INTERNATIONAL DIVING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

idsa

NEWS

EDITION NUMBER 17 JANUARY 2011

ANNUAL MEETING - ROTTERDAM REPORT

Welcoming Four New Members

Helmets of the Deep Revised

Current Wet Valve Systems

International Schools Liaison

idsa NEWS
Edition 17 January 2011

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Front cover photograph:
A diver from the Israeli Professional Diving Academy working on an oil pipeline

ANNUAL MEETING 2011
KARLSKRONA (SWEDEN)
6th to 8th September 2011
Hosted by the Swedish Armed Forces Diving and Naval Medical Centre (DNC)

ABOUT OUR HOSTS
DNC is the major Training Centre for the training of divers and supervisors in the Swedish Armed Forces, Coast Guard and Rescue divers. Education for divers is certified up to IDSA level 3. The training also includes chamber operators and free ascent training for divers and submariners. The "Free ascent/submarine escape-training" is carried out in a 21m deep pool/tank with two escape chambers for submarine lockout at the bottom.

The Centre was rebuilt in 2008, and reopened in May 2009, work will be ongoing until it is fully operational in 2012.

There are two training pools, one outside, 25m in diameter and 6m deep which is used for basic scuba training, for welding/cutting and tool handling for the divers. The other 12m in diameter and 6m deep which is used for all types of work where good control of the divers is needed. In this pool all kinds of training tasks are possible, for example: car wrecks, exercise mines and so on. It is also suitable for ROVs. It is also possible to control 'daylight', which allows "night dives" to be carried our during normal work hours.

ABOUT the CITY
Established in 1680, Karlskrona is an exceptionally well preserved example of a European planned naval base, and although its design has been influenced by similar undertakings it has in turn acted as a model for comparable installations. Naval bases played an important part during the centuries when the strength of a nation's navy was a decisive factor in European power politics and of those that remain from this period Karlskrona is the most complete and well preserved.

ABOUT the CONFERENCE
Accommodation
The Conference Hotel is the Scandic Hotel in Karlskrona
Tel :+46(0)455 372 000
E Mail: karlskrona@scandichotels.com
www.scandichotels.com
Special Room Rate (including Breakfast):
Single room: 900 Skr per room per night
Double room:1000 Skr per room per night
Attendance
The meeting will be open to members and non-members, the fee which will cover attendance, transport, refreshment, lunches, and the Association dinner–will be €230 for members and €260 for non members/Observers. Full details of travel, and all other relevant matters are available from the Administrator at info@idsaworldwide.org


The Naval City of Karlskrona

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

LEO LAGARDE

Again I would like to welcome new Members to the Association each new member moves us closer to our goal of the International Standardisation of Diver Training Standards, the new members are:

New Associate members: The Divers Institute of Technology, Seattle USA. Groupe de Recherche Archeologique Sous Marine (GRASM), Marseille, France. Oceanos Escuela de Buceo professional SL, Barcelona, Spain

New Affiliate member: Podvoddiagnostika, Moscow.

I am also very pleased to congratulate the Centre Méditerranéen de Plongée Professionnelle (CMPP) on completing an IDSA Audit successfully. The school has now been accepted as a Full Member with approval to teach to IDSA Level 3. As you will read, the Annual meeting in Rotterdam (Page 4) hosted by SMIT was well attended and provoked considerable discussion. It also allowed a considerable and unique interchange of ideas between members against one of the most exciting and long established Commercial Diving and Salvage backgrounds in the World, provided by our Hosts.

I am also pleased to know of the recent liaison visit of an Italian Instructor to Oslo (Page 12). These visits contribute a great deal to the effectiveness of IDSA, one of the most important aspects of which is that it gives students the facility to begin training at one school and continue at another, for example not all Countries have sufficient demand to teach the higher qualifications in the IDSA programme. This allows a student who completes Level 1 in his own Country to continue with Level 2 in another as his or her career develops. He no longer has to start again at the beginning if he has to go to another country as is often the case at the moment.

Finally, if you have any matters which you would like to discuss before the next Annual Meeting, please send them to the Administrator at any time.

ABOUT IDSA

The Association is concerned with all divers - offshore, inshore and inland and has established International Diver Training Standards based on the consensus view of its many members. The Standards provide both a yardstick for those responsible for either administering existing National Standards or creating new ones and a guide for clients, diving contractors and divers themselves. It is considered that the introduction of these internationally agreed diver training standards will have the effect of improving safety, providing contractors with a direct input into the Diver Training Syllabus, enabling contractors to bid across national borders on a more level playing field, improving diver quality and providing divers with greater job opportunities.

Some governments have and will, set their own national diver training requirements. The IDSA programme provides a means of equating national standards by maintaining a table of equivalence.

One of the main thrusts is towards International Diver Certification in order to bring together the various national schemes which are currently in existence. However, the Association is not only concerned with standards; it also serves as a valuable forum for the interchange of news and views between members, many of whom are the only commercial school in their country. Current routes for this interchange are the Newsletter - published in January and July, the IDSA website, the annual meeting in September/ October, and the various and many forms of contact between members and the executive board.

For membership and all other information contact the Administrator at info@idsaworldwide.org

THE ROTTERDAM MEETING

Delegates outside the SMIT floating conference facility during a break

The 2010 Annual Meeting of IDSA Schools was held in Rotterdam from 13-15 October. Hosted by SMIT, the sessions were held aboard their floating meeting centre, berthed amongst work tugs in part of Rotterdam's enormous harbour facility. This 'real life' working situation proved to be an appropriate base for the meeting which covered a range of topics with lively discussions from the 35 delegates from fifteen countries.

Outside formal sessions the opportunity to 'network' was much appreciated by members from Teheran and Moscow in the east to Houston and Seattle in the west. From the north, all four Scandinavian countries and Scotland were represented, through Poland, Holland, Belgium, France, and Italy to Morocco in the south.

It was particularly helpful to have the contributions and support from Industrial Members and from the government representatives from Norway and Sicily. Sadly the members from Egypt and India were unable to obtain visas in time.

Leo Lagarde was re-elected as chairman for the next two years.

At this stage of IDSA's evolution it was useful to discuss refinements to the membership structure, in line with present and future demands. When the Association began in the early 1980s the original members, who were all involved in commercial diver training, were given Full Member status along with the (later) right to issue IDSA qualification cards to their graduates. In order to ensure and maintain high quality, new applicants for Full Member status were subjected to a full audit by IDSA appointed auditors. However, with experience it became clear that many schools already undergo strict auditing to their recognised National Standards and yet another audit was not needed. For those schools therefore, which meet agreed and recognised National Standards, a further IDSA audit would not be required. Schools in countries which do not yet have National Standards would continue to be audited by IDSA.

At this meeting a further differentiation was proposed, that Full Membership should be sub-divided into two groups reflecting levels of training: 'Offshore Schools' which would be those accredited to teach IDSA Levels 1-4, and 'Inshore Schools' those teaching levels 1 and 2. Whilst open discussion by all members is encouraged at meetings it was generally felt that the separation would allow for voting in meetings to be specific to the type of school, giving offshore schools control over matters which only affect them; at the present time a decision concerning the minority of Offshore schools can be over ruled by the majority of Inshore schools. There would be no problem in an Inshore School applying and being audited to teach to level 3 and/or 4 should they wish to develop such courses and make the appropriate investment in equipment etc., and the IDSA course structure also allows for easy transfer between schools by students who wish to improve their qualifications. It was decided to leave the decision on dividing the two groups to the next meeting of the Executive Board.

The Chairman with Committee Member John Rabone (Left) and Minute Secretary Jill Williams making preliminary arrangements for the Meeting.

Aperitifs before the excellent Association Dinner at the 'Zalmhuis'.

