

**LOUDON COUNTY DIVE RESCUE TEAM Inc.  
Standard Operating Guidelines**

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February 25, 2002	rev 9 (Numerous policy and definition changes from 2000 review)

**LOUDON COUNTY DIVE RESCUE TEAM Inc.  
Standard Operating Guidelines**

**TABLE of CONTENTS**

<b>I</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Pg. 2
<b>II</b>	<b>Mission Statement</b>	Pg. 2
<b>III</b>	<b>Guidelines</b>	Pg. 3-9
	A. Response	
	B. Activation Procedures	
	C. On-Scene Protocols	
	1. Team Leader	
	2. Dive Team Members	
	3. Shore Technicians	
	4. On-Scene Team Safety	
	5. Pull Signals	
	6. Termination of Dive Operation	
	7. Lost Diver Protocols	
	8. Vehicle in the Water Guidelines	
	9.	
<b>IV</b>	<b>Training- Certification</b>	Pg. 10-12
<b>V</b>	<b>Organization and Team Structure</b>	Pg. 13-15
<b>VI</b>	<b>Membership Requirements</b>	Pg. 15-16
	A. Qualification	
	B. Selection Criteria	
	C. Fitness Standard	
<b>VII</b>	<b>Membership Policies</b>	Pg. 17-18
	A. Inactive Membership	
	B. Disciplinary Procedures	
	C. Dress Code / Uniform Policy	
	D. Rules and Regulations	
	E. Leave of Absence Policy	
	F. Termination	
<b>VII</b>	<b>Equipment</b>	Pg. 18-19
	A. Required Equipment	
	B. Maintenance Record / Preventive Maintenance	
	C. Responsibility of the Safety Officer	
<b>IIX</b>	<b>Team Equipment Operation Policies</b>	Pg. 19
	A. Statement of Team and Personal Equipment Use	
	B. Vehicle	
	C. Boat	
	D. Building Maintenance	
	E. Compensation Policy	
<b>IX</b>	<b>Review of Standard Operating Guidelines</b>	Pg. 20
<b>X</b>	<b>Amendments To Standard Operating Guidelines</b>	Pg. 21
<b>A</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	Pg. 22
	Board of Directors	

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### PURPOSE

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These operational protocols and guidelines have been compiled and created so that the Loudon County Dive Rescue Team Inc. hereafter referred to as the Dive Team, may more effectively and safely serve the public and to promote diving safety for the members of the Dive Team.

It is the responsibility of all Dive Team members to be thoroughly familiar with the operating guidelines and policies contained within this manual. While it is the policy of the Dive Team to utilize only Dive Rescue Specialist I certified divers as primary and safety diver during any *Rescue mode* operation any member of the Dive Team may at any time be called upon to perform in the role of any On-Scene Protocol responsibility to support the dive operation.

### MISSION STATEMENT

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The formation and purpose of the Dive Team is to be prepared to execute rescue and recovery operations in or on the waterways of Loudon County within the scope of team training, experience and equipment limitations as designated from time to time by team leadership and Standard Operating Guidelines

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### GUIDELINES

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#### RESPONSE

The Dive Team shall be activated any time an emergency exists on any body of water within Loudon County if the emergency involves bodily injury or the potential loss of life or any other incident that occurs and our assistance is needed by the agency with primary responsibility.

Any Dive Team Mission or operation that is determined to be a **Rescue** mode operation must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Must be a witnessed incident
2. Less than 1 hour has passed since the incident has occurred
3. The witness(es) must be available for interview by the Dive Team
4. A viable "Last seen Point" can be established

#### ACTIVATION PROCEDURES

After information is received at the 911 center, the following events may be expected to happen:

Within 1-2 minutes, a group page via Message Writer should be sent to all Dive/Rescue Team members. This message should include at a minimum, the nature of the call, location, and brief directions to scene. More details as they come available should be sent on additional pages.

example: "POSSIBLE DROWNING AT MELTON HILL  
SWIM AREA TAKE 321 PAST I40 ON RITE  
MEET TVA FOR ESCORT-351"

In addition to std. info we need: Age of Victim? How long down? Is the caller a witness, activities of victim prior to incident, which other Agencies are responding Upon receipt of page the responding team members should contact the dispatcher by radio on Mutual Aid Channel 4 or telephone and provide the following information: Unit number ETA to the scene.

example. "DR-3 responding... ETA approx. 15 minutes"

The dispatcher should make notes of who is responding and have this information ready for the Dive Team Leader as he will be requesting it.

As more information is made available from caller or 1st Responders the dispatcher can broadcast this information via radio on Mutual Aid Channel 4 to all responders or send multiple pages as necessary. The Dive /Rescue Team will be working within the **Incident Command System** and as such will be responsible for the Dive/Rescue Sector only, not the over-all incident.

Once on the scene Dive Team communication will consist mainly of hand/visual signals and short range Head-sets or Buddy-Comm units on a private channel. Any requests for additional resources will go through the Incident Commander.

