



Changes to Buddy Breathing Ascent Training **May 2008**

As a result of intensive research of diving practices and incidents across a number of UK and worldwide diving organisations, and in response to a number of discussions internal to SSAC, the National Diving Council (NDC) has made a recommendation for a change to the training schedule.

The Board has now approved, with immediate effect, to suspend all open water buddy breathing (shared) ascents, at both Sport Diver and Master Diver level until ratification at the next Annual General Meeting in 2009. Furthermore, the carrying of an Alternative Air Source (or equivalent) is to be made mandatory for all Members from the 2009 AGM.

In the latest version of the SSAC Qualification Record book, the assessments should now read as follows:

- Sport Diver level, Open Water Assessment 9
'From a depth of 15m, conduct assisted ascents using an alternative air source, once as donor and once as recipient. Candidates should perform a suitable safety stop(s) before proceeding to the surface. Care must be taken not to exceed 10m/min on ascent'
- Master Diver level, Open Water Assessment 10
'From a depth of 20m, conduct assisted ascents using an alternative air source, once as donor and once as recipient. Candidates should perform a suitable safety stop(s) before proceeding to the surface. Care must be taken not to exceed 10m/min on ascent. Dive Buddy must be of at least Sport Diver Level.'
- Master Diver level, Open Water Assessment 11
'From a depth of 30m, conduct assisted ascents using an alternative air source, once as donor and once as recipient. Candidates should perform a suitable safety stop(s) before proceeding to the surface. Care must be taken not to exceed 10m/min on ascent. Dive Buddy must be of at least Sport Diver Level.'

In addition, the following item shall be added to the Diving Rules listed on page 11:

- *'No Member shall dive without carrying an alternative air source to deliver air to a Buddy in an emergency'*

Previous editions of the Qualification Record book may differ to the above. Please confirm with your Branch Diving Officer or Regional Coach that you are using the most recent version.

Trainees working towards either Sport or Master Diver Award who have not yet completed the buddy breathing (shared) ascents will not be required to perform these assessments. Branch Diving Officer's should make a note in the trainee's Qualification Record book to record the change in training requirement.

The NDC and the Board are committed to ensure as far as possible that any training should be carried out as safely as possible and incidents should not happen as a result of training. A risk assessment should take place before any training activity in order to minimise potential risk.

The attached FAQ answers a number of questions that have been raised in relation to the above notice. If you have any additional questions regarding this change, please contact your Branch Diving Officer or Regional Coach in the first instance.