



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

U.S. NAVAL STATION
PSC 1008, BOX 28
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NSGBINST 1711.1E
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U.S. NAVAL STATION, GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA INSTRUCTION 1711.1E

From: Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

Subj: RECREATIONAL SCUBA DIVING AT U.S. NAVAL STATION GUANTANAMO BAY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5100.25 series
(b) NSGBINST 1710.10 series
(c) CFR Title 49, Part 180
(d) Compressed Gas Association, Commodity Specification for Air, CGA G-7.1-2011

Encl: (1) Diver Certification Registration Form
(2) Guantanamo Bay Dive Plan Form
(3) NAVSTA Guantanamo Bay Area Map

1. **Purpose.** To promulgate rules governing recreational self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (scuba) diving by all personnel at U.S. Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (NSGB).

2. **Cancellation.** NSGBINST 1711.1D.

3. **Applicability.** This instruction applies to all personnel at NSGB who participate in the instruction or act of recreational scuba diving. Failure to follow the enclosed guidance may result in administrative action, including suspension of diving privileges, debarment from NSGB, or other disciplinary action. This instruction is a lawful order enforceable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). The Installation Commanding Officer (CO) may grant exceptions to this policy.

4. **Discussion.** Recreational scuba diving at NSGB is a privilege, not a right. Scuba diving is an equipment-intensive activity that requires special training to mitigate inherent risks as outlined in reference (a). The CO of NSGB is responsible for the safety and security of this installation and its residents; the safe use of its waters is paramount.

5. **Definitions**

a. The terms "shall" and "must" when used in this instruction indicate mandatory compliance. "Will" indicates futurity; "Should," "may" and "can" are used to denote actions that are recommended but are not mandatory.

b. "Diver" means any person who is wholly or partially submerged in the water and is equipped with an underwater breathing apparatus.

c. "Junior diver" means any diver between the ages of 10 – 16 years old.

d. "Underwater breathing apparatus" means any apparatus, whether self-contained or connected to a distant source of air, whereby a person wholly or partially submerged in water is supplied air for breathing without returning to the surface of the water.

e. "Divers-down buoy" means a buoyant device, other than a vessel, which displays a divers-down symbol of at least 12 inches by 12 inches on three or four flat sides, which is prominently visible on the water's surface when in use.

f. "Divers-down flag" means a flag that meets the following specifications:

(1) The flag must be square or rectangular. If rectangular, the length must not be less than the height, or more than 25 percent longer than the height. The flag should have a wire or other stiffener to hold it fully unfurled and extended in the absence of wind or breeze.

(2) The flag must consist of a divers-down symbol on each side. The symbol is red with a white diagonal stripe that begins at the top staff-side of the flag and extends diagonally to the lower opposite corner. The width of the stripe should be 25 percent of the height of the flag.

(3) The minimum size for any divers-down flag displayed on a buoy or float towed by the diver is 12 inches by 12 inches. The minimum size for any divers-down flag displayed from a vessel or structure is 20 inches by 24 inches.

g. The "Alfa" flag is white and blue with a triangular piece missing from the blue front. The flag represents the letter "A" and means "Diver Down; Keep Clear." This flag must be flown from vessels that are conducting diving operations in international waters, coastal waters, and other waters where commercial and international shipping is taking place.

h. Decompression Illness. Decompression illness (DCI), is a term used to describe illness that results from a reduction in the ambient pressure surrounding a body. DCI encompasses two diseases, decompression sickness (DCS) and arterial gas embolism (AGE). A diver's blood and tissues absorb additional nitrogen from the lungs when at depth. If a diver ascends too fast, this excess gas will separate from solution and form bubbles. These bubbles produce mechanical and biochemical effects that lead to a condition known as DCS.

(1) Type I DCS involves the skin, lymphatic system, muscles and joints, and is not life threatening. Type I DCS includes joint pain (musculoskeletal or pain-only symptoms) and symptoms involving the skin (cutaneous symptoms), or swelling and pain in the lymph nodes.