The matter of the use of the IDSA logo was discussed and members were reminded of the decision in Palermo last year that only Full Member Schools may use the logo on their certificates. Its use on advertisements is permitted (to demonstrate membership of the Association) but applicants to courses should not assume that the use of the logo implies that courses offered meet IDSA standards, nor that IDSA certification is available. The administration will be happy to clarify the situation concerning individual schools.

The complex task of producing a 'gap analysis' showing differences between courses across the world is progressing, and already some fascinating differences in course hours and content have emerged. It is hoped that full results will be available soon and will be placed on the IDSA Website.

Delegates were fortunate to have the opportunity to visit the diving maintenance section of SMIT. The whole site including moorings, an office block, and maintenance buildings and wharves would take far more than an afternoon to cover but the two hours available gave a taste of the huge enterprise that exists and the extremely high quality of this company. This was followed by a boat tour of Rotterdam harbour – the second largest in the world – and of the container port which is in operation 24 hours a day.

The large tour boat was dwarfed by barges and ships entering and departing, the new DSV Seven Pacific could be seen testing the bell recovery system, maintenance was being carried out on oil rigs, and in other parts huge piles of salvaged metal were being loaded for recycling. The high quality of SMIT was in evidence next day when delegates were given an excellent presentation by Eric de Graaf, Salvage Superintendent on how the company trains new divers for the Salvage industry.

The Association is most grateful to SMIT for sponsoring this meeting and in particular to Marco Mentik for the overall organisation and hospitality.

The Board Meeting in Prague

Left to right : David Parkes Chief Exec of DCBC, Dag Wroldsen, Leo Lagarde (Chairman), Mark van der Esch, Paul Butler Chief Exec of ADAS, and John Rabone

The EDTC Members during a session

In order to continue liaison with the European Diving Technology Committee (EDTC) it was decided to hold a Board meeting at the same time as the EDTC Meeting, so that all Board Members were able to attend both.

As well as giving the members of the Board the opportunity to meet Members of EDTC, the Board were also able to exchange News & Views with the Chief Executives of the Diving Certification Board of Canada (DCBC) and the Australian Diver Accreditation Scheme (ADAS)

One of the most important discussions, which it was planned would be brought up at the Annual Meeting, was the acceptance of prior learning. The following Procedure was considered: a diver holding a qualification listed in the IDSA Table of Equivalence, and wishing to obtain an IDSA Diver Qualification Card (IDQC), should apply to the Administration with the following information:

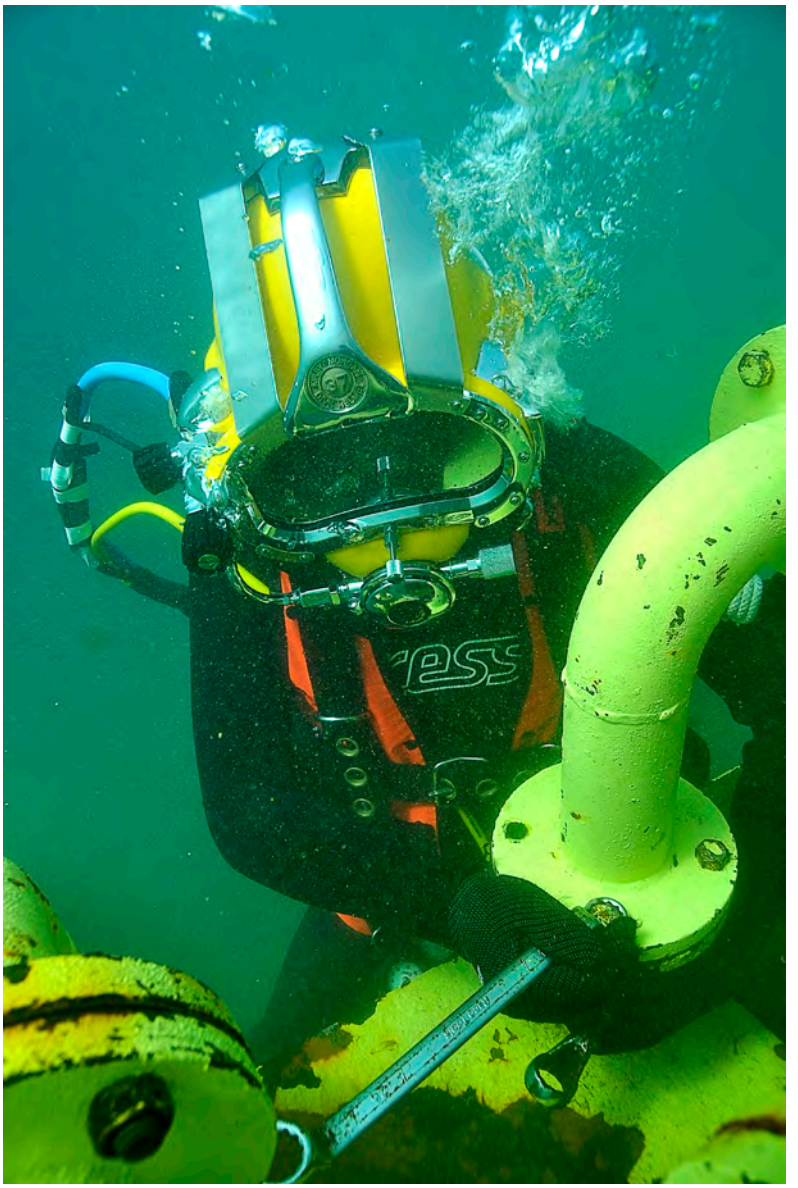
(a) His latest contact details
Full name
Current Address
Date of Birth
Nationality
(b) His Certificate of Training
(c) A copy of the identification page from his passport
(d) A colour passport type photograph

Subsequent to receiving this information the Administration will contact the school which issued the qualification and ask for verification. Once verification has been received, the applicant will be sent an invoice for the sum, agreed from time to time at the annual meeting. Once the invoice has been paid, an IDQC will be issued.

There was further discussion on how – and how much – allowance should be made for the acceptance of prior learning in the form of recreational training prior to the beginning of an IDSA course - which, at present , seems subject to considerable variation.

OCEANOS

ESCUALA DE BUCEO PROFESIONAL SL BARCELONA



With the opportunity provided by being Associate Members of IDSA, we are pleased to present internationally our Professional Diving School: OCEANOS, located on Barcelona, in the heart of Mediterranean Sea with excellent weather and exceptional facilities for diving.

For the development of our courses we have experienced professionals in the sector who, as well as introducing all the theoretical and technical knowledge during the teaching sessions, can also raise questions and difficulties that a professional diver will find in real-life situations, for example professionals used to working in difficult situations, ransom and a revival of craft, polluted and hostile environments and hydraulic work.

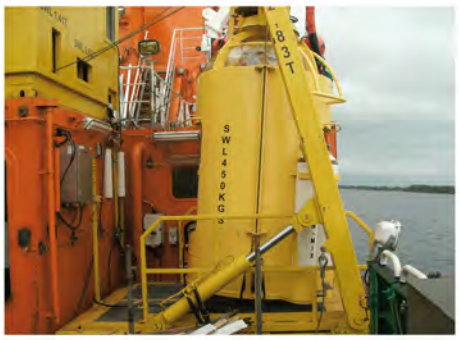
Our Professionals also have extensive experience in the field of teaching, and are fully prepared to provide the skills that are needed for the planning and delivery of each course.

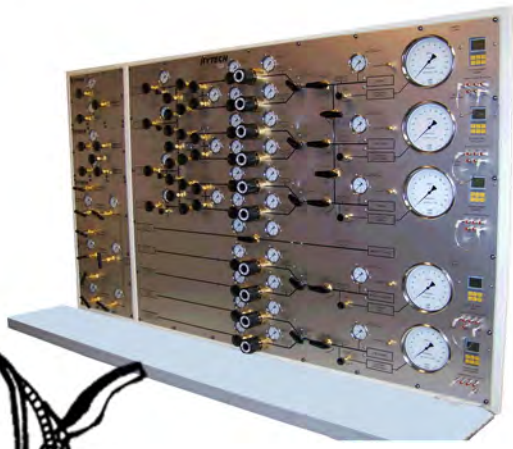
Our academic program includes courses from different categories, over a range of depths, safety courses such as Basic Life Support and Oxygen Supply in first aid and courses in different specialties of underwater working, in order for divers to become specialists in various professional areas such as cutting and welding, hydraulic works, etc...

