



12<sup>th</sup> May 2020:

### **Diving in the COVID/post-COVID era**

A special meeting of the BDSG was held on 12<sup>th</sup> May. A number of medical professionals and non-diving agencies attended, including the MCA, RNLI and the HSE, along with representatives from the dive training organisations. The purpose of the meeting was to determine how the latest changes in government guidance may apply to the UK recreational and technical diving community.

#### **Infrastructure needs establishing**

The consensus of the meeting was that the infrastructure to safely support recreational and technical diving activities are still lacking and requires more time to re-establish itself.

Contamination risks remain too high during the preparation for diving and could put undue pressure on businesses which must operate safely and within the law.

Also, if emergency support was necessary, that would place an unacceptably high burden on rescue services and medical treatment facilities at a time when they are already stretched. For example, if an asymptomatic diver needed rescuing by the RNLI, and one or a number of the crew caught the coronavirus, the whole lifeboat station would have to be put into special measures, which might mean temporarily being unable to respond to emergency calls.

Further BDSG consultations are set to take place to coincide with any changes made to UK government guidance.

**With regret, we must encourage UK divers to act responsibly and not to go diving.**

*#StayAlert*

*Chair - BDSG*

*Here is a detailed first-hand experience from a medical professional who is a keen diver and survived COVID-19.*

[Diving in the era of coronavirus - A first-hand account from a covid-19 survivor](#)

## **Fact File**

The British Diving Safety Group (BDSG) was formed in 2002 to promote safe diving practices amongst the British sport diving community.

It is chaired by the RNLI. The group has broad representation, with all of the UK diver training agencies, the HSE and the MCA having a seat at the table.

These organisations regularly meet in order to work towards a common goal; to make diving safer. By sharing and analysing incident data, devising safety initiatives and then promoting them to divers, the group has a broad influence on the recreational diving community.

The comprehensive nature of the BDSG, reflecting as it does all of the significant interests in the British sport diving scene means that it is uniquely positioned to significantly influence diving safety.

## **BDSG Members**

The members of the BDSG include:

- BHA (British Hyperbaric Association)
- BSAC (British Sub Aqua Club)
- DAN Europe
- DDRC Healthcare (Diving Diseases Research Centre)
- DDST (Defence Diving Standards Team)
- Irish Underwater Federation (Diving Ireland)
- GADAP (diving insurance)
- GUE (Global Underwater Explorers)
- HSE Diving Inspectorate (Health & Safety)
- IANTD (International Association of Nitrox and Technical Divers)
- IDEST (Inspectorate for diving equipment, servicing and testing)
- MCA (Maritime and Coastguard Agency)
- PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors)
- Ian Taylor (professional charter boat skipper)
- PSAI Europe (Professional Scuba Association International)
- RAID UK & Malta, RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institute)
- SAA (Sub Aqua Association)
- SSI (Scuba Schools International)
- ScotSAC (Scottish Sub Aqua Club)
- SITA (Scuba Industries Trade Association)
- TDI/SDI (Technical Diving International / Scuba Diving International)
- UK DMC (Diving Medical Committee).