

European Diving Technology Committee



Issue 1 - November 2011

Member Country and Groups Represented:

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|  |  |  |  |  |
| Austria | Belgium | Croatia | Czech Republic | Denmark |
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| Estonia | Finland | France | Germany | Italy |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Latvia | Netherlands | Norway | Poland | Portugal |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Spain | Slovak Republic | Sweden | Switzerland | Turkey |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| United Kingdom | IMCA | IDSA | IDRF | ADC |

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NEWSLETTER

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A reminder of the history of EDTC

A Letter from the Chairman

Dear Members,

First of all I would like to thank you for the trust put in me as your new Chairman, following the meeting Marseilles in September this year.

I, along with the Secretary and other Board Members will do my very best to honour these appointments and strive to achieve some of the expectations brought to my attention during the annual meeting.

In taking on this role I understand it is the wish of EDTC members for the Committee to be a more pro-active organization, and this will be a priority issue during my tenure as Chairman.

In order to fulfil the wish to make EDTC more pro-active, I have began a process of changing the way EDTC works from being predominantly a one year discussion event to instead being more activate within the different areas of interest that members asked that we focus upon.

Since the annual meeting, the following has ben implemented;

- The board has held two teleconference meetings in an effort to properly explore plans for the upcoming EDTC conference in Brussels. A further teleconference is expected to take place in early December to finalise if there is adequate time and content to justify a high level conference of this nature.
- The work group to cross reference relevant regulations has been activated, and we hope to have something to put before members for further discussion early in the new year
- The work group established to consider wind farm guidelines/ regulation has been activated, some work has been put in place and the next meeting to discuss progressing this, in readiness for the EDTC Annual Meeting in 2012, has already been organised to be held in London on March 2012.

As part of our efforts to keep all members updated on the different happenings, and to try and encourage Members of EDTC to voice their thoughts on any matter associated with diving activity, we have established an EDTC Newsletter that will be circulated two or three times during the year, depending on activity occurring through the year.

This initial effort is a brief summary of some work that is in progress and some matters agreed at the AGM and recorded in the minutes. I hope that members will contribute articles to the Secretary for use in compiling the Newsletter, in this way the variety of topics that face a diverse group like EDTC can be circulated periodically through the year, making the outlook for meaningful discussions and hopefully decision making at the Annual Meeting.

Best wishes for the New Year

Jörn Ryberg

Chairman of EDTC



EDTC - A brief History

The European Diving Technology Committee (EDTC) came into being in March 1973 as a result of an initiative taken by the United Kingdom's Society for Underwater Technology (SUT). The Society felt that there was a need to promote good standards for diving, to provide a means of improvement if appropriate, and to coordinate where possible, the different standards which existed around the world.

In view of the great concentration of offshore activities in European waters it was decided initially to seek a consensus for that zone. As a result the EDTC was formed and now has representatives from 21 European countries (2011). Membership also includes representatives from associated European associations and organisations. Observers also attend from countries and organisations outside Europe.

The EDTC seeks to reach its aim by;

- * Providing an independent European forum which may make recommendations relating to diving safety, technology and diving medicine;
- * Providing a place for discussions on matter related to manned underwater operations and in particular types of diving, types of equipment and their use, together with medical aspects, examination and monitoring for fitness of

divers;

- * Where applicable, recommending harmonisation so that common standards may be achieved;
- * Providing where appropriate, advice to governments, other organisations and individuals concerned with diving;

Membership is open to representatives of any country within geographical Europe. Each country may be represented by a single representative from each of the following categories:

Medical,
Industry,
Government,
Unions.

A Report from the EDTC Annual Meeting

Certification of Divers:

It was reported that false diving certificates were circulating in the business and some schools were issuing certificates claiming to be in compliance with standards proving to be incorrect when divers holding the certificates were interviewed. There were also schools claiming to provide diver training allowing the students to work anywhere in Europe, only to find out that this is not the case when they tried to obtain employment.

