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

*Services relatifs à la plongée de loisirs — Exigences minimales liées à la sécurité concernant la formation des guides avec tuba pratiquant la plongée de loisir*



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## Foreword

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ISO 13970 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 228, *Tourism and related services*.

## Introduction

The International Standards on recreational snorkelling services are intended to establish a series of specifications for safety practices and the provision of services. They specify:

- necessary levels of experience and competency of snorkel guides, and
- safety practices and requirements for recreational snorkelling service providers.

The requirements specified are minima; they do not preclude the provision of additional training or the evaluation of additional competencies by a service provider.

# Recreational diving services — Requirements for the training of recreational snorkelling guides

## 1 Scope

This International Standard specifies requirements for snorkelling guide training programmes and the criteria to be met that permit a training organization to award a snorkelling guide qualification indicating that the requirements specified in this International Standard have been met.

This International Standard also specifies the particular conditions under which the training 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 13289, *Recreational diving services — Requirements for the conduct of snorkelling excursions*

ISO 24803:2007, *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 training organization

entity providing training systems and issuing qualifications for recreational diving, and which is responsible for the implementation and quality management of training

NOTE The entity can include scuba diving federations and scuba diver training agencies.

### 3.3 snorkelling guide instructor

individual qualified to train snorkelling guides in accordance with Clause 13

### 3.4 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

**3.5**  
**open water**  
body of water significantly larger than a swimming pool, offering conditions typical of a natural body of water

**3.6**  
**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.

**3.7**  
**excursion management**  
actions and measures necessary to ensure safe conduct of recreational snorkelling activities, including planning, briefing, conduct and control, emergency procedures and de-briefing

## 4 Competencies of a snorkelling guide

Snorkelling guides shall be trained such that, when evaluated in accordance with Clause 10, they are deemed to have sufficient knowledge, skill and experience to plan, organize and conduct snorkelling excursions and lead recreational snorkellers in open water.

Snorkelling guides are qualified to do the following:

- provide all elements of snorkelling excursion management;
- oversee groups of snorkellers from the shore, a boat, or other platform;
- lead groups of snorkellers in confined water and/or open water;
- provide advice and guidance to participants of snorkelling excursions including issues regarding participants' safety and techniques to minimize impact on the environment;
- conduct any specialized recreational snorkelling activities for which they have received appropriate training;
- plan and execute appropriate emergency procedures.

If snorkelling and environmental conditions are significantly different from those previously experienced, a snorkelling guide requires an appropriate orientation with regard to local environmental conditions.

In order to lead snorkellers on excursions which have more demanding operational parameters, a snorkelling guide shall have appropriate specialized training and/or experience.

EXAMPLE Examples of such excursions include the following:

- night snorkelling excursions;
- snorkelling excursions in currents;
- snorkelling excursions on wreck sites.

Where further snorkelling instruction is required, in order to meet the above mentioned competencies, this can only be provided by a suitably qualified snorkelling instructor.

## 5 Prerequisites for training

### 5.1 General

The provider of the training for snorkelling guides shall ensure that the client fulfils the prerequisites specified in 5.2 and 5.3 in order to take part in the training course envisaged.

### 5.2 Minors

Documented parental or legal guardian consent shall be obtained when the applicant is a minor.

### 5.3 Health requirements

Documented evidence shall be obtained that the student has been medically screened as suitable for guiding recreational snorkelling by means of an appropriate questionnaire or medical examination.

NOTE In some countries, and according to some training organizations, a medical examination might be mandatory.

Students shall be advised of the importance of appropriate regular medical examinations.

## 6 Introductory information

Relevant information in accordance with ISO 24803:2007, 4.1, shall be made available to the students prior to, or during, the first class meeting.

## 7 Required theoretical knowledge

Students shall have sufficient understanding and knowledge of the following topics in order to plan and execute snorkelling excursions in accordance with ISO 13289, in typical conditions encountered in the local environment, and to plan for and respond to possible emergencies during such excursions:

- equipment;
- physiology of snorkelling;
- medical issues related to snorkelling;
- environmental considerations and responsible practices;
- excursion planning and management;
- communications;
- recommended safe snorkelling practices;
- snorkelling techniques;
- accident management;
- awareness and understanding of local snorkelling related legislation and legal requirements.

## 8 Personal snorkelling skills

**8.1** The competence of students in all snorkelling skills shall be suitable to cope with the most demanding operational factors of their region. Influencing factors may include the following:

- size and experience of the group;
- underwater visibility;
- current and tides;
- surface conditions;
- water temperature;
- surface traffic;
- equipment in use;
- flora and fauna.

