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Recreational diving services — Requirements for the conduct of snorkelling excursions

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National foreword

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**Recreational diving services —
Requirements for the conduct of
snorkelling excursions**

*Services relatifs à la plongée de loisirs — Exigences pour la conduite
d'excursions de plongée avec tuba*



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ISO 13289 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 228, *Tourism and related services*.

Introduction

This International Standard provides minimum service requirements for the conduct of snorkel excursions. These requirements do not constitute in any way a standard for the training and qualification of snorkellers, but instead are intended to introduce a participant to recreational snorkelling via a supervised, controlled experience, and to encourage the participant to seek further training.

In view of the fact that the snorkel excursion does not result in qualification, but is experiential in nature, in-depth knowledge of snorkelling skills is not necessary. Participants are taught only what is necessary for them to experience snorkelling under direct supervision.

Recreational diving services — Requirements for the conduct of snorkelling excursions

1 Scope

This International Standard specifies minimum requirements for service providers offering supervised recreational snorkelling excursions.

This International Standard applies to activities that will include participants being taken into an open water environment. It does not apply to activities that are exclusively conducted in a confined water environment, e.g. pools.

This International Standard also specifies particular conditions under which the service is provided, in addition to the general requirements for recreational diving service provision specified in ISO 24803.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 13970, *Recreational diving services — Requirements for the training of recreational snorkelling guides*

ISO 24801-3, *Recreational diving services — Safety related minimum requirements for the training of recreational scuba divers — Part 3: Level 3 — Dive leader*

ISO 24802-1, *Recreational diving services — Safety related minimum requirements for the training of recreational scuba instructors — Part 1: Level 1*

ISO 24802-2, *Recreational diving services — Safety related minimum requirements for the training of recreational scuba instructors — Part 2: Level 2*

ISO 24803, *Recreational diving services — Requirements for recreational scuba diving service providers*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1 snorkelling

activity of swimming while typically using a mask, a snorkel and fins, where participants remain at the surface or make occasional breath hold dives, and where buoyancy devices can be used to provide surface support, depending on the environmental conditions and participants' abilities

3.2 service provider

entity, including any individual acting on behalf of such an entity, which offers snorkelling excursions

NOTE The entity can be an individual or an organization.

3.3
snorkelling guide

individual qualified in accordance with ISO 13970, ISO 24801-3, ISO 24802-1 or ISO 24802-2

3.4
participant

individual who takes part in a snorkelling excursion in open water

3.5
base station

position where support and/or emergency equipment is located

EXAMPLE A vehicle on shore; a boat; a floating platform.

3.6
confined water

swimming pool with a depth appropriate to the activity or body of water, offering similar conditions with regard to visibility, depth, water movement and access

3.7
open water

body of water significantly larger than a swimming pool, offering conditions typical of a natural body of water

3.8
direct supervision

supervision of a group of snorkellers by a snorkelling guide who is in a position that allows rapid intervention on behalf of the snorkellers

3.9
snorkelling equipment

equipment consisting of fins, a mask, a snorkel, a personal flotation device (if appropriate), a quick release weight system (if appropriate) and an exposure suit (if appropriate)

NOTE An example of a personal flotation device is a snorkelling vest.

4 Prerequisites for participation

4.1 Minors

The service provider shall ensure that documented parental or legal guardian consent is obtained when the participant is a minor.

4.2 Health and fitness requirements

The service providers shall inform the participants of the health and fitness considerations associated with snorkelling activities. In particular, they shall be advised about risk factors, including those associated with cardiac diseases, pulmonary diseases and conditions that may lead to a rapid loss of consciousness.

Attention shall be drawn to the risks associated with increased age or decreased fitness levels during physical activity.

Advice given to the participants about controlling these risks shall include the importance of the following:

- a) informing the service provider of any adverse medical conditions;
- b) using flotation devices;

- c) snorkelling with a fit buddy;
- d) remaining within the immediate vicinity of the snorkelling guide;
- e) ending or limiting the activity before becoming tired, cold or unduly stressed.

NOTE 1 It is advisable to include this advice in a documented format to participants, and in their own language. An example document is provided in Annex A.

In any case of doubt, or at the service provider's discretion, the service provider shall refer participants to proper medical resources.

NOTE 2 An example form for medical screening is provided in Annex B.

5 Introductory information

The service provider shall make available to the participants relevant information in accordance with ISO 24803, prior to the conduct of the snorkelling excursion.

In addition, participants shall be informed that the completion of a snorkelling excursion in accordance with this International Standard does not qualify the participants to snorkel unsupervised.

6 Briefing of participants

6.1 General

The service provider shall provide information on equipment, excursion conduct and safety considerations to participants, as specified in 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4.