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### GUIDELINES

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#### ON-SCENE PROTOCOL

The first Dive Team member to arrive on the scene will act as Team Leader. The witness interview will be recorded on audio tape with the permission of the witness by the Team Leader and notes with drawings or diagrams will be made at this time. An appropriate search plan will be developed and communicated at this time by the Team Leader.

**TEAM LEADER:** Shall take command of dive operations upon arrival at the scene. He/she shall report to the Incident Command. He/she shall evaluate the situation. A plan shall be developed and implemented at this time for locating the object of the search using appropriate search patterns and techniques. The Risk/Benefit factor shall be evaluated at this time by the Team Leader taking into consideration existing conditions and coordinate the operation with activities in the vicinity.

1. The Team Leader shall hold a pre-dive briefing after he has interviewed witnesses. He will describe the mission, make team assignments, and identify guidelines to be followed and any deviation from protocol shall be noted at this time.
2. The Team Leader shall be satisfied that each diver is wearing required equipment.
3. The Team Leader shall insure that safe diving guidelines are followed by all personnel involved in the operation.
4. The Team Leader shall secure the dive area and have the area roped off as necessary. Only personnel authorized by the team leader shall be allowed in the dive area.
5. The Team Leader shall see that a depth/time profile is maintained for each diver entering the water during a dive operation.

**DIVE TEAM MEMBERS:** Shall respond in a SAFE manner to the dive scene when ordered.

1. Members shall conduct themselves in a professional manner with due respect for the situation and for the family and friends of the victim at all times.
2. A member may attempt a rescue by himself in an emergency situation, ONLY if he feels that the dive can be done with reasonable safety, AND delay would result in death for the victim rather than rescue.  
Divers must wear at a minimum a BC, tank, regulator, knife and mask. He MUST notify 911 Dispatch using any means available. He MUST be on the end of a search line.
3. A member must notify the team leader if he has consumed alcoholic beverages within the (12) hours previous to a diving operation.
4. Each team member who is a diver will be responsible to maintain a Dive Log.

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### GUIDELINES

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#### ON-SCENE PROTOCOL (cont.)

SHORE TECHNICIANS: Must be qualified to independently tend divers and operate surface support equipment. They will be trained and will function within the scope of the Shore Responder Program.

1. The Shore technician must be trained in theory and operational aspects of the dive operation. Training will include CPR, 1st RESPONDER, and the SHORE RESPONDER manual.
2. Shore Techs will keep the team leader informed of progress and the Safety Officer on scene of any emergencies.
3. Shore Techs will assist divers suit-up and check for proper equipment
4. Shore Techs will record the name of divers, time diver enters the water, PSI and tank size (cu ft.)
5. Shore Techs will always watch bubbles and line to divers and will always know the location and status of their diver. They will record using a reference point or compass, the location of any recovered articles or victims. They will also use knots in the line to determine area and distance searched.
6. Shore Techs will be proficient in the Rapid Field Neurological Exam.

A **Rescue** mode operation will be conducted for one and one half hours from the time the call is received. At the end of the 1 1/2 hour period the **Rescue** mode operation will cease and a total re-evaluation of the situation will be conducted by the Dive Team and any other organization who has jurisdiction and authority. At this time the operation will be considered a **Recovery** mode operation.

A **Recovery** mode operation requires special consideration in that since there is no possibility that a life may be saved, an acceptable risk during a **Rescue** mode operation may be considered an unacceptable risk in a Recovery mode operation. An **exceptional dive** situation may encountered. The following criteria any one of which if met shall constitute an **exceptional dive**.

1. Any dive made at night
2. Any dive made greater than 60 feet deep and in zero visibility conditions
3. Any dive where the depth/time profile would impose a decompression ceiling on the diver

If any **Recovery** Mode Operation is determined to be an **exceptional dive**, then a minimum of 4 hours Period of Planning is mandatory. During this Period of Planning, the dive operation will be on hold while a determination is made that divers are available with the appropriate qualification, experience, equipment and have had sufficient rest to make the dive safely.

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### GUIDELINES

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#### ON-SCENE PROTOCOL (cont.)

**ON-SCENE TEAM SAFETY:** The ultimate responsibility for safety rests with each team member. It is the diver's privilege and responsibility to refuse to dive if, in his or her judgment, conditions are unsafe or unfavorable or if the dictates of their training or the regulation of the Dive Team would be violated. No diver shall ever be forced or coerced to dive or be penalized for not diving when he or she wishes not to dive.