**8.2** Students shall be able to perform the following skills in a manner showing highest level mastery and competence:

- use of mask, fins and snorkel;
- snorkelling equipment preparation;
- pre-dive inspection of snorkelling equipment;
- safe entries and exits;
- proper weighting (if appropriate);
- snorkel clearing;
- proper descent and ascent procedures (e.g. equalising pressure in ears and mask);
- swim on the surface and under water efficiently with snorkelling equipment using different finning techniques (e.g. flutter kick, dolphin kick);
- equipment care and maintenance;
- snorkeller assistance techniques (self and others) (i.e. to assist another person and provide support on the surface).

## 9 Leadership skills

### 9.1 General

The skills specified in 9.2 to 9.4 shall be competently conducted in environmental conditions typical of those usually met when snorkelling excursions are conducted in the region.



## 9.2 Snorkelling related skills

Snorkelling related skills shall include the following:

- a) excursion planning and preparation:
  - site selection taking into account participant capabilities and environmental factors;
  - emergency plan and emergency equipment (first aid equipment, communication devices etc.);
  - equipment preparation;
  - limiting parameters for participants in the excursion (e.g. area boundaries, time limits, danger zones, depth limits);
  - use of ancillary support equipment (e.g. floats, boundary markers);
- b) snorkelling excursion briefing:
  - group assignments (buddy teams);
  - time limits;
  - problem/emergency procedures;
  - site/environmental considerations;
  - communications;
  - pre excursion equipment preparation;
- c) conduct of snorkelling excursion:
  - selection of equipment;
  - kitting up;
  - equipment fit and function check;
  - participant accounting procedures (e.g. roll call of participants entering and exiting the water);
  - group control techniques;
  - continued monitoring of environmental conditions;
  - awareness of snorkellers' stress levels;
  - ensuring environment is respected (e.g. avoiding contact with delicate marine organisms);
  - identification of in water hazards;
  - appropriate reaction to problems and emergencies;
- d) post excursion procedures:
  - debriefing;
  - equipment care.

### **9.3 Snorkeller rescue**

Students shall demonstrate rescue skills by completing at least one open water rescue.

Rescue skills shall include the following:

- dealing with cramps;
- recognition and management of emergency situations (e.g. tired, panicked, or unresponsive snorkeller);
- effective emergency surface actions;
- casualty recovery to the surface from a depth of at least 5 m;
- transportation techniques on the surface;
- conscious and unconscious casualty recovery from the water.

### **9.4 First aid**

Students shall complete a course/courses in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) approved by the training organization and shall have a valid qualification.

## **10 Evaluation**

### **10.1 Watermanship and snorkel skills**

Students shall be able to demonstrate to a snorkelling guide trainer the following skills using snorkelling equipment:

- dive vertically headfirst from the surface in water too deep to stand;
- swim at least 25 m under water on a single breath of air;
- ascend safely by looking up and around while swimming, and by holding one hand over the head;
- clear a snorkel of water and resume breathing through the snorkel without lifting the face from the water;
- make a face down, surface 800 m snorkel swim in 15 min or less.

### **10.2 Excursion management skills**

Students shall demonstrate to a snorkelling guide instructor mastery of the planning and conduct of a snorkel excursion in accordance with ISO 13289. Such demonstrations may take the form of simulated or actual snorkel excursions, but in either case, shall be supervised by a snorkelling guide trainer.

### **10.3 Rescue skills**

Students shall demonstrate to a snorkelling guide instructor mastery of the rescue evaluation in accordance with 9.3.

## **11 Minimum age**

The minimum age for conducting snorkelling excursions in accordance with ISO 13289 shall be 18 years.

## 12 Requirements for training organizations

A training organization shall provide training programmes for snorkelling guides and shall define procedures for the conduct of snorkelling excursions.

The training organization shall

- establish, implement and maintain quality control procedures in order to monitor the snorkelling excursions conducted by the service providers that are authorized by the training organization,
- establish, implement and maintain a system for intervening when those snorkelling guides are found to be failing to follow ISO 13289 or the training organization's requirements, and
- have a permanent headquarters and maintain records of all currently authorized snorkelling guides: information on the current status of authorization of snorkelling guides shall be made available to the public upon request.

## 13 Requirements for snorkelling guide instructors

Snorkelling guide instructors shall:

- be responsible for snorkelling guide training and evaluation;
- have received specific training in the education and development of snorkelling guides;
- be qualified and sanctioned by a training organization as being able to teach and evaluate snorkelling guides.

NOTE The above requirement is fulfilled by a scuba instructor of level 2 in accordance with ISO 24802-2.

## Bibliography

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

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