



## Dive Operators Policy

### Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the highest possible standards of safety and security of recreational dive operations in Belize by instituting certain measures designed to address the potential hazards and risks involved in diving activities and protect all divers from injury and or illness at all times.

### Licensing of Dive Operators

In order to be licensed, all dive operations in Belize, be they designated dive shops or dive resorts, must, in addition to the requirements stipulated under the existing legislation pertaining to the licensing of tour operators (cf. Statutory Instrument, Belize Tourist Board (Tour Operators) Regulations 1999), satisfy the following requirements.

- a) Possess and operate an adequate quantity of equipment such as craft, air tanks, weights, etc
- b) Maintain suitable premises with adequate telecommunications equipment.
- c) Possess or have easy access to all the necessary training equipment and materials for the purposes of conducting diving lessons and diving certification courses.
- d) Must have adequate public liability insurance to provide cover for accident, injury, loss of property, etc.

Although not a precondition for licensing, dive operations should ideally aim to become internationally accredited dive resorts.

### Plan of Dive Activities

Each dive operator must submit a program or itinerary detailing the activities and sites of tours advertised and offered.

### Diver Certification

i. Each dive guide must have a minimum of a dive master certification from a recognized international program to be leading any tour. He or she must also hold a current CPR certification.

- ii. Guides leading snorkeling tours must have a minimum of a skin divers certification.

### **Tour Leader**

During any diving tour, the dive operator must designate a guide as the tour leader. The tour leader is responsible for the following:

- i. Being at the site at all times
- ii. Coordinating all activities of the dive
- iii. Briefing individuals about the area in which the dive will occur
- iv. Briefing individuals about the equipment that are going to be used
- v. Briefing individuals on the emergency procedures
- vi. Briefing individuals of the estimated depth and bottom time

### **Re-certification**

Dive guides must undergo a re-certification program if they have not been actively leading tours for a year.

### **Dive Limitations**

The tour leader must ensure that a diver on a tour must be certified to a specific depth according to his or her training and in no circumstances should that diver exceed that depth.

### **Guide/Divers Ratio**

To ensure that the safety of divers is protected and the quality of the dive experience is enhanced, there should be no more than eight divers per dive guide on any given tour.

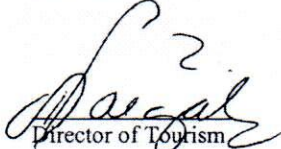
### **Emergency Procedures**

There is always the possibility of emergency situations while on any tour. In order to address this possibility, all dive operators must submit an emergency plan detailing how each of the following will be adequately addressed:


- i. Tour lost at sea
- ii. Diver injured, in trouble, or lost at sea
- iii. Diver becomes sick

**Equipment Maintenance**

- i. All dive equipment must be properly maintained and meet the standards set by a recognized international program.
- ii. A service log must be kept stating the nature of the work undertaken, serial number of the equipment, date when the work was done and the name or entity that performed the maintenance.

  
Director of Tourism

Nov 5, 2001  
Date

  
Chairman, Tour Operators Committee

November 1, 2001  
Date