1. At each dive site a trauma kit and Demand Valve O2 delivery system must be available. It shall be the responsibility of all team members to maintain their familiarization with this equipment and to be aware of its location at the dive site.
2. The Dive Support Vehicle shall have on-board at all times a list containing the following contact numbers:
  - a. Emergency aid/ Transport (LIFE STAR, Ambulance Service)
  - b. Diver Alert Network (DAN)
  - c. Recompression chamber facility and Back-up facility.
3. All dive equipment must be in excellent condition. Divers shall perform basic inspection of their own and their team members equipment prior to each dive. Equipment deficiencies demand reevaluation of the dive and possible termination of the dive operation.
4. All dive equipment shall be considered to be expendable and should be ditched if an emergency situation is encountered and if the diver feels it is necessary for a safe ascent.
5. All members must be alert to the need for decontamination both divers and equipment dependent on conditions. In most cases the diver and equipment may require only a wash down with fresh water. Any time a diver is exposed to waters that have been contaminated by unknown chemicals, the HAZ-MAT team must be called to conduct an evaluation/decontamination guidelines.
6. At any incident where leakage of unknown chemicals are entering the water from a boat, barge or vehicle etc., the team leader or the first member arriving on the scene shall notify the HAZ-MAT team, EMA director and 911 dispatch. An evaluation and dive/no-dive decision shall be issued after consulting with the Incident Commander of the incident.

**TERMINATION:** The Team Leader shall consider and not hesitate to terminate a dive operation when any of the following conditions exist:

1. Any member requests termination.
2. Any member fails to correctly respond to communication via pull signals or visual hand signals.
3. A predetermined minimum PSI is reached ( typically 700 #)
4. The team or team members assignment is completed.
5. When the team leader considers the risk is beyond the benefit.

The Team leader shall assign tasks, the objective of which is, to insure that all equipment is placed back on the truck in the normal state of readiness, that tanks that are depleted during an operation are filled and restored to service as soon as possible and that the Dive Team equipment is in service.

**Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG**

**GUIDELINES**

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The Team Leader shall hold a post-dive briefing. He shall again check the physical and physiological condition of the team divers over a 1 hr period after the dive.

Team members are instructed to report to the team leader any injuries or illness or any discrepancy noted during the Rapid Field Neurological Exam immediately.

The Team leader is responsible for completing all appropriate records at the end of each diving operation. This task may be assigned to another team member who will insure that a completed record of the dive is on file.

Any diver who entered the water shall submit to the Rapid Field Neurological Exam as soon as is possible.

LINE PULL SIGNALS: The following line pull signals shall be used **unless** modified by the Team Leader to accommodate special circumstances on a per incident basis. Any mis-communication from Diver to Tender shall be considered an emergency.

One Pull

Tender to Diver "Are You OK?"

Diver to Tender "I'm OK"

Two Pulls

Tender to Diver " Take up Slack and Change Directions"

Diver to Tender "Give me more Line"

Three Pulls

Tender to Diver " Come to The Surface"

Diver to Tender "I Have Found The Object"

Four Pulls

Tender to Diver "Hazard in The Area Stay Down"

Diver to Tender "I Have a Problem SEND SAFETY DIVER"

**Any time a search line is released, an emergency on the other end is assumed and shall be acted upon following Lost Diver Protocols**

LOST DIVER Protocol.

A slack searchline is an on-scene emergency and will be responded to in the following manner.

Primary Tender- Immediately notify all team members.

Stop pulling in the primary searchline.

Place a 2<sup>nd</sup> knot in the line while establishing a reference point.

Evaluate the bubble pattern of the lost diver, (distressed, normal or absent)

Safety Tender- immediately deploy the Safety diver along the Primary searchline to the last seen point of the primary diver and begin a search

Safety Diver- Follow the primary searchline to the end without changing the position. Have your backup regulator in your hand and be ready to encounter an out of air diver. Upon finding the diver, evaluate the situation, and signal your tender as appropriate. If the primary diver is unconscious, place your octopus in his mouth, hyperextend the neck to open the airway and ascend slowly using the primary divers BC

Team Leader- Immediately assign another Safety Diver and Tender.

Assign Shore Responders to bring more air tanks to the scene as well as the DAN O2 pack. Notify the Incident commander of the situation

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### GUIDELINES

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#### VEHICLE IN THE WATER

#### RESCUE MODE

##### Rapid Evaluation

Last-Seen-Point Established

Interview Witnesses (was victim seen in the vehicle)

LOOK FOR Tire tracks \_\_\_\_\_

Debris in the water \_\_\_\_\_

Air bubbles \_\_\_\_\_

Oil slick \_\_\_\_\_

Damage to trees/Guard rail \_\_\_\_\_

Estimate / Evaluate vehicles condition

Upon discovery of vehicle Gain Access

Do Not enter Vehicle

Open doors or reach inside through windows

Consider possibility victim either crawled out OR was ejected

How is vehicle positioned? On its **Top** - On its **Wheels** - On its **Side**

If vehicle is in a River, Approach only from Downstream side

Position other team members Downstream to look for victim

Get License plate #, Have Dispatch get phone # of owner & call to learn how many occupants

If unable to gain access & remove victim, Pull vehicle from water

The use of extrication tools underwater should be considered as A **Last Resort method**

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### GUIDELINES

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#### VEHICLE IN THE WATER

#### RECOVERY MODE

Evaluate to scene

Last-Seen-Point Established

Interview Witnesses (was victim seen in the vehicle)

