DIVE SAFETY COVID-19 GUIDELINES
EXPOSURE CONTROL GUIDELINES FOR APPROVED UCSB RESEARCH DIVING ACTIVITY
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Last updated 6/11/2020

This document describes the project approval process and exposure control guidelines for essential dive operations during the COVID-19 research stand down. The following are considered minimum requirements as of the date of this document and this document covers local diving only (i.e. Santa Barbara Channel region). Additional measures may be required by the UCSB Dive Control Board (DCB) based upon specific characteristics of the planned operations, environmental conditions, current community public health situation, or further guidance from UCSB or the State of CA.

DIVE PROJECT – UPDATED APPROVAL PROCESS

- Office of Research approval required and additional info can be found on their website.
- Diving Safety Plan must be approved by the DCB (or designated sub-committee), any associated committees (e.g. Small Boat Committee) and support services (e.g. EH&S, EEMB Marine Ops).
- Any UCSB research boating operations must follow the current UCSB's COVID-19 Research Boating Guidelines.
- Lead Diver and/or Boat Operator must receive UCSB Launchmaster approval for any UCSB related boating activity.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Approved essential dive activities should make every effort to mitigate transmission as outlined by the current CDC, CA-State, & DAN recommendations plus the guidelines noted below:

- All boating operations must be conducted with the consideration that any member of the operations is potentially asymptomatic, infected and contagious.
- Each team member should be asymptomatic for at least 2 weeks prior to field day and will not participate should they feel ill or have reasonable cause to believe they have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Dive teams and auxiliary personnel must be kept to a minimum and must be approved by the Primary Investigator (PI) and the Dive Safety Officer (DSO).
- Before each field day the PI will review with the team: the plan, face cover requirements, PPE to be used when necessary, the current CDC recommendations and any general concern for safety associated with the field operation.
- During all aspects of the operation, social distancing of 6ft or greater should be maintained unless appropriate PPE are employed. Since social distancing of 6ft or greater can be difficult to effectively maintain while working on UCSB's Research Vessels, **face coverings are required to be worn while on the boat.**
- Proper sanitizing procedures must also be practiced during use of any shared equipment: VHF radio, GPS, Nitrox Analyzer, etc. (see *UCSB Boating Guidelines for Boat and Boat Specific Equipment Cleaning*)
- The PI of the project is to ensure all team members have the appropriate face coverings (PPE when required) with appropriate training and they are being used correctly.
- Vehicle sizing must be also be planned to allow adequate social distancing and personnel driving in separate vehicles may be required.
- Additional protective measures may be required any time the current social distancing or face coverings guidelines are difficult to maintain.

DIVER REQUIREMENTS

- All divers must get direct approval from the DSO before joining an approved dive project.
- Each diver must only handle, test and clean his/her own SCUBA equipment.
- Each diver will perform functional testing and demonstrate operation of his/her equipment while observed by their dive buddy.
- SCUBA equipment (Reg/BC/Mask/Snorkel/Wetsuit) used by one diver will not be used by another diver unless equipment has been cleaned, disinfected and dried before use. Contact the DSO for recommended disinfectant to use with SCUBA gear.

BUDDY AND EQUIPMENT CHECK

- During pre-dive checks, divers must not breathe from their own secondary second stage. Pre-dive functional testing must be accomplished via depressing the purge and listening for free flows.
- Air sharing procedures must be reviewed by all approved divers during the dive planning AND briefing process.
    - *An alternate regulator/inflator (Air 2 / Air Source) attached to the BC or an octopus regulator are approved as an alternate air source during an out-of-air emergency.*
    - *DSO can provide a loaner octopus regulator if the dive team would prefer an octopus alternate air source configuration instead of an alternate regulator/inflator (Air 2 / Air Source) attached to the BC.*
    - *Contact the DSO to request a loaner octopus regulator and hose.*

RESCUES

- In-water surface tows should be performed with the primary objective of expediting extraction and proper PPE, such as a pocket mask, should be used for rescue breaths if necessary.