The meeting was informed that EU Directive 2005/56 is being changed strengthening the right of free movement within EU

and also limiting individual countries right to refuse employment of such personnel. With the current status of diving schools issuing certificates, some on behalf of national Authorities, other on behalf of an association (such as IDSA) control with diver certification will continue to be a problem and could potentially expose employer of divers to legal prosecution.

EDTC's and the member contractors preferences have always been for diving certificates to be issued by National Authorities, or alternatively by an accredited agency on behalf of the National Authority, as this should ensure necessary control with the providers of such training (Which is already the case for many of the IDSA Schools). Standards for such trainings should also preferably be National Standards, which should be based on the EDTC high level standard, supported by a more detailed standard (such as IDSA) and amended to take into account National Requirements.

IDSA claims to have an audit scheme in place where audits are performed by an independent IDSA member. This however still leaves to potential for questioning the individual's independence and it is suggested that the scheme would be better served by employing an accredited professional third party Auditor (National Standards Organisation) assisted by Technical Auditors provided by IDSA or others, as this will improve the credibility of such audits.

Some countries (like the UK) are currently publishing a list of certificates acceptable to them and it was proposed that EDTC should do the same. However, in order to do so materials need to be collected and assessed.

It was proposed by Olav Hauso that EDTC request the Government Representative for a Compliance Statement with the EDTC Standard as this will produce a useful starting point for the exercise. Eric Albier' accepted to act as a coordinator for progressing this.

The Brussels Conference A summary of the Objectives.

In a recent visit to Brussels, the Secretary noted the following;

One of the benefits of attending Brussels was the opportunity to fully focus on the objectives and necessary arrangements for the conference, without the normal distractions that occur in the workplace.

In reminding myself of the summary of the meeting held in February 2009, I note that the topic was to be focused on two elements, (1) the culmination of the GAP analysis of different country diving regulations, and (2) the free movement of labour within the EU.

The primary intention behind choosing Brussels as part of the working group summary was to get a higher profile to the proceedings, the reference to "official" was included in the text, but it would also be to try and get some attendance from those in the parliament to try and progress the awareness of commercial diving activity

across Europe.

Two things need to be resolved before we go head long into organising a conference in the centre of Brussels:

- (1) Is the GAP analysis advanced enough to be a key topic of discussion? If not has it been progressed to a point where the main areas are now identified, conference could be the culmination of this work?
- (2) Unless we can get some Euro MP's directly involved in the conference, especially with regard to the second topic item of the free movement of diving personnel, It is questionable whether there is any real benefit in adding this topic to the agenda.

The real benefit of holding the conference in the EU Parliament is to present a united voice in respect to key matters to try and get some real progress.

At this stage the outstanding information required to make the final decisions is quite simple:

- (1) Are we ready or will we definitely be ready with some real substance on the two topics for conference of this nature in May 2012?
- (2) If we will not be ready on these two topics do we have other matters that warrant a conference?
- (3) Who will be attending? Can we get commitment from all members of EDTC to attend?

Wind Farm Diving.

Several of the members have proposed that EDTC should be engage in drawing up diving regulations for wind farms as current legislation in many cases do not apply to underwater work as wind farms may be outside territorial water nor covered by offshore regulations.



Image courtesy of PDA Ltd

Some members were of the opinion that such activities could use existing regulation (although they have no legal validity outside the 4 or 12 Nautical Mile borders) while others were of the opinion that new regulations were necessary to provide an even playing field and safeguard personnel engaged in development of wind farms.



Image courtesy of Osiris Marine Services Ltd

Consequently a working part consisting of the following members were appointed:

- Jørn Ryberg, Sweden (Industry),
- Jane Bugler, (IMCA),
- Palle Kristensen, Denmark (Government),
- Chris Sherman, United Kingdom (Government)
- Roger O' Kane, United Kingdom (Industry)
- Leo Lagarde, the Netherlands (Industry).

The Working Party was requested to submit their report for the next members meeting.

This has already commenced and work is ongoing.



Image courtesy of Osiris Marine Services Ltd