LOOK FOR Tire tracks \_\_\_\_\_

Debris in the water \_\_\_\_\_

Air bubbles \_\_\_\_\_

Oil slick \_\_\_\_\_

Damage to trees/Guard rail \_\_\_\_\_

Estimate / Evaluate vehicles condition

Upon discovery of vehicle have 2 divers verify position/condition of vehicle

Photograph the scene Both vehicle and the surface (Use a buoy to mark vehicle location)

Perform Vehicle Check

\_\_\_\_\_ Is key/ignition On/Off

\_\_\_\_\_ Are lights turned On/Off

\_\_\_\_\_ Is vehicle in Gear or Neutral

\_\_\_\_\_ Has gas pedal been tampered with

Protect Finger Print potential

Use caution handling Door handles, Mirrors, Steering wheel etc.

If victim is in vehicle, Note the position found

Gather documents from visor, side pouches, glove box etc.

( these articles can easily be washed out of vehicle)

Equipment

Short straps for bumpers

Long straps used around axles or around roof

A good method for pulling Tow Cable to the vehicle is to loop a rope through a carabeaner that is attached to the vehicle and feed back to shore. Shore Techs can then pull the rope thereby pulling the cable toward the vehicle. This results in much less work for divers.

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### TRAINING / CERTIFICATION

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It is the intention of the Dive Team to establish a standard operation procedure for training requirements so that proficiency in all types of water rescue and recovery will be achieved and maintained by all members of the team.

In order to achieve that goal, it is necessary to make training mandatory for all members and to require penalties for failure to meet mandatory training requirements.

The purpose of these penalties is not that they may be a form of harassment, but instead a statement of willingness and commitment to achieve a high level of skill in an activity in which, literally, life and death, both yours and others, are at stake.

Mandatory Training: It is mandatory for all members of the Dive Team to attend 10 training sessions a calendar year. Training sessions will consist of:

- 1 A classroom segment which may be offered only once

Classroom segment will consist of various topics determined by the Training Officer as appropriate to our evolving membership and missions requirements.

- 2 A field segment which will be offered once and will be held on Saturdays. The team will be notified of training at each business meeting and will also be paged out the day before. After each training session, the coordinator will notify you whether or not you have met a minimum standard of proficiency. If not you will be advised of needed improvement and will be required to attend the next session in which the training objective will be met. A record will be kept documenting both attendance and performance at all training sessions by the Training officer.

3. These training sessions or topics will be one of the following:

- Boat-based Rescue search (Lake or still water)
- Shore-based Rescue and recovery (Lake or still water)
- Boat-based Rescue search (River or current diving)
- Shore-based Rescue and recovery (River or current diving)
- Top Water rescue skills
- Physical fitness challenge
- Deep Recovery and salvage
- Night Operations and diving
- Rescue/Safety diver skills
- CPR certification
- Underwater Investigations
- Video equipment operation
- Vehicle in the water Rescue / Recovery
- Cadaver dog operations
- SOG Test (90% correct for passing score)
- Underwater navigation (the confidence swim)

Formal Training- All dive team members will be eligible to receive formal training on an as needed basis and within budgetary restraints. In order to establish an equitable and fair priority scheme for those wishing and deserving Specialty training, attendance records for meetings and training records will be used in determining which members receive specialty training. It is understood that due to a lack of equipment or to physical or psychological make-up, some members cannot participate in some areas. This does not relieve any member from attending training as there are still many support functions which can be learned. It is important that all members have at least a working knowledge of each area.

rev 9

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### TRAINING / CERTIFICATION

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If you do not attend training, you will be subject to the following penalties:

1. For the 1st offense during a single calendar year you must contact the Training Officer within 5 days following missed training explaining your absence. You will only be allowed to participate in a support role on any call which require skills covered in missed training. The dive team leader of a rescue mode operation may waive the rule only when there is a shortage of qualified divers on the scene, and he or she feels that a minimum of risk will be added to the operation by doing so.
2. For the 2nd offense or for missing the same training topic 2 years in a row, you must submit a letter to the Training Officer within 5 days explaining your absence. This letter should detail the problem which kept you from attending and a solution which when implemented will keep you from missing any more training sessions.
3. For the 3rd offense during a single calendar year or if the same training session is missed 3 years in a row, there will be serious doubt regarding your commitment to the team. You will be required to meet with the Officers within 10 days of the missed training and show good cause as to why you should not be terminated from the team.

If you are not terminated, you will be placed on 90 days probation. During that period you must participate in all team activities including training and meetings. At the end of 90 days you will meet with the Officers again and if you have satisfactorily completed the probationary period you will return to full membership status. Failure to comply with this final measure will result in immediate termination for the team.

All members will be expected to keep a personal log of dives. If you receive training from an outside agency, it is your responsibility to notify the Training Officer so that your training record can be kept up to date.

**Mandatory Down Time:** Along with mandatory training, each diver will be expected to log a minimum of 60 minutes underwater on SCUBA every 2 months. This shall be done by no less than 2 dives of a minimum of 30 minutes each. At least half of this will be done Open Water. The remaining time in a pool will be satisfactory.

