

IN 1452 – Introduction of IMCA diving supervisor continuing professional development (CPD)

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1. Introduction

As part of our mission to improve performance in the marine contracting industry IMCA continuously evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of how we work and what we do. As part of that we also review the way we manage our diving supervisor training and certification process.

For example, as recently advised, the examination system for **diving supervisor** and **life support technician** (LST) certification has already been updated and moved to a more modern and secure footing, with online exams taking place at external test centres.

IMCA now intends to modernise and improve the system still further by taking steps to address a long-standing deficiency in the IMCA diving supervisor scheme.

As you may already know, there is currently no formal requirement for IMCA diving supervisors to maintain their technical knowledge or keep up to date with the latest industry guidance. When the diving supervisor scheme was developed by IMCA's predecessor organisation, the Association of Offshore Diving Contractors (AODC) in the late 1980s, diving supervisor certificates were issued for life. Once qualified, certified supervisors were not required by AODC/IMCA to undertake any additional refresher or development training.

This situation is not acceptable to modern industry. It is indisputable that diving supervisors sit in a safety critical role. Nowadays, industries operating in high risk environments (including the offshore marine sector) require their safety critical personnel to undertake some form of continuing professional development (CPD) in order to prevent skill-fade and keep staff up-to-date with current recognised good practice.

The time has now come for IMCA to provide its certified diving supervisors with a user-friendly but effective CPD scheme intended to renew and revalidate their knowledge and skills.

[Diving CPD](#)

2. How will IMCA's Diving Supervisor CPD programme work?

Delivery

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The IMCA diving supervisor CPD scheme will be delivered on an annual rolling programme through the use of a dedicated application. The App will be accessible either through iOS or Android mobile platforms or through standard laptop or desktop PCs. Participants will be able to work through the App at home, on the move or while offshore.

Content

Each year of CPD material will be made up of four units that will be issued quarterly, and each unit will consist of six Modules:

- One core module aimed at both air diving and bell diving supervisors. The Module will contain details of new IMCA Safety Flashes and recent relevant IMCA Diving Information Notes.
- Four modules focused on refreshing and updating supervisors' knowledge of the IMCA Diving Division's current information and guidelines.
- One saturation module; differentiated from the other Modules to Apply to Bell Diving supervisors only.

Assessment requirements

Questions will be included in each unit to test the understanding of participants, and users will be unable to progress to the next module until they have successfully completed the previous one by answering all the assessment questions correctly.

Certificate of currency

Candidates will be required to complete all four units within the year, upon which they will receive a certificate of currency containing a QR code that can be used for verification purposes. This certificate will demonstrate they have completed the annual CPD programme and it will remain valid for the following calendar year.

The scheme currently will only be open to qualified IMCA diving supervisors and to qualified diving supervisors from the Australian Diver Accreditation Scheme (ADAS) and the Diver Certification Board of Canada (DCBC).

Persons joining the scheme part way through the year will be required to complete ALL the Units for that year to receive the certificate of currency valid for the following calendar year.

Consultation/testing

Trials of the IMCA Diving Supervisor CPD App are about to begin. A cross section of Diving Supervisors have been invited to participate in the consultation and testing process to ensure the system is easily accessible, appropriate, user-friendly, and effective.

Implementation

Should the trials prove successful, IMCA's aim is for the system to go live in Q2 2020.

Initially participation will be voluntary. However, it is intended to be IMCA's policy that all working IMCA diving supervisors must hold a CPD certificate of currency from the year commencing 2022. That will mean they will need to have completed the full four Units of the 2021 IMCA Diving Supervisor CPD App by the beginning of 2022.

From 2022 a supervisor having satisfactorily completed the required four Units for a

year will be listed by number on IMCA's website as being "Current" for the following calendar year.

Supervisors failing to complete the required Units will no longer be deemed current by IMCA and the supervisor's number will not Appear on the "Current" list.

Fees

Fees for participation in the IMCA Diving Supervisor CPD Scheme have yet to be finalised.

3. Benefits of the programme

IMCA Diving Supervisors will be able to demonstrate that they participate in a credible and effective CPD programme that refreshes their knowledge and skills and keeps them up-to-date with industry events and current guidelines.

The IMCA Diving Supervisor CPD programme will be delivered in a straightforward user-friendly but effective format.

In addition, for the first time, IMCA will be able to identify all its currently active diving supervisors and be able to contact them, should the need arise, on issues of importance.

The programme should help reinforce the standing of IMCA Diving Supervisor qualifications throughout the industry.

Ultimately, however, it is still the contractors' responsibility to ensure that the diving supervisors they appoint are competent.

Diving Committee

Diving Hub