The Practical Aspects of Scientific Diving Operations: Goals, Challenges, and Solutions

Kevin L. Buch
Diving and Small Boat Safety Officer, Oregon State University
Scientific Diving Operations

**Practical Goals:**

- Zero Incidents
- Successful Task Completion
Zero Incidents

• Is it possible? You Bet!!

• How?

Enhance safety at the individual and group levels
Enhance Individual Safety

- Training and experience appropriate for the task and environment
- Physical fitness
- Task familiarity/recent activity
- ATTITUDE
Enhance Group Safety

- Clear and open lines of communication
- Appropriate on-site supervision
- Organization and emergency preparedness
- ATTITUDE
Successful Task Completion

• Be clear on what’s important
• A well thought out dive plan w/mutual agreement
• Time management/scope of work
• ATTITUDE
Practical Challenges

• **Professionals Who Dive Sometimes** are not the same as a *Diving Professional*

• Wide variety of tasks

• Wide variety of environments

• Non-diving upper level administration
Practical Solutions

• Provide opportunities for T & E; be creative!
• Professional networks-peer review rocks
• Ensure the right kind of on-site supervision
• Create a culture – change ATTITUDES
• T & E: Pizza Pool sessions w/drills and games, got a boat tied up?--entries/exits and victim recovery; non-diving social events
“Lead Diver” concept:

- consider COI
- not a “paper” supervisor, can be a powerful tool if mentored properly
- The person who carries your culture to the field
Create a culture – change ATTITUDES!
Create a Culture

• Not “No” but “How?”
• Educate don’t Dictate
• Be accessible: face-to-face meetings; get in the water with them!
• Engage the Bosses
Safe Scientific Diving-
The Bottom’s The Limit!!