The Months will be paired as follows:

January- February	May-June	September-October
March-April	July-August	November-December

Penalty for missed down time will be based on the following criteria:

1. 60 minutes missed- you will be contacted by the Training Officer with an explanation and a plan to make-up time
2. 120 minutes missed- you must submit a letter to the Training Officer explaining your failure to meet this requirement and a plan to make-up time. At this time you will understand that any more missed down time may risk termination from the team.
3. 180 minutes missed - at this time there is serious doubt as to your commitment to the team and you will be required to show good cause to the Officers of the team as to why your membership should not be terminated. If it is found that your membership should not be terminated then you will have 1 month to make the missed down time. Should you fail to do this your membership will be immediately terminated.

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### TRAINING / CERTIFICATION

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Voluntary Training: From time to time during each calendar year there may be different types of training offered. The criteria for offering specialized training shall be that it benefit the team as a whole and that a reasonable number of members wish to receive this training. Usually 30 days notice will be given at a business meeting regarding the opportunity to attend specialized training. However all such training shall be considered voluntary unless a majority of members present at a regularly scheduled meeting vote to make it mandatory.

Example of Voluntary training may include:

Dive Rescue Specialist II

Med-Dive Specialist

Ice Diver

1st Responder

Swift Water Rescue

Dry-Suit Specialty

Underwater Investigator

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### ORGANIZATION AND TEAM STRUCTURE

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The following Offices shall be elected from the team membership. The primary function of the team officers is to maintain order, perform all functions not related to on-scene operations, and to handle the day to day operations of the organization. The terms for each office shall be (1) one year with no person holding the same office for more that (2) two consecutive terms .

**Team Leader:** He or she shall preside over all regular business meetings and either conduct the day to day business or designate a person on a per incident basis. The Team Leader must have completed DIVE RESCUE I .The Team Leader shall have responsibility for the maintenance of records on each call-out including on-scene incident, water accident reports etc. The Team Leader shall be a permanent member of the Board of Directors.

**The Assistant Team Leader:** The Assistant Team Leader shall substitute for the Team Leader as needed. He or she shall act as chairman of the membership committee and shall address all disciplinary issues. The Assistant Team Leader must have completed DIVE RESCUE I.

**Secretary Treasurer:** He or she shall keep the minutes of all regular business or special called meetings and act as chairman of the Budget committee. As treasurer, he or she shall make financial reports at each meeting. He or she must be a team member but not necessarily a diver.

**Public Information Officer: (PIO)** He or she act as team spokesperson and liaison to all other agencies including the media. The primary function of the PIO is to promote intra-agency communications, work to prevent misunderstandings and to maintain good working relationships. The PIO shall be kept updated by chairpersons of different committees as appropriate.

**Training Officer:** The Training officer shall schedule and document all in-service training drills and activities. he or she will be responsible to keep abreast of up-coming opportunities for both mandatory and voluntary training. The Training Officer shall maintain a personal file which includes: Physical / Medical records, completed in-service training, personal dive log for tracking down time. The Training officer must have completed at a minimum DIVE RESCUE I.

**Safety Officer:** He or she shall have the responsibility of maintaining equipment readiness. This will consist of both remedial and preventive maintenance records and re-call lists . Any safety issues that arise should be brought to the attention of the safety officer. The Safety Officer will maintain a complete equipment inventory list with serial numbers. The Safety Officer should be a qualified diver.

#### Chief Shore Technician

The primary Function of the Chief Shore Tech. is to maintain a high level of proficiency among the Team Shore Responders. The members of the Dive Team whose primary responsibility is that of Shore Tech will report directly to the Chief Shore Tech. The Chief Shore Tech will also be the assistant to the Training Officer.

#### Other Dive Team roles and responsibilities

Shore Responders- Assist divers by handling logistics, line tending, scene security, topwater rescue functions and interfacing with the media, family and bystanders. Essentially, anyone that is not diving is a shore responder. Shore responders are constantly aware of the needs of the other dive team members

rev 9

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### ORGANIZATION AND TEAM STRUCTURE

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Public Safety Diver- A certified openwater scuba diver that is involved in rescue and/or recovery agency diving regardless of underlying or previous training

Dive Rescue Specialist- A specially trained scuba diver who has completed at least the Dive-Rescue Specialist I and in some cases, Dive-Rescue Specialist II

#### On-Scene Roles

Incident Commander- Officer in Charge of the overall safety and operation of all on-scene agencies. Typically the jurisdictional Fire Chief or his designee

On-Scene Team Leader- The 1<sup>st</sup> Dive Team member to arrive on a scene. This person may or may not be relieved by a senior Dive Team member or the Dive Team Leader

Primary Diver- The diver who's primary objective is to locate the object of the underwater search. The primary diver is always assigned by the on-scene team leader and never assumed by any diver themselves.