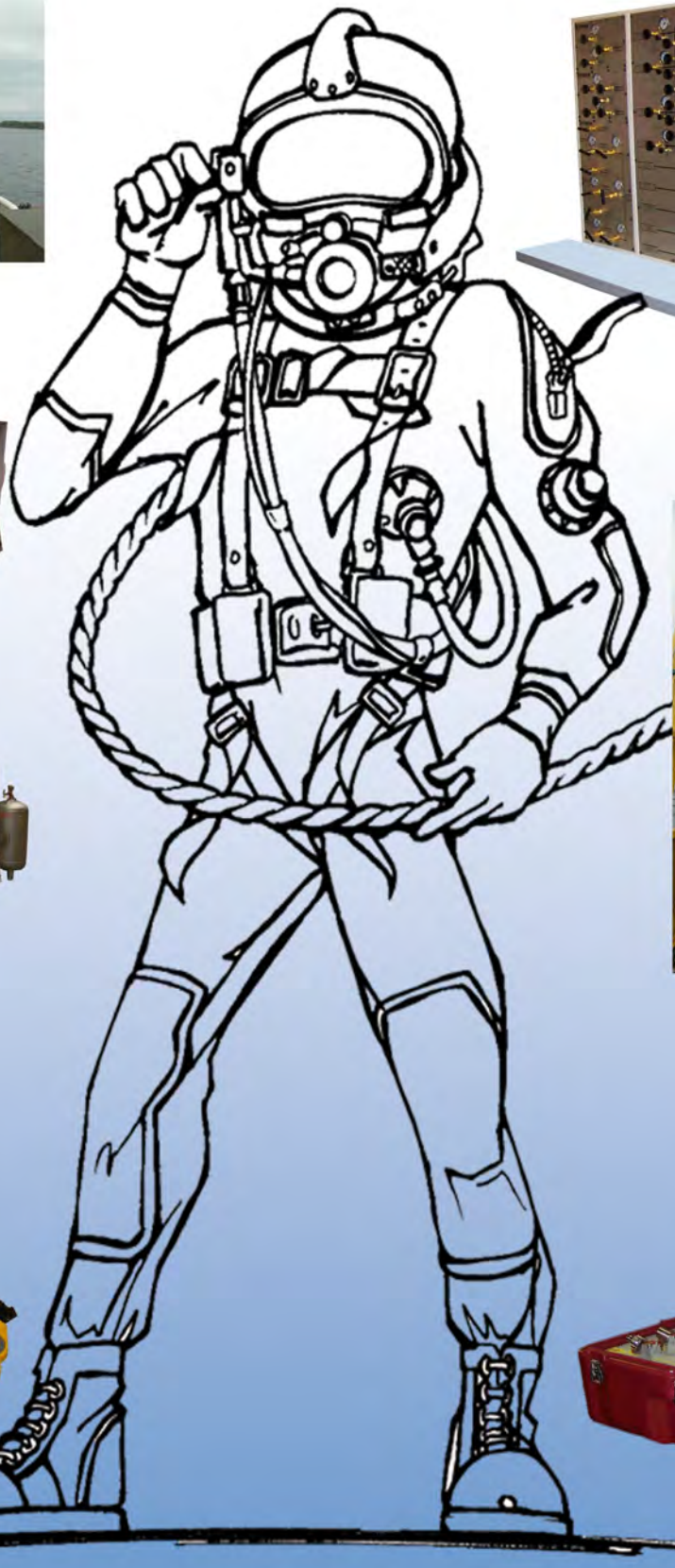
OCEANOS also focuses on new techniques of construction work that have led to new skills for workers, such as on tunnel boring machines where the operators work at high atmospheric pressure. Such works are performed in hyperbaric conditions, confined spaces and all in one 'depth', so this type of work is performed by professional divers.

Aware of the latest technological advances OCEANOS is committed to education and training of excellent specialists in the diving world.

HYTECH







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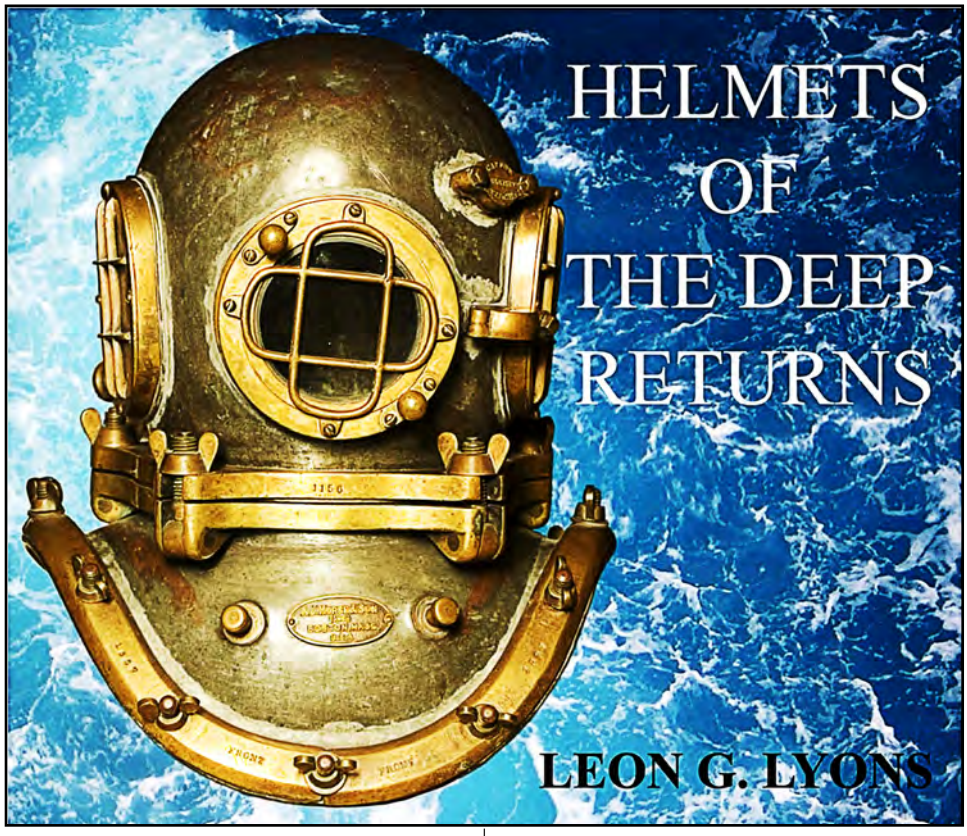


In 1989 Leon Lyons, an avid helmet collector wrote his first book HELMETS OF THE DEEP about diving helmets. The book contained many pictures of helmets and is still considered the 'Bible' for historic and modern helmet diving equipment. This four hundred page book, an edition of a thousand copies was, despite the relatively high price, soon sold out and became a rarity in the second-hand book market. It saw several sales of more that US$ 3000. Without a doubt the book contributed a great deal to the wider interest in the (semi)commercial sector There are many collectors, varying from people who own a single helmet to collectors with more than two hundred helmets, along with various accessories and equipment. During the past decades, much more previously unseen material has turned up and additional information has become available. These were the reasons that Leon Lyons started working on a new edition. In 2007, with the help and support of many diving equipment collectors, further additional information became available. His new book HELMETS OF THE DEEP RETURNS is the result of nearly four years of intensive work. Lyons succeeded in finding and obtaining so much material, that currently a volume of around twelve hundred pages is expected. The book will be printed in an edition of two thousand copies, of which eighteen hundred will be the standard hardbound copy plus a limited edition of two hundred copies in a luxury leather binding. Each book will be provided with a serial number and be delivered with a certificate, personally signed by the author.

