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I) PURPOSE/SCOPE/APPLICATION

- A) To establish guideline for the District 14 DRT Operations
- B) The scope of this SOG is:
 - 1) To establish a guide for the safe and efficient operation of the D14 Dive Team
 - 2) To establish guidelines for communities represented on the D14 Dive Team operating at the scene of any water related incidents.
 - 3) To maintain independence from other agencies, organizations, or groups. The D14 Dive Team shall operate within their scope of training under the direction of the local Incident Commander with respect to underwater rescue/recovery operations, but may cooperate with other agencies or groups when necessary to safely and effectively conduct or conclude the operation
- C) This SOG will be applied at all DRT 14 Trainings and Activations.

II) REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- A)

III) DEFINITIONS

- A)

IV) SPECIALIZED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A) All members shall be responsible for enforcing this SOG

V) SAFETY

- A) The D14 Dive Team may be called upon in all weather conditions, at any time and often in situations of zero visibility to initiate a rescue/recovery operation. Individuals

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engaging in underwater rescue/recovery, particularly under adverse conditions must realize that these activities they are undertaking are inherently dangerous.

- B) The D14 Dive Team Operations Officer shall make recommendations to the Incident Commander as to whether or not to proceed with the dive operation or continue with the surface rescue based on a risk/benefit analysis.
- C) Each individual diver has the right to refuse to dive for any reason without penalty.
- D) All equipment is to be considered expendable, where personal safety is concerned.
- E) No SOG can exhaustively account for all situations regarding underwater rescue/recovery, and no SOG can replace (nor is this SOG intended to replace) comprehensive instruction under the supervision of competent instructors. This document will serve as a guideline only and specific situations or incidents should be guided by the proper use of the risk/benefit analysis.

VI) ENFORCEMENT

- A) Failure to understand this Standard Operating Guideline may result in disciplinary action.
- B) Any deviation from this Standard Operating Guideline may require a written report to the Chief overseeing the team and or the District 14 Chair..
- C) This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee’s civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.

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VII) STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

A) Dive Operations

- 1) The first member of the team to arrive on scene will initiate and assume the position of the Dive Team Operations Officer. Using the risk/benefit analysis process and conferring with the local Incident Commander he/she will start the decision making process of rescue vs. recovery. He/she may pass this role to another team member upon their arrival.
- 2) The decision of rescue vs. recovery as our mode of operation will be decided upon conferring with the local Incident Commander, this decision will include a risk/benefit analysis, conference with local authorities, the type of water, type of search required, age and number of victims, etc. **It shall be noted that in cold-water emergencies there has been significant survival rates in younger children in colder water, with submersion times of 90 minutes or less.**
- 3) As members arrive, they shall check in with the Staging / Accountability Officer. The Dive Team Operations Officer will assign other team members to their respective positions on their arrival, such as, but not limited to, diver, support, safety, rehab, documentation, witness interview, last seen point verification, etc.
- 4) Should the need arise, additional dive teams shall be dispatched through D14 Dispatch. The Dive Team Operations Officer will confer and recommend with the local Incident Commander to make this decision. It shall be the local Incident Commander who shall make the request.
- 5) District 14 will create and maintain a list of qualified and trained dive teams and their response capabilities available at all times. Dive team members may assist with this list.

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- 6) The Dive Team Operations Officer shall confer with the local Incident Commander:
 - (a) To switch from rescue to recovery mode
 - (b) Call a dive due to darkness
 - (c) Call a dive due to unsafe conditions
 - (d) Call a dive due to environmental conditions
 - (e) Any other reasons or conditions that create an unsafe environment for our team.
- 7) The Dive Team Operations Officer will create a rehab sector as soon as personnel on scene allow. This does not have to be dive team members. This may include members of the hosting agency, however rehab personnel should include ALS personnel and they should have a working knowledge of diver emergencies.
- 8) All divers and support personnel will report to rehab sector when assigned by the Dive Team Operations Officer. Their stay in rehab will be determined by the rehab sector chief. Should it be determined that the diver or team member requires further medical attention, the team member will confer with the Dive Team Operations Officer and be sent to the appropriate medical facility that can handle the medical condition. In the event that this occurs, the member's Chief will immediately be notified, (by the Dive Team Liaison Chief, or the Diver Team Operations Officer) and given the appropriate information.