(2) Type II DCS involves the nervous system, respiratory system, or circulatory system. Type II DCS may become life threatening. In the early stages, symptoms of Type II DCS may not be obvious and the stricken diver may consider them inconsequential. The diver may feel fatigued or weak and attribute the condition to overexertion. Even as weakness becomes more severe the diver may not seek treatment until walking, hearing, or urinating becomes difficult. Initial denial of Type II DCS is common. For this reason symptoms must be anticipated during the post dive period and treated before they become too severe.

Type II DCS symptoms include numbness, paresthesia (a tingling, pricking, creeping, pins and needles, or electric sensation on the skin), decreased sensation to touch, muscle weakness, paralysis, mental status changes, motor performance alterations, tinnitus (ringing in the ears), hearing loss, vertigo, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and shortness of breath or other difficulties breathing.

(3) Arterial Gas Embolism (AGE). The signs and symptoms of AGE may include near immediate onset of dizziness, paralysis or weakness in the extremities, large areas of abnormal sensation (paresthesia), vision abnormalities, convulsions, or personality changes. During ascent, the diver may have noticed a sensation similar to that of a blow to the chest. The victim may become unconscious without warning and may stop breathing. Additional symptoms of AGE include extreme fatigue, difficulty thinking, vertigo, nausea and or vomiting, hearing abnormalities, bloody sputum, loss of bodily functions, tremors, loss of coordination, and numbness.

(4) Time Course of Symptoms. DCI usually occurs after surfacing. If the dive is particularly arduous or decompression has been omitted, the diver may experience DCI before reaching the surface. After surfacing, there may be a latency period before symptoms appear. This may be as short as several minutes to as long as several days. More information on DCI/DCS/AGE can be found at: www.diversalernetnetwork.org/medical/articles/Decompression.

6. Action

a. The Port Operations Officer is responsible for efficient management of the administrative requirements of this instruction and will serve as the primary liaison between the CO of NSGB and the on base diving community at large. The Port Control watch stander is his primary interface.

b. The Command Judge Advocate is responsible for the ongoing legal review of this instruction.

c. The Security/Force Protection Officer is responsible for the enforcement of the rules and regulations of this instruction.

d. The Harbor Magistrate is responsible for adjudicating violations of this instruction.

e. The Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM)/Navy Exchange Guantanamo Bay (NEX GTMO) Recreational Dive Center provides merchandise and services to include selling and renting scuba equipment and providing instruction. If NEXCOM contracts out all or part of the Recreational Dive Center operation, the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) and the Contracting Officer (KO) are the primary and secondary liaisons between Naval Station leadership and any entities contracted by NEXCOM to provide these services.

f. In support of recreational scuba, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Denich Gym will accept and witness Diver Certification Registrations Forms (enclosure 1) and submit to Port Operations.

7. Scuba Diving Training and Certification Requirements

- a. All scuba divers must be trained and certified by one or more of the following nationally recognized scuba diving organizations NAUI, PADI, IDEA, PDIC, ADC, SEI (YMCA), Armed Forces, or other nationally or internationally recognized certifications.
- b. All previously certified scuba divers must complete enclosure (1) and return it to the MWR Diver Registration Desk at Denich Gym for verification and approval prior to performing any scuba diving at NSGB.
- c. All recreational scuba divers in training must dive under the supervision of an instructor who must file a dive plan on their behalf.
- d. All recreational scuba divers completing training at NSGB will receive a temporary certification from NEX GTMO Recreational Dive Center. Since receipt of a permanent certification card may take several weeks, attaching a temporary proof of certification to enclosure (1) is sufficient until receipt of permanent certification card.
- e. Scuba activities have inherent risks which can be minimized when professional scuba program staff members, who have been trained and certified by national and international certification organizations, instruct scuba program participants. All recreational scuba training shall be conducted by a nationally or internationally certified and insured instructor. Once certified, it is the individual diver's responsibility to adhere to safe diving practices and to maintain proficiency in diving.

