

	<b>OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS</b>	POLICY 0317	VERSION 1.0
		EFFECTIVE DATE June 20, 2012	
	AUTHORIZED BY: /s/ Rear Admiral Jonathan W. Bailey, NOAA <hr/> RADM Jonathan W. Bailey, NOAA Director, Office of Marine and Aviation Operations	REVIEW DATE June 20, 2015	
		RESPONSIBLE POSITION Manager, NOAA Diving Program	

## OVERSIGHT OF NOAA DIVING OPERATIONS BY NON-NOAA PERSONNEL

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### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy outlines the conditions under which non-National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) personnel may oversee NOAA diving operations.

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### 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all NOAA divers and diving operations conducted under NOAA auspices.

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### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 One of the keys to ensuring NOAA diving activities are conducted safely is to have knowledgeable and experienced individuals with the appropriate technical expertise topside at the dive site.
- 3.2 Although NOAA has employees certified to supervise diving operations, there are insufficient numbers of them to cover all required operations. Additionally, some specialized diving activities (e.g., technical diving) require the skills of individuals with expertise external to the ranks of NOAA personnel.
- 3.1 To address this shortfall, the NOAA Diving Control and Safety Board (NDCSB) has determined that selected non-NOAA personnel, meeting the criteria outlined in this policy, may oversee NOAA diving operations.

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### 4. POLICY

- 4.1 Non-NOAA personnel who have completed NOAA Divemaster training may oversee NOAA diving operations if a NOAA employee who is a Divemaster or Lead Diver is physically on the dive station to ensure all NOAA Diving Program (NDP) standards, policies, and procedures are followed.
- 4.2 Non-NOAA personnel who have not completed NOAA Divemaster training may oversee NOAA diving operations if they are approved by the NDCSB, and if a NOAA employee who is a Divemaster or Lead Diver is physically on the dive station to ensure all NDP standards, policies, and procedures are followed.

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### 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 NOAA Divers, Divemaster, and Lead Divers
- 5.1.1 Shall initiate requests to utilize non-NOAA personnel to oversee NOAA diving operations through their Unit Diving Supervisors (UDS).

- 5.1.2 Requests shall include, but are not limited to, qualifications of the requested individual (e.g., diving credentials and experience), fitness of the requested individual to participate in NDP operations (e.g., medical and physical conditions), and liability and financial support requirements and considerations.
- 5.1.3 NOAA Divemasters and Lead Divers assigned to assist non-NOAA Diving Personnel on the dive station shall:
  - A. Ensure that all dive operations are conducted in accordance with the NOAA Diving Standards and Safety Manuals.
  - B. Approve daily dive plans and grant authority to commence operations.
  - C. Remain actively engaged in all phases of the dive operation.
  - D. Assist non-NOAA Diving Overseers in managing emergencies as requested and ensure that all diving incidents are reported per the NOAA Diving Standards and Safety Manuals.
  - E. Suspend or terminate dive operations deemed unsafe or unwise.
- 5.2 Non-NOAA Diving Personnel
  - 5.2.1 Shall provide information on their qualifications to oversee specific NOAA diving operations upon request.
  - 5.2.2 Shall oversee NOAA diving operations in accordance with the NOAA Standards and Safety Manuals, and:
    - A. Include the assigned NOAA Divemaster or Lead Diver in all phases of the dive operation including pre-dive planning.
    - B. Obtain concurrence from the NOAA Divemasters and Lead Divers to commence dive operations.
    - C. Keep assigned NOAA Divemaster or Lead Diver informed on progress of dive operations.
    - D. Relinquish oversight of the dive operation when so directed by the assigned NOAA Divemaster or Lead Divers.
- 5.1 Unit Diving Supervisors
  - 5.1.1 Shall review requests from Divers, Lead Divers, and Divemasters and, if deemed appropriate, forward to respective Line/Staff Office (LO/SO) Diving Officer.
  - 5.1.2 Shall inform the requesting diver of the NDCSB decision.
  - 5.1.3 Shall ensure a qualified NOAA employee who is a Divemaster or Lead Diver is present to monitor adherence to NOAA diving administrative requirements when a non-NOAA individual is overseeing NOAA diving operations.
- 5.2 Line/Staff Office Diving Officer
  - 5.2.1 Shall review requests from UDSs and, if deemed appropriate, forward to the Chair of the NOAA Diving Control and Safety Board.
  - 5.2.2 Shall inform the UDS of the NDCSB decision.
- 5.3 Chair, NOAA Diving Control and Safety Board
  - 5.3.1 Shall forward requests from LO/SO Diving Officers to the members of the NDCSB for a vote.
  - 5.3.2 Shall inform the members of the NDCSB on the results of the vote.

#### 5.4 Members of the NDCSB

- 5.4.1 Shall review requests and vote to approve or reject requests.
- 5.4.2 Acceptance of non-NOAA personnel for the oversight of NOAA diving operations shall be made on an individual basis dependent on the qualifications of all involved.

## 6. DEFINITIONS

<b>NOAA Divers</b>	Individuals certified by the NOAA Diving Program Manager to dive and perform work in a hyperbaric environment in support of NOAA's mission. These include NOAA employees (federal full-time and contract employees), reciprocity, and volunteer divers.
<b>NOAA Divemaster</b>	NOAA divers assigned by the NOAA Line or Staff Office Unit Diving Supervisor to oversee and direct all aspects of a dive operation affecting the safety and health of the dive team members at the dive site.
<b>NOAA Diving Control and Safety Board</b>	An appointed board of representatives from NOAA's LO/SO who report jointly to the OMAO Director and NOAA Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and have autonomous and absolute authority over and promote the safe and effective operations of the NOAA Diving Program.
<b>NDCSB Chair</b>	Individual elected by the voting members of the NDCSB to coordinate and lead meetings, and cast the deciding vote in case of ties.
<b>NOAA Lead Diver</b>	Individuals appointed by Unit Diving Supervisors to oversee and conduct diving operations.
<b>NOAA Line/Staff Office Diving Officers</b>	Individuals who oversee and direct diving activities within specific NOAA Line and Staff Offices and serving as voting members on the NDCSB.
<b>Non-NOAA Personnel</b>	All personnel who are not currently full or part time equivalent (FTEs) employees or who are not authorized volunteers of NOAA.
<b>Unit Diving Supervisor</b>	NOAA diver appointed by Diving Officers of the respective NOAA Line Office to oversee, direct, and approve all diving activities conducted within the unit and to administer to the needs of assigned divers.

## 7. AUTHORITY

Document Management System  
<http://10.49.29.4NWebDesktop/Binders.aspx>

- OMAO 0300, NOAA Diving

## 8. NOTES

Effect on Other Documents: None.

Distribution: All NOAA divers

Document History:

<u>Version</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Brief Description of Changes</u>
1.0	6/20/12	Initial Document