6.2 Equipment

The service provider shall ensure that participants have appropriate introductory knowledge of the selection (e.g. correct fit), use and, where relevant, sanitization of the following equipment items:

- a) fins;
- b) mask;
- c) snorkel;
- d) personal flotation device (if appropriate);
- e) quick release weight system (if appropriate);
- f) exposure suit (if appropriate).

6.3 Excursion conduct

The service provider shall ensure that participants have appropriate introductory knowledge on snorkelling and the snorkelling environment, as follows:

- snorkelling techniques (e.g. equalization of ears and mask, clearing of snorkel);
- emergency and routine hand signals and communications (including emergency recall signal);

- snorkelling buddy system;
- points of interest and environmental considerations;
- behaviour and techniques to avoid disturbing marine life.

6.4 Safety considerations

The service provider shall advise participants how to minimize the risk of harm from any of the following hazards that are relevant:

- sunburn;
- heat exhaustion/heat stroke;
- hypothermia;
- dangers associated with surface traffic (e.g. collision, propellers);
- harmful aquatic life;
- getting separated from the snorkelling guide or base station;
- boarding the wrong boat after the excursion;
- exhaustion;
- breath holding hazards (e.g. shallow water blackout, hyperventilation);
- currents;
- wave action.

7 Requirements for in-water activities

7.1 During the actual conduct of the excursion, the safe supervision of participants is the responsibility of the snorkelling guide.

7.2 The service provider shall limit the number of participants per snorkelling guide where environmental conditions are less than ideal, e.g. where there is significant water movement.

The service provider may also use additional aids to improve safety, such as current lines, surface support stations and/or area boundary indicators.

7.3 The service provider shall ensure that during open water excursions, participants are equipped and properly fitted with snorkelling equipment in accordance with 3.9.

7.4 During any open water excursion, snorkelling guides may not engage in any activities other than direct supervision of the participants.

7.5 At least one snorkelling guide shall be present at a snorkelling excursion. Where more than one is present, one of them shall be designated the leading snorkelling guide for that session and shall have overall responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of this International Standard are met.

8 Supervision procedures

8.1 Group assignments

The service providers shall take into consideration the following factors when assigning participants to snorkelling guides:

- size, type and location of the snorkelling site;
- number of participants;
- communication and language considerations;
- participants' snorkelling experience and snorkelling skill level;
- participants' fitness and capabilities;
- skill and availability of support staff;
- available equipment (e.g. radios, tenders, rescue equipment);
- effectiveness of observation, e.g. underwater visibility, or observers' height of eye on a base station;

The service provider shall assign participants into buddy pairs for the conduct of the excursion.

The snorkelling guide should advise participants to remain in assigned buddy pairs in the water, and that one of each pair should watch from the surface if the other makes a sub-surface dive.

8.2 Supervision from a base station

Where supervision is carried out from a base station, the snorkelling guide shall ensure that all participants can be monitored at all times and can be reached rapidly if required. The snorkelling guide shall be in a position to enter the water immediately and to respond to needs of participants in an emergency.

The maximum number of participants that may be supervised by one snorkelling guide from a base station is 20. The total number of participants may be increased if additional snorkelling guides are available to enter the water immediately, so long as a ratio of 1 to 20 participants is not exceeded. This ratio only applies to ideal conditions. If conditions are anything less than ideal, the ratio shall be reduced.

8.3 In-water supervision

Where supervision is carried out in water, the snorkelling guide shall ensure that he/she can be easily identified by participants and shall remain close enough to be able to intervene rapidly in the case of an emergency. The maximum number of participants that may be accompanied by one snorkelling guide in the water is 12. This ratio only applies to ideal conditions. If conditions are anything less than ideal, the ratio shall be reduced.

8.4 Check in/check out procedure

The snorkelling guide shall account for all participants before and after the snorkelling excursion and shall document the fact that they have returned to the base station.

9 Emergency equipment and procedures

9.1 Equipment

9.1.1 The service provider shall ensure that the following equipment is present at the base station or is carried upon the snorkelling guide's person:

- a first aid kit (including appropriate treatment for stings, bites and grazes inflicted by local marine organisms);
- an emergency oxygen unit with a capacity of delivering at least 15 l/min of pure oxygen for at least 20 min;
- a means of recalling participants (e.g. an alarm, a whistle, air horn or underwater signalling device);
- a watch or other means to measure time;
- means of communicating for assistance (e.g. VHF radio or cell phone);
- contact information for local emergency medical services.