The expectation is that this book will be available in the second quarter of 2011. In the meantime the editing procedure is under way and it is planned to have it ready around the end of this year. The actual printing and binding process will take two to three months, so it can be expected that the book will be available for transport to the USA and Nautiek in the Netherlands at the beginning of April 2012; not counting any unforeseen delays. Logistical preparations are being done beforehand, to achieve delivery to the customers that have reserved one or more books

The final retail price of the book is not fixed at this moment, as the cost of printing is dependent on the still unknown number of pages. Also still unknown is the actual material needed, the production costs, the expense of airfreight, and the importation and handling costs in the countries of destination. No doubt there will be changes in the exchange rates of the Dollar and Euro. The basic retail price of the book (ex V.A.T.)will be calculated in the European Community. It will be distributed from both the USA and the Netherlands. The price will be kept at an equivalent level. A provisional estimate of the retail price according to the exchange rates of August 29th 2010 projects US$500 or 390 euros for the standard copy, and US$1000 or 780euros for the leather bound version.

Exclusive distribution in Europe will be by Nautiek. Copies reserved by European customers can be requested by letter or email from:

NAUTIEK, P.O. box 454; 2240 AL WASSENAAR,
The Netherlands.
Email: nautiekvof@planet.nl

Nautiek's reservation and payment procedures are as follows: the reservation of books is provisionally considered to be without commitment. As soon as the actual printing starts, an invoice will be sent with a request for a down payment of US$200 per standard or 400 euros per leather bound book, to be paid within a month via bank transfer. This advance payment will be settled in the final invoice that will also include the V.A.T. (where this is appropriate) and delivery costs (insured postage parcel). The final invoice will be sent, in anticipation of the receipt of the rest of the money to be transfered to our bank, followed by the dispatch of the book after the payment is received.

In the case of having to cancel the order, due to unforeseen circumstances, after having submitted the down payment, the full paid amount will be refunded after the receipt of a written request.

For additional information: nautiekvof@planet.nl

Copies may be reserved by customers outside Europe from the author:

Leon Lyons, P.O.Box 190; ST AUGUSTINE:
FL 32085#0190; U.S.A.
Email: AMoebus103@aol.com

DIVER SHORTAGE
CONCERN FOR THE OFFSHORE WIND INDUSTRY

More than 2,200 commercial divers will be needed to help build and develop Europe's offshore wind sector as it rapidly expands over the next six years, according to leading industry analysts. A new report commissioned by subsea training provider The Underwater Centre at Fort William in Scotland has studied the number of divers who will be needed to meet the renewable energy targets which have been set by governments across Europe.

The study, which was carried out by energy business analysts Douglas Westwood, focuses on the installation and maintenance phases of offshore wind farm development over the next six years. It concludes that 1,700 divers will be needed during the installation phase where there is a potential for 17.7GW to come online. 2013 will see a peak in demand with 500 divers required, mainly in the UK and Germany. With the potential of 3,800 turbines coming online in Europe by 2016, an additional 500 divers would be required during the operations and maintenance phase. The report also reveals that during the operational phase, 1.3 divers will be needed for every 10 turbines. From 2010 to 2016, the majority of divers required for the installation phase will be in water depths from 20m to 39m. It is projected that turbines in depths of more than 40m will become more frequent, leading to an increased need for divers. Before 2008, most turbines were installed in depths between 10m to 19m. Now projects are moving further offshore, with 90% of new developments in depths greater than 20m.

Steve Ham, general manager of The Underwater Centre said the new report underlines the integral role that commercial divers will play in the offshore wind farm sector. We have been speaking for some time about how there will be an increased need for commercial divers to meet the demands of the nascent renewables sector, specifically the high number of wind farms that have been planned. This report from Douglas Westwood reinforces our message that there is a danger that demand will outstrip availability of trained subsea personnel which, in turn, could affect the progression of some of the wind farm projects. 'Training our students in a realistic and industry relevant environment is key to our overall approach as this means, once they complete their course and leave The Underwater Centre, they are able to hit the ground running when they get employment in the renewables sector.'

The findings of the report are no surprise to leading industry representatives who say that the renewables industry is in danger of suffering from a raft of skills shortages. Subsea UK chief executive Alistair Birnie said, 'There is a growing and urgent need for skills right across the energy industry which this report clearly underlines. We cannot rely on our existing pool of resources to support the massive growth rate and the only way we will succeed is if we invest in the right skills at the right time. This report highlights divers as being one of the pressure areas which also includes skills such as engineers and technicians. 'Attracting new blood into the industry, combined with the energy industry working together to consolidate existing resources, is essential if we are if we are to address the demand for skills now and in the future.' Eric Doyle, alternative energy manager at energy consultancy Xodus Group said 'It is important that a resourcing assessment is made across the offshore wind supply chain and that a action plan is put in place to service the growing sector and to help minimise delays to wind farm projects. The industry is in danger of suffering from skills shortages in many disciplines and it is crucial that these risks are not underestimated and that action is taken now to transfer appropriate skills, knowledge and experience from the oil and gas industry.

(Source: Maritime Journal: Photo Peter Barker)

PROFESSIONAL SCUBA DIVING

Not in itself a dangerous activity but a potentially dangerous one.

A recent (March 31, 2010) casualty has brought into focus, once again and in the most serious way, the need for sound competence and the appropriate conduct of professional SCUBA operations a line should be drawn between the definitions of professional and industrial diving.

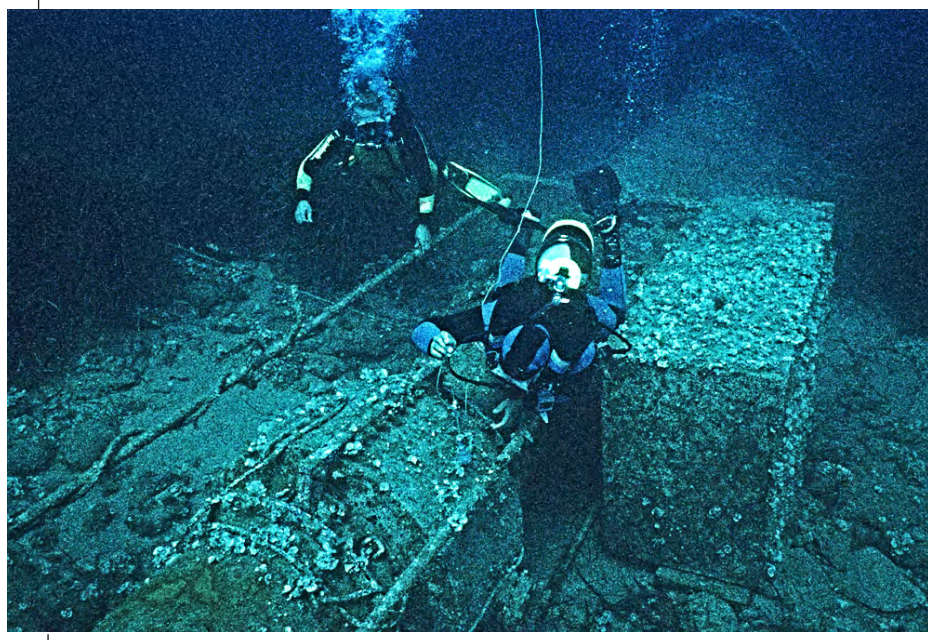
Anybody who earns a penny for what he is doing underwater is a professional diver, but beside the wide world of professional diving (e.g. environmental science, biology, geology, archaeology, photography, movies, salvage) there is another large area of industrial diving i.e. oil and gas industry, marine construction. Scuba diving can be considered a safe activity provided it is based on suitable equipment, correct and competent training, sound experience, appropriate manning levels, accurate planning, good environmental knowledge, adequate supervision, correct conduct of operations. Otherwise it becomes a potentially dangerous activity likely to turn into a nightmare and doomed to casualties.