B) Animals in the Water

- 1) D14 Dive Team personnel shall not place themselves at an undue risk to personal injury for the rescue of an animal. It is inherent that the team may be activated for the rescue of an animal. The Dive Team Operations Officer shall initiate the risk/benefit analysis prior to any member attempting the rescue or

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recovery of an animal. If the decision to attempt the rescue/recovery is made it shall be done with the utmost attempt at personnel safety.

C) Witness Interview

- 1) If the witness interview has not been conducted prior to the dive team arrival then the initial witness interview will be started as soon as possible using the standardized questioner form. The team member will ask the witness to proceed to the location where they reportedly last saw the victim in the water.
- 2) All witnesses will be kept separate from each other prior to questioning. This will allow us to get different opinions without them having a chance to change their stories.
- 3) All witnesses will be asked to identify themselves, establish a LSP (last scene point) using a reference object such as a, tree, house or rock across the water, fire boat, or firefighter in a rescue suit in the water.
- 4) Witnesses shall remain at the scene for as long as the Dive Team Operations Officer requires. If they should need to leave we should make every attempt to acquire the necessary information to allow us to contact them later if needed.
- 5) All witness statements will be recorded on the standardized questioner form and a sketch will be made.
- 6) Once all interviews are complete, the personnel will create a "Last Seen Point" by triangulating the information on a map and transferring this information to the Incident Commander and Dive Team Operations Officer.

D) Operational Readiness

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- 1) Once the scene size-up and witness interviews are completed, the decision to work in the rescue mode or the recovery mode will be made by the D14 Dive Team Operations Officer and the Incident Commander.
- 2) The decisions to work a shore based operation or a boat-based operation will be decided on the distance from shore, type of body of water and last seen point of the victim(s) also be made.
- 3) The rescue mode operation will be utilized if there is a chance to save human life.
- 4) The recovery mode operation will be used if there is no chance to save a human life or we are just trying to recover an object.

E) Team Member Duties

- 1) Primary Diver
 - (a) Self-evaluation of fitness to dive
 - (b) Proper equipment fit
 - (c) Review line signals with line tender
 - (d) Complete understanding of assigned mission prior to commencing operations
 - (e) Proper execution of search patterns
 - (f) Maintain proper tension and line contact at all times
 - (g) Proper execution of object located procedure
 - (h) Proper execution of and compliance with team procedures
 - (i) Preservation of object location, evidence and victim dignity
- 2) Duties of Line Tender

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- (a) Assist the primary and back-up diver with dressing when needed
 - (b) Performs pre-dive equipment check of entry diver
 - (c) Conducts a pre-dive checklist using the standardized dive team form
 - (d) Review of operation mode with diver (rescue vs. recovery)
 - (e) Review search pattern to be used with the diver
 - (f) Review all line signals with the diver
 - (g) Track and document diver's air supply using surface consumption rate from charts
 - (h) Control correct and efficient execution of search patterns through direct line contact and tensions while maintaining visual contact with divers air bubbles at all times and when appropriate through direct verbal contact with diver
 - (i) Notify Dive Team Operations Officer as soon as victim/object is found
 - (j) Assist the return of the diver to shore or boat while documenting return psi and maximum depth of dive
 - (k) Conduct post-dive check out and neurological exam
- 3) Duties of Back-up Diver/Rescuer
- (a) Perform primary function as safety/back-up diver for primary diver
 - (b) Maintain operational readiness to perform primary function within a relatively close proximity to primary diver entry point in or near the water
 - (c) This individual will be fully dressed and ready for a rapid entry into the water should the primary diver signal for help or that he found the object
- 4) Duties of Dive Team Operations Officer

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- (a) Liaison between dive team and local Incident Commander
- (b) Confer with local Incident Commander to determine rescue vs. recovery mode using risk/benefit analysis
- (c) Determine operational readiness of dive team
- (d) Assign team members to needed support roles
- (e) Document all team movements throughout the incident
- (f) Create an after actions report to be submitted to all Chiefs and local Incident Commander
- (g) Facilitate an on scene critique of the incident with team members as soon as possible, prior to leaving the scene.
- (h) Terminate the incident for the dive team.

F) Search Patterns

1) Shore based patterns:

- (a) Sweep pattern 200 feet water rescue line
- (b) Parallel pattern 200 feet water rescue line
- (c) Snag pattern 200 feet water rescue line

2) Boat based Operations:

- (a) Expanding circles 200 feet water rescue line.
- (b) Tow bar 25 feet water rescue line

G) Rescue Operation – Upon Locating the Victim

- 1) The diver shall provide the proper signal to the line tender while maintaining control of the victim.