9.1.2 The following equipment is recommended for use and may be considered essential, depending on the participants, the environmental conditions and the availability of local emergency medical services:

- floats, marker buoys, flags or means of identifying the snorkellers and/or the excursion area to other craft;
- binoculars;
- polarized sunglasses (for better vision from surface in bright conditions);
- provision to treat thermal imbalances (depending on the climate, this may include the provision of shade or of blankets, for example);
- automated external defibrillator (AED);
- drinking water;
- provision for removing an unresponsive participant from the water;
- navigational aids to establish the approximate position of a lost participant (e.g. GPS unit or marker buoy);
- a surface support vessel;
- propeller guards on boats likely to manoeuvre while participants are in their vicinity;
- warnings to other vessels that participants are in the water (e.g. flag ALPHA, relevant lights).

9.2 Procedures

The service provider shall have a prepared emergency plan which shall include the following:

- contact information for local emergency medical and/or rescue services;
- procedures for locating a lost participant;
- procedure for recalling all participants;
- procedures for removing conscious and unconscious casualties from the water;
- provision for informing a casualty's next of kin of an incident.

Annex A (informative)

Example of a medical and responsibility declaration

Risk awareness statement — Recreational snorkellers

I (*print name*) _____

declare that I have been advised that snorkelling can be a strenuous physical activity and may increase the health and safety risks to me if I am suffering from any of the following:

a) any medical conditions that may be made worse by physical exertion

(e.g. heart disease, asthma, some lung complaints)

b) any medical condition that can result in loss of consciousness

(e.g. some forms of epilepsy and some diabetic conditions)

c) asthma that can be brought on by cold water or salt water mist

I have been advised that snorkelling can be a strenuous physical activity, even in calm water, and that older or unfit persons are at an increased risk due to a higher incidence of medical conditions made worse by physical exertion, such as heart disease and stroke. I have been advised to tell the service provider or snorkelling guide if I have any concerns about my medical condition.

I have also been advised of the importance of the following

- informing the service provider or snorkelling guide of any adverse medical conditions;
- wearing flotation devices;
- snorkelling with a fit buddy;
- remaining within the immediate vicinity of the snorkelling guide;
- ending or limiting the activity before becoming tired, cold or unduly stressed.

Signature _____ Date _____

Parent's or guardian's signature for minors _____

It is recommended persons with a medical condition and older persons intending to snorkel should:

- a) Snorkel in an area which allows the lookout or snorkelling supervisor to offer closer supervision.
- b) Wear a flotation device that will support the wearer in a relaxed state.
- c) Snorkel in a buddy pair.

Annex B (informative)

Example of an information sheet for medical screening

Medical Statement

This is a statement in which you are informed of some potential risks involved in recreational snorkelling and of the conduct required of you during the snorkelling activities.

You must complete this Medical Statement, which includes the medical history information section, in order to enrol in the snorkelling excursion.

To the Participant:

The purpose of this medical information sheet is to inform you whether you should be examined by a physician before participating in recreational snorkelling. If any of these conditions apply to you, this does not necessarily disqualify you from snorkelling. It only means that you must seek the advice of a physician.

Please acknowledge that you have read and understood the information provided below by initialling each individual point.

Please be advised that if any of these items apply to you, for your own safety, you must consult a physician prior to participating in recreational snorkelling.

YOU MUST CONSULT A PHYSICIAN IF:	Initials
you are pregnant, or you suspect you may be pregnant	
you regularly take medications (with the exception of birth control)	
you are over 45 years of age and one or more of the following apply	
— you smoke	
— you have a high cholesterol level	
YOU SHOULD CONSULT A PHYSICIAN IF YOU EVER HAD:	Initials
asthma, or wheezing with breathing, or wheezing with exercise	
any form of lung disease	
pneumothorax (collapsed lung)	
history of chest surgery	
claustrophobia or agoraphobia (fear of closed or open spaces)	
epilepsy, seizures, convulsions or take medications to prevent them	
history of blackouts or fainting (full/partial loss of consciousness)	
history of diving accidents or decompression sickness	
history of diabetes	
history of high blood pressure or take medications to control blood pressure	
history of any heart disease	
history of ear disease, hearing loss or problems with balance	
history of thrombosis or blood clotting	
psychiatric diseases	
I AM AWARE THAT I COULD BE UNFIT TO SNORKEL IF I HAVE OR DEVELOP DURING THE COURSE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:	Initials
cold, sinusitis, or any breathing problems (e.g. bronchitis, hay fever)	
acute migraine or headache	
any kind of surgery within the last 6 weeks	
under influence of alcohol, drugs or medications effecting the ability to react	
fever, dizziness, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea	
problems equalising (popping ears)	
acute gastric ulcers	
pregnancy	

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