Primary Tender- The tender for the primary diver is assigned by the team leader and assists the primary diver with every aspect of entering the water safely and insures the primary diver is ready to commence the search.

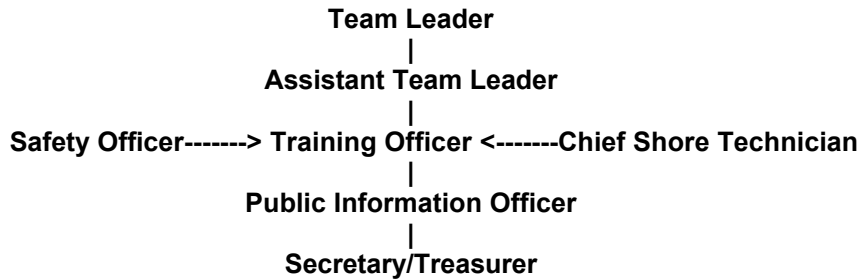
Safety Tender- The tender for the Safety diver is assigned by the team leader and assists the Safety diver with every aspect of entering the water safely and insures the Safety diver is ready to enter the water immediately if the Primary diver needs assistance. The Safety Tender is also the Timekeeper

Safety Diver- The diver who is always at the waters edge (or in the boat) next to the Primary divers line ready to respond in the event that the primary diver needs assistance.

Secondary Diver- a Fresh / backup diver to the primary diver.

Top water rescuer- Any diver or shore responder with top water rescue skills

## ORGANIZATION CHART FOR THE DIVING CONTROL BOARD



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### RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Issue the Standard Operations Guidelines Manual
- B. Update the Manual as necessary after each annual review
- C. Establishes requirements for diver endorsement and qualification
- D. Establish or approve training programs
- E. Insure medical examinations and surveillance of endorsed divers and applicants
- F. Approve and recommend guidelines for all diving operations
- G. Establish or approve facilities and guidelines for the inspection and maintenance of diving equipment used by the Dive Team
- H. Approve all purchases of diving equipment
- I. Review any unusual or long operation, dive incident or training issues
- J. Recommend a budget for the Dive Team
- K. Promulgate changes in policy, standards and regulations covering diving under the auspices of the Loudon County Dive Rescue Team

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

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The membership of the Dive Team is comprised of civilians and members of various emergency agencies located within the vicinity of Loudon County. The requirements for members are the same for all applicants, regardless of past experience or current status. Both current members and prospective candidates of the Dive Team should understand that the Dive Team is a non-profit organization dedicated to water safety. The Dive Team's primary mission is the rescue and/or recovery of persons and/or property involved in water related accidents. The areas of involvement that a member of the Dive Team is expected to participate in include but are not limited to the following:

rev 3

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

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Still water diving, rescue and recovery (usually in zero visibility)  
Swift water, rescue and recovery ( rivers and /or flooded areas)  
Ice diving, rescue and recovery ( under ice covered lakes or ponds)  
Evidence Recovery (underwater crime scenes)

Both current members and prospective candidates of the Dive Team should understand that at no time will a member be paid or compensated for missions or other team activity. This however does not include expenses due to mandatory training that are agreed to and approved upfront and before the fact.

To join the Loudon County Dive Rescue Team as a diver you must meet the following criteria:

1. Be at least 21 years of age.
2. Be in good physical condition.
3. Be certified or certifiable as a scuba diver.
4. Own your own or have provided for you scuba diving equipment which must meet certain standards set forth by the team.

If your interest in joining is providing shore support only, you need only meet criteria 1 & 2

The process required for membership application is as follows:

1. You must submit a written application obtained from a member (your Sponsor) to the Asst. Team Leader. If you are a member of an emergency agency not currently represented on the team, you must provide your agency with a copy of the Dive Team SOG's and must include with your application a written statement from the head of your agency expressing full support of this SOP.
2. Your application will be submitted to the membership committee. If approved, a 3 man applicant board will be appointed to schedule and conduct an oral interview to determine your qualification for membership.
3. If you successfully complete the oral board you will be scheduled for a pool session where your ability to handle a water environment will be evaluated by 2 team divers.
4. If your performance and interview are successful your application will be presented to the membership for their review at the next scheduled business meeting. Your attendance at this meeting will be required to allow the team membership to meet you if they have not done so already and ask questions regarding your application. The team will then vote on your application using secret ballot. If you are not voted in as a member your sponsor has the responsibility of telling you why if you so desire.
5. If approved for membership, you will complete the following for your file.
  1. Statement of physical fitness
  2. Emergency information sheet
  3. A list of all personal equipment that you will be using including serial numbers

#### Probationary Period

Each new member will be placed on a 90 day probation period, during which time he/she must participate in all team activities including training and meetings. At the end of this period your performance will be rated and evaluated by the Dive Control board. There are three possible outcomes.

1. Your performance is rated acceptable and you become a full member.
2. Your performance is rated marginal and the probation period is extended. At the end of this period your performance will be rated and evaluated by the Dive Control board
  2. Your performance is rated unacceptable and you will be dropped from the team.

rev 3

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### MEMBERSHIP POLICIES

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#### Inactive Membership.

