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BSAC Diving for divers

Diving Information

HSE AND RECREATIONAL DIVING T.14

The BSAC is an amateur training organisation
The BSAC is primarily involved with the provision of diver training within the many Branches affiliated to the organisation. The organisation and its associated branches are amateur in their operation and follow the safety guidelines and training programme of the BSAC.

The HSE monitors 'at work' diving operations
The HSE is concerned with all matters relating to Health & Safety and their Diving Division is the department that oversees all diving matters that are considered 'at work'. The 'at work' situation covers any diving contractor that is receiving payment for the provision of an 'undertaking' or contract. With respect to recreational diving, the HSE's interest is with commercial diving centres that provide diver training services, at all levels of training, in return for a payment from their client.

BSAC UK Centres are commercial
BSAC Centres are such a group of diver training providers and UK-based centres must follow the HSE 'Diving at Work Regulations 1997' and the guidance provided in the Approved Code of Practise (ACoP) 'Recreational Diving Projects'. All BSAC Centres based in the UK are made aware of their responsibilities upon joining the organisation and records are kept at HQ to verify that all UK centres comply.

BSAC UK Branches are non-commercial
The HSE deem BSAC UK Branches to be groups of amateur recreational sport diving members' clubs and not as commercial operations. As such the Diving at Work Act 1997 and the ACoP 'Recreational Diving Projects' do not apply to BSAC branches.

Reimbursing instructor expenses
An instructor becomes a 'commercial' instructor when they are making a living from their diver training activities and drawing a wage from the proceeds. Reimbursing branch instructors for their travelling and bona fide expenses incurred on the day would not be considered making that instructor a commercial instructor. The basis of guidance on this aspect should be the BSAC 'Policy for the Reimbursement of Volunteer and Staff Expenses' guidelines available from HQ.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What is the HSE concerned with?
A. The HSE is concerned with all matters relating to Health & Safety at work and their Diving Division is a specific department that oversees all diving matters that are considered commercial. The 'at work' situation covers any diving contractor that is receiving payment for the provision of an 'undertaking' or 'contract'. This provision is often known as a 'project'.

Q. What is the 'Diving at Work Regulations' (1997)?
A. This is the title of a set of regulations that came into operation in 1998 and applies to all diving in the Great Britain that is considered commercial. Thus all commercial diving centres/companies in the UK must comply with these regulations. Diving centres overseas do not need to comply with these UK regulations but may have similar local legislation that they must comply with.

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