8. Recreational Scuba Diving Regulations – General

- a. Only certified scuba divers and divers conducting training certification may dive at NSGB. Due to the unique nature of Guantanamo Bay's dive sites, and to familiarize new divers with local waters and dangers, previously certified divers must complete an orientation dive with an instructor or dive master, or complete an orientation course provided by the NEX GTMO Recreational Dive Center prior to diving unescorted.
- b. All dives, including repetitive dives, conducted at NSGB will include dive planning using industry standard diving tables or the dive planner function on your own dive computer.
- c. All repetitive dives should be planned so that the first dive will be the deepest in the series. All subsequent dives should be no deeper than the previous dive.
- d. All dives shall be planned in order to have a tank pressure of at least 500 PSI at the completion of the dive. This planned "reserve" shall be used when necessary to complete required safety stops or emergency decompression stops.
- e. No dives shall be made as planned "decompression" dives.
- f. All recreational scuba divers shall adhere to the "buddy system" and shall remain in visual contact with each other at all times.

g. All recreational scuba divers shall keep their certification cards on their person or stored in their immediately available gear while diving (for inspection by Security Department personnel if requested).

h. Recreational scuba diving is permitted in all areas except the shipping lane (inside the channel), Industrial Area, Deer Point, Glass Beach (no beach entry, boat entry is allowed), Saint Nicholas Channel, Mahomilla Bay, East of Windmill Beach to Kittery Beach, Guantanamo River, and the Cuzco Wildlife Preserve. Diving in the Cuzco Wildlife Preserve (Blue, Hidden, and Cuzco Beach) will only be permitted with the express written permission of the CO, NSGB. Taking of any and all sea life (with the exception of Lion Fish) is prohibited in the Cuzco Wildlife Preserve. Diving at Chapman Beach is restricted to 0600-1700 daily. Enclosure (3) provides a map of all beaches.

i. The maximum depth limitations correspond to the qualification level of the diver, e.g. 60 feet for a PADI basic Open Water diver. Divers shall follow the applicable limits recommended by their certifying agency.

j. The maximum depth limitation for all non-certification recreational scuba dives, consistent with the mandatory use of the "buddy system" at NSGB, is the limitation applicable to the least qualified diver. The planned maximum depth shall not exceed 100'.

k. The maximum depth limitation for certification scuba dives is dependent on the nature of the training as determined by the instructor. Certification scuba dives may not exceed a planned max depth of 100'.

l. "Night dives" are beach dives between sunset and 2330 from authorized beaches, and between sunset and one hour prior to sunrise from a vessel. Night dives are not authorized at Kittery Beach, Chapman Beach, or from any vessel anchored east of Windmill Beach, or west of the Leeward Control Tower. Divers who have not previously made a night dive may seek instruction or guidance from a certified instructor or dive master prior to their first night dive. PADI, and other instructional programs, offer specialty courses for night diving, if so desired. Divers should be prudent when diving at night, especially for the first time, to ensure they are properly equipped and do not enter conditions that might exceed their capabilities or comfort level.

m. Junior divers must "buddy" with one of the following on all non-certification dives:

- (1) Scuba program instructor
- (2) Scuba program assistant instructor
- (3) Scuba program dive master
- (4) Dive certified parent or guardian diver

n. All diving (including pool diving) shall be suspended when the hyperbaric chamber is unavailable for use. When this occurs, dive plans will not be approved, and active dives will be

recalled to the extent possible by Port Operations in coordination with NSGB Security.

o. Scuba diving is prohibited under the following conditions:

(1) Consumption of alcohol within the past 8 hours – Regardless of when the last drink was consumed, divers should be free from the effects of alcohol. In addition to alcohol's negative effect on judgement, dehydration associated with consuming alcohol can increase the risk of DCS.

(2) Under the influence of medication causing dizziness or drowsiness.

(3) In a 24-hour flight duty status.

