. **Response** - All team members responding to a scene are expected to follow all local and state traffic laws.

b. **On-Scene** - While on scene, team members will wear a PFD whenever near or around water. PFDs will be offered to other rescue/recovery personnel when possible. If an incident involves either swift water or other falling hazards team members will wear their helmets. Team members will have a whistle and cutting device easily accessible while on scene. All team members will remain clear of the tow cable after it is attached to the vehicle. Dives should not exceed 100'. With few exceptions, divers will not enter the water without a backup diver on-scene and ready to dive. Swift water operations will not be attempted until adequate downstream safety is in place.

3. **DEPTH LIMITS/DEEP DIVING** - The standard depth limit is 60'. Dives between 60 and 100' are considered deep dives. **Due to physiological complications, THE TEAM WILL NOT KNOWINGLY PLAN A DECOMPRESSION DIVE.** A member diving to depths 60' to 100' must be either a certified Advanced open water diver or higher, or make three logged/witnessed dives greater than 60'. The team's deep dive training session can count as one of these dives. All dives greater than 60' will be planned using accepted dive tables and safety precautions. Divers will display a knowledge and understanding of complications associated with deep diving. Neurological exams will be performed on divers before and after deep diving. The individual diver has the right and the responsibility to refuse to dive if they feel uncomfortable with the dive and if they feel the dive exceeds their skill level. The team

will not knowingly perform a dive to depths greater than 100'. WRT will plan each dive to known depths greater than 60'.

3. **REQUIRED EQUIPMENT** – the following equipment items are required by team members;

a. Divers:

- 1) Mask
- 2) Snorkel
- 3) Buoyancy Compensator
- 4) Fins
- 5) Environmental Protection – Either Wet suit or Dry suit
- 6) 2 knives – 1-high, 1- low
- 7) Regulator – To include an alternate air source
- 8) Whistle
- 9) Helmet
- 10) Weight belt

a. Surface Technician:

- 1) PFD
- 2) Knife
- 3) Whistle
- 4) Helmet
- 5) Throw bag
- 6) Gloves

The team will supply the following equipment items based on availability.

- a. PFD – A high float PFD buoyancy weight of at least 15 lbs
- b. Helmet
- c. Throw bag
- d. Pager – either 802 or digital
- e. Radio and charger

5. **VEHICLE RECOVERY (VR)** – Members will participate in a VR only after they have been trained. Vehicle Recoveries can be considered training after they have been determined to be a non-emergency and conditions are safe for training. All team members will remain clear of the tow cable once it has been attached and the vehicle is being towed. All attempts to approach the vehicle will be made from downstream or from the side of the vehicle.

6. **SWIFT WATER** – All members must have either accomplished 2 swift water training sessions or completed a nationally recognized Swift water course before they can participate in a swift water environment. River right and river left are determined by facing downstream the bank to the right is river right and the bank on the left is river left. Trained members will only use advanced swift water equipment. A diver/rescue will not

enter the water until adequate back up is in place. All team members will remain down-river from all ropes under tension.

7. **ICE OPERATIONS (IO)** – All members assisting in IO must be Ice Rescue Certified. This applies to anyone on the ice. All divers performing ice diving must be certified by an Internationally/nationally recognized organization. Any member entering the water will wear some form of environment protection. Members entering the water will also be hardwired to the surface by a locking caribeener. Diver will use the law of thirds when attempting any dive into an overhead environment. They will plan to use 1/3 of their air supply for the dive, 1/3 for exiting the water, and the last third for any complications that arise.

8. **NIGHT DIVING** – A dive is considered a night dive when it falls between sunset and sunrise. Divers will have 2 logged night dives prior to performing any night dives on missions. Team training's can count toward this requirement. The divers will wear a marker light and surface technicians will wear clothing with reflective material or a marker light.

9. **REMAINS RECOVERY** – Every WRT member participating will follow the locally accepted universal precautions when dealing with human remains. Bagging will occur in a manner that is discrete to the situation, preferably underwater. Video and still photography will be taken when possible and upon request of the officer on scene.

10. **EVIDENCE RECOVERY** – Evidence will be recovered in a manner that will be determined on scene. No member will discuss the incident outside of WRT any operation deemed as "Evidence" unless approved by a DEM Marine Deputy.

11. **OPERATION TERMINATION** – An operation will be terminated when it can no longer be carried out in a safe manner or the Incident Commander determines termination.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND THE DIVE TEAM

1. Anyone, whether surface support or diver, has the right and responsibility to refuse to participate due to any problem that they feel will jeopardize the safety of the mission or the team members.
2. Divers have the responsibility to notify on-scene personnel of any medical problems. These include but are not limited to:
 - a. Pregnancy
 - b. Ear or sinus problems to include colds and the inability to equalize
 - c. Prior decompression sickness for deep dives
 - d. Consumption of any medication contrary to diving
 - e. Any muso-skeletal abnormality that inhibits the member from safely performing the position they are assigned
3. Public Safety diving is a rigorous task. Physical fitness is paramount in ensuring the safety of the team members during missions and training's. Members are responsible for monitoring and adjusting their own physical fitness capability. Divers have already met the pre-established medical requirements for SCUBA diving when they accomplished their SCUBA diving class. It is the individual divers responsibility to self-govern when a physical/emotional/medical incident will prevent them from diving. The individual diver is also responsible for notifying a Team Officer of this condition.
4. Team members' physical/emotional/medical conditions will not be discussed with anyone outside of the dive team and anyone the member expresses doesn't want information to be known. Emergency Medical Technicians or other Health Care Providers are bound by locally accepted patient confidentiality standards.
5. Team members will not respond to a mission or training if they have consumed any alcohol beverage within the last 12 hours. Illicit drug use is not tolerated at any time and will result in the member being removed from the team and turned in to the proper authorities.
6. A medical form will be filled out by team members prior to missions requiring deep or ice diving. A field neuro exam will be performed on each deep and ice diver before and after entering the water.
7. Any member who is under the care of a physician for an injury or incapacitating medical condition shall submit to the Marine Deputy a written order from their physician prior to the member participating in any operation or training.

8. Any member who is injured or damages Spokane County or WRT owned equipment while participating in any team function shall immediately notify one of the marine deputies if present if not, notify Sheriff's Radio for a shift supervisor.