Due to the serious mission of the Dive Team, it is felt that placing members on inactive status will be counterproductive to accomplishing the Dive Team goals. As such, if you feel that you will no longer be able to participate in Dive Team activities, you will be required to resign from the team. If at a later time you feel that you will be able to commit the time necessary to fully participate on the Dive Team, you may apply for membership.

#### Basic Fitness Standard

1. Must be able to run/walk 2 miles in 20 minutes
2. Must be able to pull by rope a 60 pound weight a minimum of 30 yards
3. Must be able to carry 2 full SCUBA tanks 1/2 mile in 10 minutes
4. Must be able to swim 500 yards without any equipment (divers only)
5. Must be able to tread water using only feet for 5 minutes (divers only)
6. Must be able to survival float for 15 minutes with minimal effort

#### Disciplinary Guidelines

It shall be the responsibility of the Assistant Team Leader to address any reported infraction, indiscretionary action, breach of community moral standard or violation of the rules set forth in the Standard Operating Guidelines Manual. Actions by any team member including but not limited to, not following Standard Operating Guidelines, blatant disregard for the safety of team members, refusal to follow orders of the team leader and blatant disregard for the feelings of victims family members will be considered violations. If the report is an verbal one, the Asst. Team Leader will request that the complaint be submitted in a written format. Upon receipt of the written complaint, the Asst. Team Leader will appoint an investigative board on a per incident basis that will consist of the Asst. Team Leader and 2 peers of the offender in that if the offender is a Shore Tech, then the other two board members will also be Shore Techs. If the offender is the Asst. Team Leader the Team Leader will become the investigative officer. The ruling of the Investigative Board shall be considered final and absolute. Disciplinary action may result in the reprimand or dismissal of the member and a full written record of the action will become part of the members personnel file.

Uniform Policy. At this time Dive Team members will purchase their own shirts and caps etc. and as such the acquisition and wearing of clothing bearing the Team Insignia will not be mandatory. The wearing of clothing deemed inappropriate or unprofessional will not be tolerated.

#### Rules and Regulations

The Standard Operating Guidelines manual by its own structure and content shall fulfill the requirement of Dive Team rules and regulations. It is the feeling of the Dive Control Board that most any circumstance while not specifically addressed within this manual shall be governed by common sense.

#### Leave of Absence Policy

The Dive Team "Leave of Absence" policy shall be the same as "Inactive Membership" outlined under the topic of Membership Requirements. A waiver of this policy only under extenuating circumstances may be considered by the Dive Control Board on a case by case basis.

rev 3

## Termination

The Dive Team "Termination" policy shall be outlined under the topic of Membership Requirements.. A waiver of this policy only under extenuating circumstances may be considered by the Dive Control Board on a case by case basis.

# Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

## EQUIPMENT

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All equipment shall meet standards as determined by and approved by the Dive Control Board. Only those makes and models of equipment specifically approved by the Safety Officer and/or Dive Control Board shall be used and by divers with appropriate training. All Team owned equipment shall be standardized and compatible.

Personal equipment should only be used on dive team missions or training when dive team equipment is unavailable. If any member chooses to utilize their own equipment due solely to personal preference, then the member assumes responsibility for any lost or damaged personal equipment. It will be up to the Team Leader to decide whether or not to incur by the dive team any expense due to the replacement or repair of personal equipment used on dive team missions or training. Damaged or lost personal equipment that is not related to dive team missions or training will be solely the responsibility of the owner of the equipment, not the Dive Team.

Routine visual inspections and hydro testing on tanks that are not the property of the dive team will be the responsibility of the equipment owner. Annual inspections on personal BCD's and regulators will be the responsibility of the owner. The dive team will pay for AIR refills on personally owned scuba tanks used on dive team training or missions only, not for EANx or NITROX fills.

Additionally, charges made to local vendors, hardware stores, dive shops, etc. will require the approval of the Dive Team Leader in advance.

### Recommended Equipment

Dive Team members who are divers (especially Dive Rescue Specialists) are recommended to own and have in their possession at all times the following equipment:

1. Mask with straps taped and snorkel
2. Properly Weighted Belt with quick release or equivalent BC
3. Wet Suit or Dry Suit with underwear
4. Tank and Buoyancy Compensation device
5. Regulator with either octopus or AIR II
6. Fins with Straps taped and dive boots if needed
7. Knife mounted on BC and EMS shears in pocket
8. A search line 100' minimum
9. Compass
10. Slate or "wet notes"
11. Hood and gloves

### Maintenance Records and Preventive Maintenance

All inspections, tests, and maintenance must be accomplished by a technician approved by the Safety Officer and the Dive Control Board. Record keeping shall be the responsibility of the Safety Officer. Each equipment modification, repair, test calibration, or maintenance shall be logged including the date, nature of work performed, serial number, and the name of the person performing the work along with his certifying agency and number if any.