(4) 12 hours or less prior to a flight. Lesser intervals calculated from Navy tables are allowed for active duty divers. Some individuals may have more strict guidelines – e.g. CNAF 3710.7 requires all Navy flight crew wait 24 hours, and PADI recommends 18 hours following repetitive dives.

p. Diving at Cable Beach, Pebble Beach, Chapman Beach, and the Slot is restricted to divers possessing Advanced Open Water or higher qualifications. Conditions, especially in the Tackle Box, can vary dramatically throughout the day or from dive site to dive site. Divers should be mindful of currents, tides, wave heights and other conditions, and ensure that all dives are conducted well within the capabilities of the most limited diver (regardless of qualification level).

q. All personnel are responsible for reporting suspected cases of decompression illness. Any diver who exhibits signs or symptoms of DCI/DCS/AGE during or at any time after a dive shall be referred to the nearest medical facility immediately – time can be critical. Dive buddies should ENSURE that medical personnel are made aware the patient has recently been scuba diving, and be prepared to offer details on the profile of the dive or dives.

r. All divers shall adhere to the NSGB1710.10C, Outdoor Recreation and Wildlife Instruction.

9. Recreational Scuba Diving Regulations – Equipment

a. The following equipment, at a minimum, must be used on all recreational scuba dives at NSGB: mask and fins, cutting device, snorkel, buoyancy compensation device (BCD) with power inflator, regulator with alternate second stage, depth gauge, timing device (watch, computer, etc.), signaling whistle or equivalent, weight belt/weight system, and an inflatable surface marker buoy (e.g. "safety sausage" rescue signal). Additionally, one of the following items shall be employed per buddy pair or group diving outside 100 yards from all beaches, walls, or vessels: divers-down buoy, divers-down flag, or divers-down symbol. A divers-down flag must be flown from vessels that have active diving operations in progress.

b. Night dives shall require two battery operated lights, minimum of one non-battery activated light (chemical-light), and a bright shore lantern/light at shore entry/exit point to be

removed upon completion of dive.

c. Only the NEX GTMO Recreational Dive Center shall sell refills for recreational scuba tanks. Compressor operators shall not fill any tank failing to meet the visual inspection program standards or the five-year hydro-test, reference (c), nor shall they offer service to non-certified divers.

d. Diver's air compressors require a satisfactory air sample not older than six months. Diver's compressed air must meet the more stringent standards defined by the system's manufacturer or that defined as Grade E compressed breathing air in reference (d).

10. Recreational Scuba Diving Regulations – Dive Plans (Requests and Execution)

a. Recreational scuba diving without a dive plan is prohibited.

b. Each dive pair or dive group will ensure they provide the information of enclosure (2) to Port Control via phone at 4188, or via radio on Marine Channel 73, at the following times:

(1) Prior to commencement of each dive

(2) Upon completion of each dive

11. Recreational Scuba Diving Instruction and Instructor Regulations

a. Only qualified, certified and insured scuba diving instructors may instruct recreational scuba diving.

b. Instructors shall maintain student training records for a period required by the instructor's certifying agency.

c. Instructors are responsible for adhering to this instruction and, to the best of their ability, must ensure student compliance with the rules during the course of instruction.

d. Instructors will complete the dive plan filing requirements for their classes for all dives to include pool dives. Instructors may e-mail their student roster to Port Control up to three days prior to enacting the dive plan, however they will need to call 4188 to verify the roster and the plan prior to commencing diving operations and instruction. Only certified instructors may file for divers not in the port operations database, i.e. non-certified divers.

e. Instructors are responsible to ensure the conditions are appropriate for the type of instruction to be conducted and for the capabilities of the students. All basic open water, junior open water, junior advanced open water, and specialty diving instruction should be conducted at one of the following locations:

(1) Windmill Beach

(2) Girl Scout Beach

(3) Phillips Dive Park

f. All advanced open water diving and advanced specialty diving instruction should be conducted at one of the following locations:

(1) Windmill Beach

(2) Girl Scout Beach

(3) Phillips Dive Park

(4) Cable Beach

(5) The Slot – the Slot can present challenging and unique conditions. Instructors should consider the Slot as a “graduation dive” for advanced students. In any case, it is preferable that a diver’s first experience at the Slot be under the guidance of an instructor, and not on his own the day after he receives his advanced certification.

g. Any diver holding a professional level certification (instructor, assistant instructor, dive master, etc.) who has interaction with students, including but not limited to acting as a professional dive guide, verifying skills, and conducting scuba skills updates/refreshers, must be employed or contracted by NEX GTMO or NEXCOM.

h. All diving professionals will cease all diving instruction/operations if any student/diver displays any symptom of DCI, or abnormal sinus/ear pain. The diver should be escorted to the nearest medical treatment facility and notify Port Control at 4188, Navy Dive Locker at 4444, or call 911 for assistance and transportation.