The details of the above incident are that on March 31, 2010 in Tangier, SRPTM (Societé Réalisation Port Tanger Méditerranée) had the task of installing a current meter and recorder at a water depth of 53 metres (174 FSW) at some 800 metres (about half a mile) from the shore line. The main contractor was Saipem S.A. – Bouygues TP a European (EEC) diving contractor

The diving technique was Scuba with two divers, no safety line, breathing medium compressed air and a bottom time of 20 minutes.At the moment of leaving the bottom on the way up to the surface, there was a loss of visual contact between the two divers. One of them surfaced alone, the other one was found several minutes later lying on the seabed with his Scuba equipment some 3 metres away from him. The body was brought to the surface and the diver was confirmed dead.

Of course there are several aspects which should be considered in this event. Lack of competence and of professional attitude by the main contractor, lack of appropriate procedures in the choice, appointment and control of the diving contractor, lack of competent inspectors and supervisors.

Scuba is still an effective and practical diving system involving much reduced costs and requiring relatively light surface support systems. It goes back to the middle of the last century (early 1940s) when Y. Cousteau and E. Gagnan created the first modern regulator. Since then the professional Scuba diver has progressed at a steady pace to take his place, where appropriate, in an industry dominated for 150 years by the heavy gear diver. This led to the birth of CMAS (Confederation Mondiale des Activités Subaquatiques) in 1959 dealing with sport, scientific research and technical underwater activities. SCUBA diving on air in those early days often reached depths in excess of 100 metres (330 FSW) with a negligible number of casualties. The great credit of CMAS was the creation of a progressive training scheme for Scoba divers, based on three levels (one, two, three stars) which brought the divers to recognised levels of competence. In 1960 at the CMAS convention in Barcelona it was agreed that the depth limit should be: 40 metres (130 FSW) for heavy working tasks, 60 metres (200 FSW) for light tasks, 90 metres (300 FSW) for observation only. Since then Depth limits generally have generally become more restrictive. Until now, in most European countries, the maximum depth is 30 metres (100 FSW) for Inshore/Inland activities, and is banned altogether offshore.



Most Commercial Diving Schools consider SCUBA to be an essential part of basic training, as it brings the diver face to face with the underwater environment and breeds in-water competence as well as highlighting those who do not achieve it. In recent years Scuba safety has been enhanced by the introduction of communications, the diver frequently wears a Full Face Mask or Demand Helmet joined to the Comms Box at the Surface by a hard wire attached to the lifeline All this reflects the real need for accurate and appropriate training and for very careful preparation in the conduct of SCUBA diving operations. In view of current concepts in terms of human safety underwater we should think about SOLUW (Safety of Life under Water) as the equivalent of the worldwide accepted and adhered to SOLAS (Safety of Life At Sea) rules and regulations. It is a long way to go, but it is a worthwhile action if the progress made in the last 3 decades is considered. Thanks to the efforts of IDSA, ADC int., IMCA and OGP DOSsC (Diving Operations sub Committee).

Giulio Melegari

AN ITALIAN IN OSLO

BY FRANCESCO CONSTANTINO CHIEF INSTRUCTOR AT CEDIFOP

CEDIFOP based in Palermo, Sicily, achieved full membership of IDSA in 2008 to teach to Level 2. Like many other IDSA schools, CEDIFOP is geographically isolated, a fact recognised by the school's Director, Manos Kouvakis, who is committed to the aim of equal standards of training both in and outside Europe. This need is also reflected in the European Protocol of Lisbon which seeks to establish comparable standards of training in a wide variety of subjects across Europe and which is, of course, the long standing aim of IDSA within Diver Training.

So at the end of September 2010, as CEDIFOP's chief Instructor, I was able to visit the Norwegian school, NYD near Oslo, to experience teaching in a different environment and to study at first hand the daily workings of this well known school. As a Supervisor Instructor working in a school located in the busy commercial harbour of Palermo, the contrast in the conditions on an Oslo fjord gave a new perspective, with the pier at Fagerstrand providing equipment storage, teaching facilities, administrative offices and workshops all on site, and with immediate access to deep water available off the pier.

I was made very welcome by the Director, Dag Wroldson, and his team, and given access to observe and learn the content of various technical features of the equipment which was available and of training techniques in use there. It was very helpful to be able to talk to other instructors and to gain knowledge of the small, everyday aspects of training as well as of major techniques. I also had the opportunity to dive in the very different conditions and observed wet bell training, chamber decompression etc which will be useful as CEDIFOP works towards attaining Level 3 status in the future.

This opportunity to be within the working environment of another IDSA school has been very useful. It will help us to ensure that our training and standards are in line with other IDSA Schools and has given me a better understanding of what is expected. It is not a cheap option for a school to send an instructor but has been very worthwhile. It also needs the host school to be willing to share its experience and to allow instructor time. I am very grateful to have received the generous help from NYD and hope that other schools will be able to do the same in the future

SUMMARY LECTURE

FIRST DEVELOPMENTS OF DIVING IN THE NETHERLANDS

England

In 1823 Deane invented fire fighting apparatus, consisting of a helmet, with air suppied by a bellows. After some years the helmet was attached to a jacket which was suitable for diving. Those diving suits had the disadvantage that the diver had to stay in a more or less upright position to prevent water getting into the helmet. Around that period, the industrial revolution had just begun and with several further inventions it was possible to make hoses that withstood higher pressure as well as air pumps with larger capacity and better watertight suits. In 1838 the design of the closed diving suit by Edwards was perfected by August Siebe which offered the diver mobility and the ability to dive deeper and longer.

