

**FWC Division of Law Enforcement
Interim Policy Memorandum
IPM 12-03**

Date: February 8, 2012

TO: All Division members

FROM: Colonel Jim Brown
Director, Division of Law Enforcement

SUBJECT: SCUBA Dive Policy and Procedures

This Interim Policy Memorandum replaces IPM 03-04, *SCUBA Dive Policy*, and provides guidance on the Division's approach, policies and procedures concerning dive operations using a Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus (SCUBA) and associated gear. This IPM does not affect, alter or rescind IPM 09-05, *Snorkeling/ Skin Diving Policy*. This IPM shall remain in effect until these policies and procedures are rescinded, incorporated in an existing General Order, or promulgated in a new General Order.

- A** It is the policy of the FWC Division of Law Enforcement to prohibit its members from engaging in SCUBA diving activities and operations, unless specifically trained, authorized, and tasked to do so under the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) between the National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Law Enforcement.
- (1)** Members of the Division's Boating and Waterways Section, Boating Access Unit are exempt from this IPM, but shall comply with all applicable standards promulgated by the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) on Commercial Diving Operations (29 CFR 1910, Subpart T)
- B** Any diving activities and operations conducted under this JEA shall be conducted in accordance with the rules, regulations, and requirements of the diving program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
- C** Members engaging in SCUBA diving activities under the JEA are required to achieve and maintain the appropriate certifications through the NOAA Diving Program (NDP).
- D** The dive supervisor shall notify the Regional Communications Center of any diving activities and operations, noting purpose of dive, vessel location, number of divers, and beginning and end time of the dive operation.
- E** The dive supervisor shall notify the area supervisor via email prior to any diving operations and activities, including diving for vessel maintenance.
- F** If required, diving activities and operations shall be suspended in a safe manner in order to respond to law enforcement or public safety calls for service.