

	<b>STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE</b> State Form 39870 (R/S-06)	Reference Number <b>SOC-008</b>
Subject <b>SCUBA Team – Utilization, Selection and Training</b>	Special Instructions <b>Replaces ENF-063 dated June 1, 2018</b>	
	Effective Date <b>January 30, 2026</b>	

## **I. PURPOSE**

Establish guidelines for the utilization, selection and training of ISP police employees as members of the Department's SCUBA team.

## **II. POLICY**

SCUBA teams shall provide the Department with the capability of responding to emergencies in and around water which require a coordinated "team" effort in response to potential life-threatening incidents and/or search and recovery operations.

## **III. PROCEDURE**

A. SCUBA personnel shall respond to water-related incidents involving, but not limited to:

1. Potential life-threatening incidents in or near water;
2. Drowning;
3. Death investigations, to include drowning;
4. Crime scene investigations in or near water;
5. Requests to search for and recover evidence;
6. Requests from other agencies for SCUBA assistance;
7. Investigation of all fatal SCUBA accidents; and/or
8. Vehicle crash investigations.

B. SCUBA personnel may also respond to:

1. Special patrols or surveillances on or near water;
2. Rescue missions; or
3. Other operational activities designated by the SCUBA/Underwater Search and Recovery Team (USRT) Commander and approved by the Special Operations Commander or designee.

C. Operational dives shall be voluntary and not required if an individual diver believes any dive is beyond the diver's capability or if a dive is believed to be unsafe.

D. Operational dives shall normally be made with the assistance of at least one (1) other certified Department SCUBA Diver. The Senior Instructor, Divemaster, Team Leader or Senior Diver at the scene shall assume command of all actual diving operations. If a Department diver is not

available, the dive may be made with any National Association of Underwater Instructors' (NAUI) certified law enforcement diver. If an operational dive is necessary to attempt to save a life in a potentially life-threatening incident and no other Department diver is available, the dive may be made with or without any certified diver at the discretion of the individual Department diver.

E. Operational decompression dives, ice dives, cave dives, wreck dives and any dive which involves a restricted free ascent shall be conducted only with the permission of a Department certified diving instructor. The instructor, or designee, shall assume command of the diving operation and ensure all recognized safety procedures are followed.

#### F. Activation of SCUBA Personnel

1. If Operations receives a call about a water-related incident, Operations personnel shall immediately notify the applicable District.
2. A District, upon receiving a call about a water-related incident, shall notify the applicable SCUBA Team Leader, or if unavailable, the SCUBA Assistant (Asst.) Team Leader; if neither are available, the SCUBA/USRT Commander shall be notified.
3. Upon notification, the Team Leader, Asst. Team Leader, or the SCUBA/USRT Commander shall coordinate the necessary manpower and equipment. This shall include placing additional personnel on standby (if necessary).
4. The Officer-In-Charge (OIC) shall contact the requesting District and advise them of the officers assigned to the detail and their estimated time of arrival. Operations shall be contacted and given the required information for the operations log.
5. When possible, divers will make notification to Operations and Special Operations via e-mail when they are in-route to an incident. Information included in the notification shall contain location, dive type, and team responding to the incident.

#### G. Team Assignments

1. The Special Operations Command (SOC) Commander shall determine the number of SCUBA teams, the number of team members per team and the geographical breakdown of team assignments.
2. All SCUBA assignment information shall be published in the SCUBA Operational/Training Manual.

## H. Selection Process (Vacancies)

1. When a SCUBA diver vacancy exists, the SCUBA/USRT Commander, with the approval of the SOC Commander, shall notify all Division, Section, Zone, Area and District Commanders of the vacancy by email a minimum of five (5) days prior to the closing date.

2. Interested personnel shall submit a [Specialty Team Application](#), through channels, to the SCUBA/USRT Commander.

a. All applicants must:

- (i) Meet the minimum standards, as defined in [SOC-004](#); and
- (ii) Be able to successfully meet the NAUI/ISP physical testing requirements.
- (iii) Be the rank of Trooper (All other ranks will be considered at the discretion of the SOC Commander and Enforcement Major).

b. The SCUBA/USRT Commander shall notify the candidates and their commanders at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the screening process and furnish information listing the date, time and location of the test.

1. The selection committee shall consist of the SOC Commander, the SCUBA/USRT Commander and Asst. Commander, the Team Leader, and the Asst. Team Leader of the team with the vacancy.

2. The screening process shall consist of the NAUI/ISP swim test, an interview before a selection committee and a physician's examination.

3. The NAUI/ISP swim test shall include:

- (i) The measurement of baseline blood pressure (systolic not to exceed 150 and diastolic not to exceed 90),
- (ii) Swimming three hundred (300) yards in 8 minutes or less,
- (iii) Swimming twenty (20) yards underwater using one breathe,
- (iv) Swimming fifty (50) yards underwater using three breaths,
- (v) Survival floating for ten (10) minutes,
- (vi) Treading water for ten (10) minutes, and
- (vii) Retrieval of a 10-pound weight from eight (8) feet of water.

4. After completion of the screening process, the SOC Commander shall make the final selection and shall notify the person chosen for the position, in writing, through channels.

5. The selected candidate(s) will attend SCUBA training contingent upon the successful completion of a decompression chamber orientation and dive to a minimum depth of ninety (90) feet.

I. SCUBA Team Member Training

1. Department SCUBA personnel shall be properly trained and utilized in accordance with the NAUI standards and the standards set forth in the Department SCUBA Operational/Training Manual.

J. This procedure is to be used in conjunction with all relevant Department regulations, rules, policies and procedures