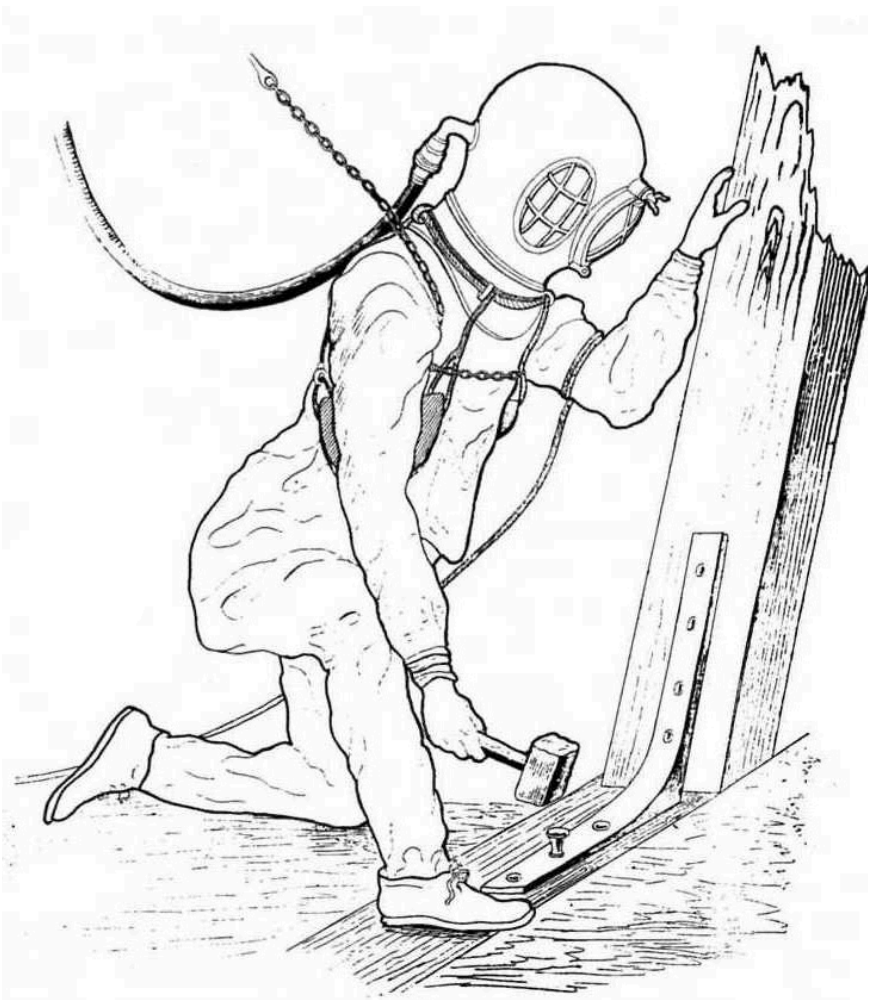


Figure 128 *A Dutch version of the Deane open diving helmet and dress dated 1843. Note the unusual location of the chest weights, underneath the diver's armpits. Another novel feature seen here for the first time is the hinged front face-plate of the helmet. The artist was clearly aware that the diver in the open helmet could not lean his head forward.* Leon Lyons, USA

The Netherlands

In 1836 the first semi-open English diving equipment were imported into the Netherlands. In 1843 the firm Bikkers (a manufacturer of fire fighting pumps and other equipment in Rotterdam) produced modified semi- closed diving equipment. They were successfully used during construction work of bridge foundations in Rotterdam. Within a few years Bikkers went over to the manufacturing of closed diving suits. As a consequence of the growing need to build bridges, sluices and provisions for water housekeeping in around one third of the country which is lying 1 – 7 meters below sea level and expanding the major ports with direct access to the North Sea. The use of divers was growing. This application was also of use to divers during salvage work in inland waters and along the dangerous Dutch coast. In 1867 Bikkers received a set of the French Rouquayrol-Denayrouze diving system. This consisted of a diving suit based on the closed diving system where the air supply come from a hose from a pump to the helmet, but via an air reservoir with compressed air that was worn on the back of the diver. By means of a hose connection on and in the helmet the diver breathed through a mouthpiece from a regulator that was mounted on the top of the air reservoir. During inhalation a membrane opened the air supply and closed it during the exhalation process, and the exhausted air left via a mushroom valve.

This system restricted the amount of air needed compared to the free-flow air supply of the standard helmets, and was adopted by several navies, but for diving in the civil sector it never became very popular. At the end of the 19th Century this system was abandoned in favour of the free flow principle. Ae the start of the 1900s Bikkers ceased production of diving equipment, as the use of English helmets became more dominant

Dutch diving activities had in the meantime grown to a high level in the fields of hydraulic works, underwater ship repair and the salvage of ships and cargoes has developed to this day giving the Netherlands its worldwide reputation.

Jan de Groot

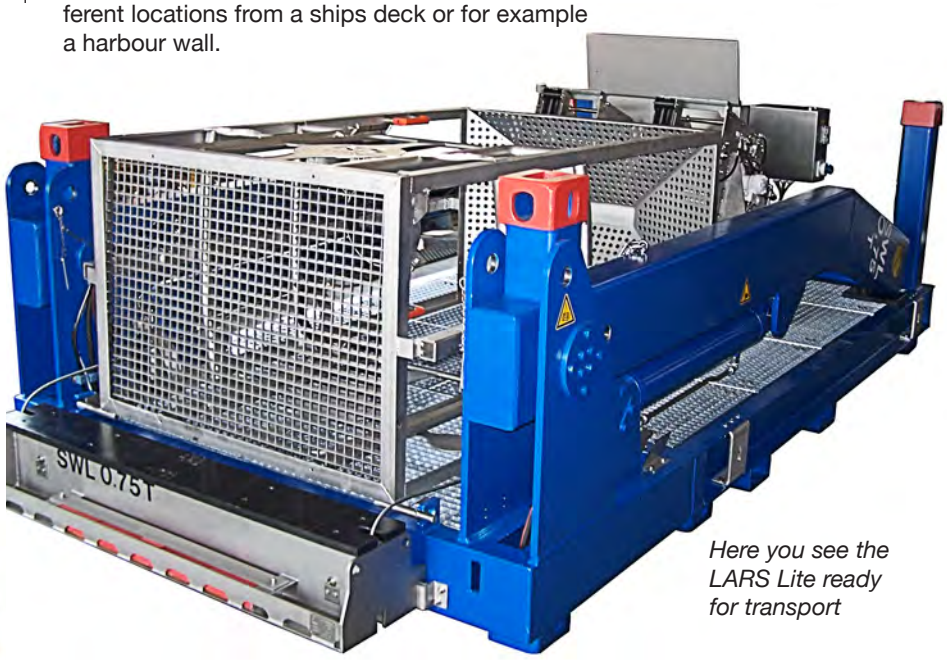
TECHNICAL DIVING EQUIPMENT POMMEC B.V.

Diving is a dangerous occupation; you want to be sure that you're using the safest materials available. One small mistake can cost someone's life. In every business there is also a budget to keep in mind; you will have to find the balance. Pommec can help you with this by supplying the safest materials for a good price. Maintenance is also an important factor, because after you bought something it has to stay in a good condition.

Pommec has over 30 years of experience in commercial diving equipment. It all began in 1978 with selling high-quality thermal cutting electrodes for underwater use. Of course companies needed more then cutting electrodes and we soon started to sell all kinds of diving materials. Today we sell and produce almost any (air) diving equipment imaginable all over the world. Think of launch and recovery systems, wet bell systems, decompression chambers, diving suits, umbilicals, communication systems, cutting electrodes and much more.

We've highlighted two of our systems below; The Launch & Recovery System Lite (LARS Lite) and the 2/3 Diver Wetbell Launch & Recovery system. These two systems give a good example off what we represent.

The Launch & Recovery System Lite (LARS Lite) is designed for the safe and controlled launch and recovery of divers. It is easily transportable and can be used on different locations from a ships deck or for example a harbour wall.



Here you see the LARS Lite ready for transport

The LARS Lite

The LARS Lite consist of an A-Frame, control box, top mounted hydraulic man-riding winches, a diving cage and a clump weight.

All movements are hydraulically controlled and also (electric) remotely controlled.

A key advantage of this system is that the winches are mounted on top of the A-Frame which provides optimum access and a safe workspace.

All can easily be lifted and transported by using the corner blocks or the forklift lifting points. It is also possible to stack 2 systems top of another and can be transported in a 20' high cube container.

The 2/3 Diver Wetbell Launch & Recovery systems are specifically designed to provide a compact option to the standard launch and recovery systems offered by our competitors. This system is very easily transportable because it fits exactly in a slightly adapted open top container. We realise the necessity to use the least amount of deck space onboard a vessel and ensure that shipping & mobilisation costs are kept to a minimum.
A variety of layouts for systems are available and our design office can provide a custom system layout to suit your vessel and diving requirements.
The configuration of the Wetbell Launch & recovery system will comply with IMCA's diving standards and your specification requirements.