12. Violations

a. Violation of any of the provisions in paragraphs 4 – 11 will be adjudicated as follows:

(1) Issuance of a wildlife/waterborne violation notice or verbal notification from Security. In case of a verbal notice, written notice will be provided within 72 hours.

(2) Port Control will complete a Port Control Incident Report and forward to the Harbor Magistrate for review.

(3) Suspected violator’s scuba privileges will be suspended until appearance before the Harbor Magistrate.

(4) A table of punishments is provided in reference (c). Violations are grounds for one or more of the following at the Harbor Magistrate’s discretion:

(a) Temporary suspension of diving privileges.

(b) Permanent (lifetime) ban of diving privileges.

(c) Recommendation to the CO, NSGB for debarment from the installation.

(d) If subject to the UCMJ, disciplinary proceeding, including trial by Court-martial.

b. Evidence for review and adjudication of suspected violations include but are not limited to, Harbor Patrol citations, Port Control Incident Reports, and written eyewitness statements.

c. The Harbor Magistrate will review and adjudicate all suspected violations.

Any violation that results in the activation of NSGB Security/Dive personnel or securing diving operations on any beaches will result in a suspension of diving privileges effective from time of incident. Suspension time served while waiting for adjudication may or may not count for suspension time administered at adjudication. Failure to appear at Harbor Court will result in a ban from diving at NSGB.

13. Responsibility. The Command Diving Officer is overall responsible for the annual review of this instruction.

14. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of media and format, shall be managed per SECNAVINST 5210.8.


J. A. FISCHER

Distribution:
Electronic only, via NSGB NIPR Network

Guantanamo Bay Scuba Diver Registration Form

Name: _____ Certification Agency: _____
Address (Local): _____ Certification Level: _____
Command/Employer/Sponsor _____
Specialty Certifications: _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Certification Number: _____
Date of Departure from Guantanamo Bay: (DD/MM/YY) _____

| | |
|--|---|
| Photocopy of Certification Card FRONT | Photocopy of Certification Card BACK |
|--|---|

Attach temporary certification to back of this form

Rules Acknowledgement

I have read, acknowledge, and will comply with NSGBINST -1711.1 series regarding scuba diving at U.S. Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I have received my certification locally, or if previously certified participated in an orientation dive provided by a local instructor or dive master, or done an orientation course given by the NEX GTMO Recreational Dive Center.

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| _____ Applicant | _____ Date | _____ MWR Representative | _____ Date |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|

Waiver of Liability

I agree that I scuba dive at my own risk. I agree to hold the United States Government harmless for any injuries that I may incur while scuba diving at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I understand and agree that I may be treated in a hyperbaric facility if I am suspected of incurring Decompression Sickness/Illness or an arterial gas embolism (AGE) during or after diving at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I further understand I may be responsible for any costs incurred.

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| _____ Applicant | _____ Date | _____ MWR Representative | _____ Date |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|

Approval

Your request to scuba dive is approved – ensure you follow the rules to the letter!

| | |
|---|---------------|
| _____ Port Control Officer or his designee | _____ Date |
|---|---------------|

Guantanamo Bay Dive Plan Form

Group Leader / Instructor: _____

Group Leader / Instructor Certification Level: _____

Group Members – Names and Certification Level:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

(6) _____

(7) _____

(8) _____

Dive Locations: _____

Date of Dive(s): _____

Number of Dives: _____

Dive Type(s): [DAY/NIGHT (if multiple, state number and types)]

Dive Start (Time or Times): _____

Dive End (Time or Times): _____

Maximum Depth(s): _____

Important: The group leader/instructor must contact Port Control at the beginning and the end of the dive via VHF 73 or via phone at 4188.