#### Responsibility of the Safety Officer

The Safety Officer shall have the responsibility of maintaining equipment readiness. This will consist of both remedial and preventive maintenance records and re-call lists . Any safety issues that arise should be brought to the attention of the safety officer. The Safety Officer will maintain a complete equipment inventory list with serial numbers. The Safety Officer shall be notified as soon as is possible of any equipment related issues.

## **Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG**

### **TEAM EQUIPMENT OPERATION POLICIES**

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#### Statement of Team Equipment and Personal Equipment Use

Team equipment shall be used only on emergencies and training or when authorized by a Team Officer. When Dive Team equipment is used during any operation, dry-suits are to be dried, latex neck and wrist seals treated with talcum powder, zippers treated with wax and stored on the dive support vehicle immediately after use. Depleted tanks are to be filled and placed back in service as soon as possible. All dive team equipment is to be used properly and within design parameters. Personal equipment will be used by team members when Dive Team equipment is unavailable or out of service.

#### Vehicle:

The Dive Support vehicle shall be operated at all times in a safe and professional manner in accordance with local laws and ordinances. Emergency traffic will allow the legal speed limit to be exceeded by 10 MPH only when operating both red lights and siren. A periodic vehicle check will be conducted using the vehicle checklist located in the operators compartment as a guideline. A regular maintenance schedule shall be kept by the Safety Officer. Any equipment discrepancy shall be reported to the Safety Officer immediately and corrected as soon as possible.

#### Boat:

Any team boat shall be operated in a safe manner at all times and within the manufactures specifications. Overloading will not be routinely done and any occupant of the Zodiac not wearing a wet suit must be wearing a personal flotation device. Any occupant wearing a dry-suit must have the dry-suit fully sealed and zipped. The operator of the boat must have a kill switch attached to their PFD. The outboard motor must not be running while a diver is down within 25 feet of the boat or otherwise not in plain view of the operator.

#### Building Maintenance

The Dive Team station will be kept clean and neat at all times.

#### Compensation Policy

From time to time the Dive Team will be called upon to render public assistance. These requests for our services may range from simple lost article recovery i.e. jewelry, keys, etc. or may be more complex salvage operations of boats or vehicles. Any donations or payment for services rendered will be promptly turned over to the Dive Team Treasurer in their entirety.

## **Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG**

### **ANNUAL REVIEW OF STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

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An annual review of the Standard Operating Guidelines shall be conducted in November each year. The purpose of this annual review is to keep the Standard Operating Guidelines current with the ever evolving world of rescue diving, to keep the dive team operating in a safe and effective manner and to provide a means by which we can learn from the mistakes that we may make, situations we may encounter and the misfortunes of other dive teams. This annual review will be conducted by the Safety officer, Chief Shore Tech, Training Officer, and PIO/ Liaison Officer. The findings and report of the Standard Operating Guidelines Review Committee shall then be presented to the membership for discussion within the scope of existing provisions to make amendments to the Standard Operating Guidelines.

## **Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG**

### **AMENDMENTS TO STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

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Standard Operational Procedure for Changes or New Policy in the SOG's

If at any time any team member feels the need to change, add to, delete from or create any new policy, he or she may present their written recommendation before the membership at a regularly scheduled business meeting. The Dive Control board will then accept the written recommendation for research and review for a period of not more than 1 month.

If at the end of this period, the Dive Control board is not in agreement on the recommendation, then it is dead. If at the end of this period the Dive Control board is in agreement with the recommendation it will be brought again before the membership for discussion and approval or disapproval. If at this time the recommendation is disapproved then it is dead. If at this time the recommendation is approved it will go into the Standard Operating Guidelines Manual.

At no time will any Team Member or Team Officer take it upon themselves to change, add to, delete from or make new policy

## Loudon County Dive Rescue Team SOG

### APPENDICES

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#### Board of Directors

The function of the Loudon County Dive Rescue Team Board of Directors shall be to provide sound management and financial advice. The day to day operation of the Dive Team and on-scene guidelines shall remain the responsibility of the Dive Control Board and the Dive Team membership. The Board of Directors will consist of 7 members. One seat will be held by the current Team Leader. Another seat will be held by the past Team Leader. The remaining 5 seats will be filled by members of the community whose names will be submitted and who have volunteered to serve on the Board. The 5 Board members will be voted upon by the Team membership at the 1st business meeting in November every 2 years. The terms of the directors shall be for 2 years. Any member of the board who cannot complete their term shall notify the Team Leader and a special election will be held to fill the vacant seat. The seats on the board shall be known as seats 1 through 7 with the current Dive Team leader holding seat 1 and the past team leader holding seat 2. The first year seats 3 and 4 will serve for a term of 1 year and seats 5, 6, and 7 will serve for 2 years. This is to provide for a rotation without all board members being elected at the same time.

The Board of Directors shall elect their own Chairperson and Secretary.

The Board of Directors shall set their own meeting schedule as deemed necessary by the business of the Board but no less than 2 meeting per year.