Please visit us at: www.pommec.com

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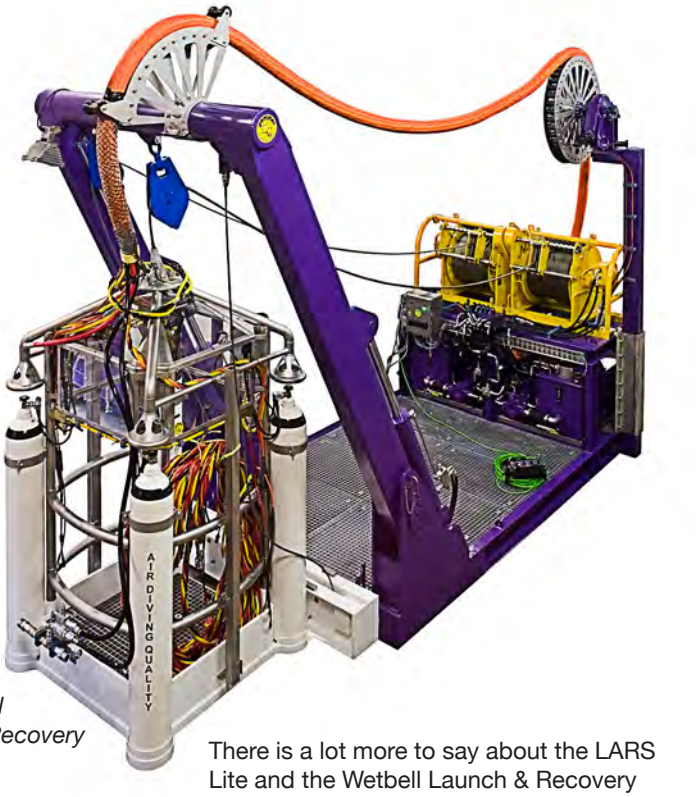

The Wetbell Launch & Recovery system

There is a lot more to say about the LARS Lite and the Wetbell Launch & Recovery system and we have many other products we would like to share with you. The good news is that we have recently launched our new website. Here you will be able to find much more information about these systems and many other products. Please visit us at www.pommec.com.

INESCAPABLE LOGIC ?!
An American tourist asks an Irishman:"Why do Scuba divers always fall backwards off their boats?"
To which the Irishman replies:
"If they fell forwards they'd still be in the f*in' boat."**

With its central position in the Mediterranean, Italy has a continuous need for trained divers to work in a variety of underwater situations and one might expect, therefore, that like many other European countries, a national certification programme would be in existence. This, however, is not the case and whilst, in the past, this lack has provided overseas divers with opportunities to work in the region, the situation has been less happy for Italian nationals.

DIVER RECOGNITION IN ITALY

By Manos Kouvakis
Managing Director of
CEDIFOP (IDSA Full Member School) Palermo

To comprehend the problem it is necessary to understand that Italy is made up of twenty more-or-less autonomous regions each with its own government. Each Region is responsible for making laws and regulations and largely setting their own standards for problems which apply specifically to them, whilst being answerable, in turn, to the National Government. In the case of diving therefore, there is no agreed national standard since this is seen as a regional problem which will affect only those regions which perceive a need for them. In practice, as one might expect, this has meant that diving, concerning as it does, relatively few individuals, has received a very low priority in the face of competition from other regional needs and problems - transport, agriculture, unemployment, welfare etc.

Until 2010 there have been only three Ministerial (national) decrees - 1979, 1981, 1982 - concerning diving and these all relate to operative procedures for diving work in harbours and their vicinity, and simply define the qualification to work as 'Commercial Diver'; in practice this simply means that the diver should be on the Italian Register of Divers (OTS). This has led to a proliferation of diving schools which set their own standards and curricula and which may, in some cases, simply train sport divers. In the absence of State legislation some Port Authorities such as Ravenna (1992), Anzio (2010), and Palermo (2010) have enacted their own Ordinances.

The Sicilian government has recently taken the lead in showing commitment to raise standards in the commercial diving field. With this in mind, Snr. Salvatore Lentini (Vice President of the Parliamentary Committee on Employment and Professional Education for Sicily) attended the IDSA Annual Meeting in Rotterdam (October 2010), with a view to raising commercial diver training standards in Sicily, and to consider the possibility of using the IDSA Standards as the benchmark for commercial diver education in the Region.

2010 also saw the publication by UNI (the National Body for Unification) of a specific regulation concerning 'Safety and Health Care in Hyperbaric and Diving Activities'. (UNI 11366/2010) UNI is an Association recognised by the Italian Government and the European Union whose aim is the studying, elaborating, approving, and publishing of regulations and voluntary codes of practice. The writer of this article, as Managing Director of CEDIFOP, the recently recognised IDSA Full Member School in Sicily, is an Associate Member of UNI and has been closely involved in the committee which is charged with the up-dating and modification of this Regulation. The first draft in June 2010 emphasised the importance of training, pointing out that the regulations concerning OTS in Italy represent only the initial stages of diver training when compared to the international training standards as set out by IDSA, and provision must be made for further training, supervised practice, strong links with employers for monitoring development and detailed record keeping.

It was noted that this approach to diving qualifications is in line with the EU's Lisbon Protocol (2002), agreed by Member States (Directive 2005/36/CE of the European Parliament). It states that:

In order to promote the free movement of profes sionals, while ensuring an adequate level of Qualification, various professional organisations or Member States should be able to propose common platforms at European Level

With this in mind the writer believes that members of IDSA are in a good position to lobby their national or regional authorities with a view to promoting IDSA Standards in Europe, and world-wide. For here is a ready-made qualification which would ensure both high quality and a common platform without, once again, 'reinventing the wheel'.

Left to Right: Leo Lagarde (Chairman) Snr. Salvatore Lentini, Instructor Francesco Consantinos and CEDIFOP Director Manos Kouvakis at the Annual Meeting in Rotterdam.

DOSsCOGP

(Oil and Gas Producers -Diving Operations Safety sub Committee)

Since its creation, several years ago, the OGP Diving Operations Safety subCommittee under the keen, active chairmanship and leadership by Nigel Lusby (Shell), has created a really effective network capable of exchanging information which, in the past, used to remain hidden or forgotten about casualties, shortcomings, incidents related to underwater intervention for the oil industry.

Beside this important collection of records and information DOSsC has also issued guidelines which have become an important reference for all the oil operators in the conduct and control of diving intervention in the hyperbaric mode. More recently the concept for a "diver passport" to take the place of the traditional "certificate of training" has been brought forward and it should lead the way toward a more accurate selection of divers related to the specific tasks they are asked to perform underwater.

From the historical point of view we must remember that immediately after WW 2, when industrial diving started growing, the hyperbaric diver brought the heritage of the traditional hard hat diver, who had ruled underwater intervention for nearly 150 years, and was the "jack of all trades".

Underwater intervention became quickly a multifaceted and rather complicated group of activities where there was no longer place for a "jack of all trades, master of none"

Now, following the action by OGP DOSsC, there is a growing trend toward the creation of "masters" competent in specific tasks and activities (e.g. NDT, inspection, construction, metrology, surveying, hydrotesting, welding, data recording, trenching and burying of pipelines). Training of divers, beside the basic training capable of teaching divers how to safely blow bubbles underwater, is therefore including additional modules dedicated to specialist tasks.

Giulio Melegari

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NOTES & NEWS

Diving operations in progress at the Western end of the NYD Pier

NEW NDT SCHEME

John Rabone reports that Lloyds no longer certify Underwater Inspection Divers. This means they still recognise some standards e.g. CSWIP but don't issue certificates
and no longer renew certificates for divers who previously held them.

A new NDT Standard under the British Institute of NDT is being set up by a group (about 16 participants) – including Fort William and others – to replace CSWIP levels 3.1 and 3.2. It has got to the stage of listing equipment and producing a training manual.

The intention is that Schools will pay BINDT for a training guide and also a small fee per candidate.

Any school will be able to apply to BINDT to be audited and if successful will be able to both run the courses and the Exam.

The next problem is to obtain acceptance from the oil companies.