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- 2) The line tender shall discreetly notify the Dive Team Operations Officer while assisting the diver and victim back to shore or to the boat
 - 3) The Dive Team Operations Officer will notify the Incident Commander on the scene.
 - 4) The victim shall be removed to emergency personnel designated by the local Incident Commander
- H) Recovery Operation – Upon Locating the Victim or Object
- 1) The diver shall provide the proper signal to the line tender.
 - 2) The line tender shall advise the Dive Team Operations Officer of the development.
 - 3) The diver shall secure the search line or otherwise mark the location of the victim or object.
 - 4) The diver shall return to the line tender following the contour of the land.
 - 5) The diver shall brief the line tender and the Dive Team Operations Officer of his findings.
 - 6) Upon conferring with the local Incident Commander the Dive Team Operations Officer shall determine the method and location to remove the victim or object, relying on the advice of the divers.
 - 7) The Dive Team Operations Officer should assign a second team of two (2) back-up divers while the first dive team removes the victim or object.
- I) Vehicle Recovery Operation
- 1) The basic dive operation in the recovery mode is to be followed.
 - 2) Only trained vehicle recovery divers will be utilized in this operations

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- 3) All operational decisions will be made by the Dive Team Operations Officer, who may confer with other team members.
- 4) Divers will attach the lifting bags to an appropriate location on the object to be recovered and stay clear of the object during lifting operations.
- 5) In the event of a winch being used, Safety will clear an area around the winch.

J) Diver Fouled – Emergency Situation

- 1) Proper line signal or verbal communication will be made to the tender
- 2) If the tender does not receive a response from a one tug line signal or no verbal response with the diver or he/she receives four (4) or more tugs or at his/her discretion the diver may be in need of assistance
- 3) Safety/Back up diver will be activated immediately, and the Dive Team Operations Officer will be notified. The 90% will move up to Safety/Backup and the 90% diver will be replaced by an additional diver.
- 4) The safety diver will follow the line to the distressed diver, he/she should approach expediently but cautiously as not to become fouled himself.
- 5) If, by decision of the safety diver, he may need more personnel to recover the primary diver, all assets necessary and available will be deployed under his direction, keeping a safety available on the surface.
- 6) A direct line of communication will be established with the safety diver as soon as possible.
- 7) Accountability of all personnel will be of the utmost importance at this time and all non-essential shore personnel will be removed from the dive site to facilitate this emergency, including all local firefighters and non-dive team members.

K) Termination of Dive Operations

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- 1) The Dive Team Operations Officer upon conferring with the local Incident Commander will terminate the dive team operations under the following conditions:
 - (a) Rescue/Recovery of victim (s) or object
 - (b) Weather
 - (c) Unsafe conditions such as darkness, moving water, etc.
 - (d) Any other condition deemed necessary by the local Incident Commander or Dive Team Operations Officer
- 2) Assure that a primary and neurological survey of all divers involved in the operation has been completed
- 3) Assures that all personnel on scene have been properly rehabbed
- 4) Facilitates a critique the operation.
- 5) Activates a CISD team if required by local authorities or personnel on scene.
- 6) Assures decontamination of all equipment
- 7) Assures that all team and personal equipment is placed back into a readiness state, as soon as possible.
- 8) Ensures completion of all reports (incident, witness and scene sketches).
- 9) All personnel shall immediately report any physical problem i.e. injuries, any symptoms of a hyperbaric disorder or any equipment malfunctions to the dive team leader.
- 10) Closes out accountability with team members and local authorities.

L) DIVER EQUIPMENT

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- 1) All divers shall have the following equipment:
 - (a) Dry suit
 - (b) Hood
 - (c) Gloves
 - (d) Harness/Carabineer locking
 - (e) Weight belt
 - (f) Full Face Mask
 - (g) Fins
 - (h) Buoyancy compensator
 - (i) Regulator
 - (j) Depth Gauge/Pressure gauge
 - (k) Octopus/Alternate Air Source
 - (l) 2 Cutting Tools
 - (m) Compass

- 2) All divers will maintain their personal dive equipment in a readiness state to facilitate a faster response upon arrival on scene.

- 3) All boats will be properly maintained by their respective departments and kept in a readiness state to be determined by the ambient and seasonal weather conditions.

- 4) We recognize the budget problems and recommend that each department supply this equipment. This equipment will be purchased as soon as budgets allow or a grant is obtained for the dive team.

VIII) RECORDS, REPORTS, CHARTS, FORMS

- A) Dive Team Neurological Check List

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Sog Review Dates: