



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Division of Law Enforcement

DIVE TEAM

GENERAL ORDER	EFFECTIVE DATE	RESCINDS/AMENDS	APPLICABILITY
65	May 7, 2018	N/A	All Sworn Members

References

1 POLICY

- A** The Division staffs regional dive teams to enhance response capabilities during critical incidents, special details or underwater operations. Dive team missions and objectives include support of the Division's regional operations and the agency's core mission, interagency assistance, domestic security, search and rescue, and any incidents requiring underwater response.
- (1) Dive teams are designed around the Division's unique law enforcement responsibilities, specialized equipment, and uniquely trained personnel. Dive teams are capable of providing a specialized underwater response in Florida's diverse marine and freshwater environments.
 - (2) Dive teams provide support to local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies and emergency response organizations that do not have the equipment, personnel or capabilities to provide such response or upon request to assist in underwater dive operations.
- B** Dive team members are selected from within the Division in consideration of their law enforcement capabilities, self-motivation, and physical fitness. Assignment to a dive team is a secondary duty and shall be voluntary.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES

- A** The dive team leader is responsible for providing specially trained personnel to respond and conduct underwater operations to include but not limited to: search and rescue, body recovery, evidence recovery, boating accident investigations, derelict vessel investigations, and other mission related activities.
- B** Dive team members are required to attend and successfully complete each annual physical fitness assessment, as outlined in the dive team Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).
- C** Dive team members are required to complete each medical physical outlined in the dive team SOP.
- D** Dive team members are required to maintain "Ready Condition" for deployment at any time with the exception of periods when the member is on approved leave.

3 PROCEDURES

A Division personnel interested in participating on a dive team shall notify the Regional Commander or Team Commander of their interest in becoming a team member. Upon meeting the minimum criteria for selection and successful completion of the required physical fitness requirements, and when team vacancies exist, potential team members shall be recommended for selection to the respective team's Regional Commander. The Regional Commander shall have final approval for selection of team members.

B Dive Team Member Qualifications

- (1) Potential dive team members must meet the following criteria:
 - (a) Be a sworn member of the Division, with at least one year of satisfactory law enforcement service with the Division, including completion of the sworn members Field Training Program and initial employment probationary period.
 - (b) Be free from any injury or disability which could adversely affect his/her physical performance and prevent the sworn member from performing the essential duties of the dive team.
 - (c) Not be on light duty status or administrative leave.
 - (d) Not have had a suspension for disciplinary reasons for a minimum of one year.
 - (e) Must be in good physical condition and maintain a regular exercise regimen.
 - (f) Must have the ability to properly handle people during stressful situations.
- (2) If the applicant does not meet the above criteria, the applicant may request an exception to the appropriate Deputy Director. The request and the waiver, if granted or denied, must be in written format and retained in the regional files.
- (3) Dive team members are expected to consistently perform above average during normal patrol duties and should be recognized as positive informal leaders in the field. Working just at, near, or below expectations for normal patrol duties, or failure to meet the conditions above are grounds to be removed from the team or to not be accepted to the team.

C Recruitment and Selection

- (1) Participants may be recruited for the following positions:
 - (a) Team Leader (TL)
 - (b) Assistant Team Leader (ATL)
 - (c) Team Member (TM)
- (2) Recruitment Process
 - (a) Applicants for TL, ATL, and TM must successfully demonstrate swimming skills as required on the Criminal Justice Diver Performance Evaluation FDLE CJSTC 19 form.
 - (b) All applicants for TL, ATL, and TM must have open water certification from a nationally recognized institute (PADI, NAUI, etc.) and must be comfortable in water.
 - (c) Upon successful completion of the physical fitness assessment, applicants must submit to an oral interview. The interview board, appointed by the Regional Commander, shall rank and approve each applicant for team membership suitability. The interview board shall be composed of one TL, one ATL, and one member designated by the appropriate Regional Commander.
 - (d) If selected to be a member of the dive team, the sworn member must undergo a medical physical and be approved for participation by a physician at intervals specified in the Dive Team SOP.

- (e) Upon successful completion of the physical fitness assessment, interview, and medical physical, the applicant shall be awarded team status or placed on a regional dive team reserve list which may be drawn from for a period of one year to fill team vacancies.
 - 1. If an applicant is not awarded team status during the one year reserve status, they must reapply and re-qualify through the physical fitness assessment and interview.
 - 2. Recruitment assessments and interviews shall be held based on regional team vacancies and needs.

D Training

- (1) New dive team members shall attend the first available dive refresher training.
- (2) Dive team members shall only participate on dives for which they have been trained.
- (3) Dive team members shall attend continued dive team training as outlined in the Dive Team SOP.

E Activation and Deployment

- (1) Dive teams may be requested from Local, State, and Federal agencies, or from within the Division. The affected Regional Commander may approve dive team deployments depending upon request.
 - (a) The Division Director or designee can also activate dive teams as needed to respond to unusual occurrences or critical incidents in consultation with the affected Regional Commander(s).
- (2) The decision to activate a dive team depends on the specifics of the request, the dive team capability for responding to the request, and consideration of other law enforcement resources available for responding to the request.

F Dive Team Operating Procedures

- (1) Refer to the Dive Team SOP for additional information.

4 FORMS

FORM NUMBER	FORM TITLE
FDLE CJSTC 19	Criminal Justice Diver Performance Evaluation