If successful this will break the monopoly of CSWIP and make certification less costly

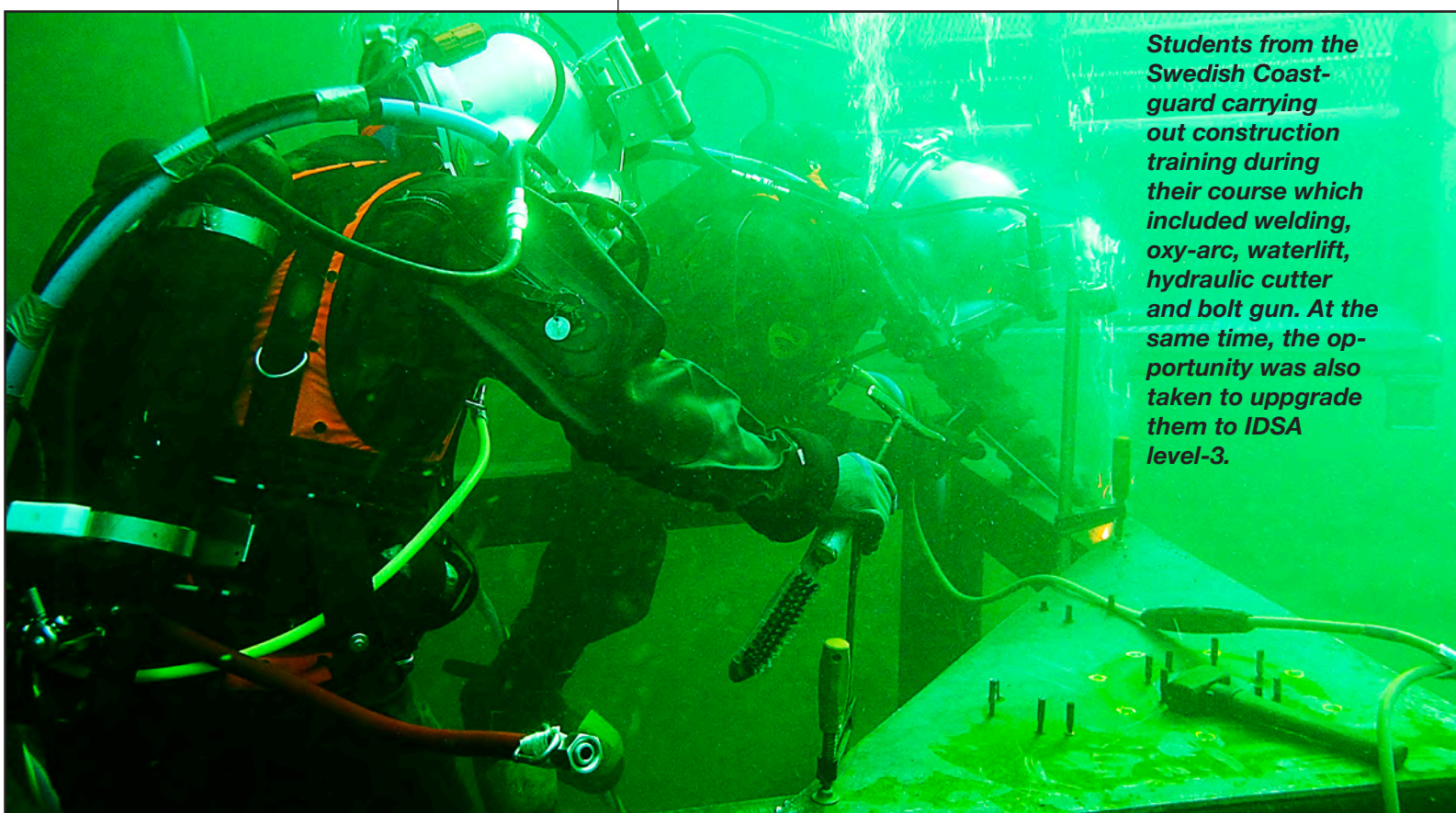
THE NORWEGIAN COMMERCIAL DIVING SCHOOL IN OSLO (NYD)

At the time of going to Press there were 65 students under training at NYD - (46 on IDSA and 9 for the Norwegian rescue boats). Students are from several Countries and classroom teaching is held in four groups, two in Norwegian, one in English and one in Russian. So it is challenging to organise the instructors. The practical work is carried out from six diving stations and with average temperatures minus 10-20C that can also be a logistic and technical challenge.

The underwater welding capacity is also being expanded and in 2010 three complete packaged welding sets were bought from Speciality Welds (UK) and it is planned to buy 2 more.

The Scuba training facilities are being uppgraded by building a brand new scuba station using six complete new Interspiro scuba sets with twin composite tubes and two Interspiro DP sets (high preassure umbilical). A second hand small 1.300 mm twin lock chamber has also been purchased and when upgraded and certified it will be used to back up the Scuba training. Three new A-frames are being built and mounted to take diving baskets, and when finished there will be seven diving baskets in operation on the pier. Our new office is now finished and also our new conference room for eight to ten people.

Finally it is of considerable interest that the Norwegian entrepreneurs (NBU) are writing a new inshore diving standard. Dag Wroldsen is a member and one of the senior members of his staff is the Secretary which means that the interests of IDSA will be well represented.



Students from the Swedish Coastguard carrying out construction training during their course which included welding, oxy-arc, waterlift, hydraulic cutter and bolt gun. At the same time, the opportunity was also taken to uppgrade them to IDSA level-3.

THE INTERNATIONAL DIVING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION (IDSA) LIST OF MEMBERS

FULL MEMBERS: DIVER TRAINING

Centre de Formations pour Petites et Moyennes Enterprises (CFPME)	Belgium
SYNTRA	Belgium
Royal Danish Navy Diving School	Denmark
Luksia sukellusala	Finland
Institut National de Plongee Professionnelle (INPP)	France
YAK Diving Academy	India
CEDIFOP	Italy
Hydrolab-Hydrocat	Italy
Centre Méditerranéen de Plongée Professionnelle (CMPP)	Morocco
Netherlands Diving Centre (NDC)	Netherlands
Norwegian Commercial Diving School, Oslo (NYD)	Norway
Farjenas Diving School	Sweden
Swedish Armed Forces Diving and Naval Medicine Centre	Sweden
Divers Academy International	USA
The Ocean Corporation	USA

FULL MEMBERS: SPECIALIST TRAINING

KB Associates	Singapore
Interdive Services Ltd	UK

INDUSTRIAL MEMBERS

Alpe SUB Srl	Italy
Palumbarus Diving Works	Italy
Hytech	Netherlands
Pommec BV T.D.E.	Netherlands
Norwegian Association of Underwater Entrepreneurs (NBU)	Norway
Cassaras AB	Sweden
Svensk Sjoentreprenad	Sweden

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

University of Southern Denmark	Denmark
Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport (AASTMT)	Egypt
International Academy for Diving Technology (IADT)	Egypt
Diver Ltd	Hungary
Marine Centre, Mumbai	India
Darya Koosh Marine Co	Iran
Israeli Professional Diving Academy	Israel
Marine Consulting Srl	Italy
Sub Sea Services SNC	Italy
Caspian Dive School	Kazakhstan
Regional Centre for Underwater Demining (RCUD)	Montenegro
Namibia Commercial Diving School	Namibia
Podvodrechstroy Diving School	Russia
Forespro	Russia
Oceanos Escuela de Buceo professional SL	Spain
Diving Diseases Research Centre (DDRC)	Spain
London Diving Chamber	UK
Divers Institute of Technology	UK
International Diving Institute	USA
Santa Barbara City College	USA

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Safe Air Diving	Denmark
NAVFCO Military Diving School	France
DERA Diving	Indonesia
Nautiek	Netherlands
BPN Explorer	Poland
Podvoddiagnostika	Russia
Aqua Mont Service	Serbia
Composite-Beat Engel	Switzerland
Hydroweld	UK
Speciality Welds	UK
Underwater Centre	UK
University of Plymouth	UK
Searchwise Ltd	UK
Minnesota Commercial Diver Training Centre	USA

RECIPROCAL MEMBERS

Association of Diving Contractors (ADC UK)	UK
Association of Diving Contractors International (ADCI)	USA
Association of Commercial Diving Educators (ACDE)	USA