DAN announces the DAN Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) Program For Scuba Diving Service Providers

The primary mission of DAN is to offer assistance to injured recreational scuba divers. An important secondary mission is to prevent diving injuries. Recent events have reinforced the importance of a pre-emptive approach to safety – **the DAN DIVING SAFETY PARTNER – HAZARD IDENTIFICATION and RISK ASSESSMENT program (DSP-HIRA)**.

The DSP (Diving Safety Partner) program recognises diving operations that self-report compliance with essential diving emergency preparedness – appropriate first responder training for all staff; pre-dive briefings; a practical emergency assistance plan; and an effective lost diver recovery procedure. However, this needs to be taken one step further – towards preventing diving injuries!

DAN has undertaken the important mission of promoting and supporting a culture of safety amongst divers and participating diving service providers. The expanded Diving Safety Partner programme will include Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) components to – actively prevent diving injuries! This will empower dive operators to ensure that their activities are undertaken with the appropriate awareness, control and mitigation of relevant health and safety risks, whether these affect dive clients, instructors or support staff.

Program vision

To create, promote and build a culture of safety at all SCUBA diving schools, charters and operations around the world.

Goals and Objectives

- To initiate & then grow participation by all diving service providers;
- To provide risk and safety awareness education to all participants;
- To offer risk mitigation & control education courses, based on actual operational aspects;
- To have an accident & incident monitoring program in place to continually assess the status of progress towards the vision.

Typical risk areas

- The following are examples of the critical areas providers should include:
- Ladders and stairs;
- Entries and exits, emergency escape routes,
- Boat propellers and boat operations;
- Slippery surfaces;
- Lifting of heavy equipment;
- Noise-induced hearing loss;
- Compressors, gas quality, cylinder filling, cleanliness;
- Briefing of staff and divers, keeping control of divers in the water*;*
- Avoiding DCI
- Safety in diver and staff training courses
- Risk of fires and/or explosions

- Links with medical facilities and personnel
- Etc.

The program

The “DSP-HIRA” program is made of 3 levels, with an associated Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) component. The division is based on size and nature of the dive operation, each providing recognition of the participants as a DAN Safety Partner.

DSP: Silver

HIRA Level 1
The service provider should be able to effectively deal with emergencies that have occurred. The service provider should typically:

- Be able to rescue injured persons (including diving emergencies, but also other non-diving-related injuries);
- Be able to provide life support and basic first aid;
- Be able to administer oxygen and have sufficient oxygen supplies;
- Be able to conduct a neurological examination of an injured person;
- Be able to contact emergency service providers (including DAN);
- Have a feasible emergency assistance plan in place (for lost divers, diving emergencies and non-diving emergencies).

The provider should have appropriate oxygen, first aid and emergency equipment available and the staff members of the facility should have the following qualifications (DAN or equivalent):

- Oxygen first aid for SCUBA diving emergencies;
- Basic Life Support;
- First aid for hazardous marine life injuries (if these injuries can be caused in the region the provider operates in);
- On-site neurological assessment for divers.

Assessment
DAN provides interested applicants with guidance on how to meet the requirements to achieve this level. Depending on the degree of in-house expertise and knowledge concerning dive safety, either a DAN-led risk assessment will be conducted, or a self-assessment may be done by the facility or service provider. A standard reporting document is utilized and a final, completed report is submitted to DAN for consideration.

Recognition
Service providers and facilities that are committed to this level of safety and meet the minimum requirements will be recognized by DAN as a “Silver Diving Safety Partner”.

DSP: Gold

HIRA Level 2
In addition to the level 1 requirements, the provider trains others to deal with emergency situations, emergency exercises are carried out on a planned or regular basis, and there is an increased awareness of safety. The service provider should typically:

- Be able to deal with emergencies (diving, nondiving, neuro-assessment, etc);

- Train others in emergency management of related injuries and illnesses;
- Continually log and maintain the competency of their staff members;
- Use standardized safety systems (e.g. checklists).

Apart from the equipment and facilities available for level 1 recognition, the facility should have a training facility available. The facility should also have an active ("current status") instructor available, who can provide the following DAN (or equivalent) programs:

- Oxygen first aid for SCUBA diving emergencies;
- Basic Life Support;
- First aid for hazardous marine life injuries (if these injuries can be caused in the region the provider operates in);
- On-site neurological assessment for divers;
- Automatic External Defibrillators for SCUBA divers;
- First Aid.

Assessment
As with the previous level, the assessment may be carried out by means of a risk assessment led by DAN or through self-assessment with a final report submitted to DAN for consideration.

Recognition
Service providers and facilities that are committed to this level of safety and meet the minimum requirements will be recognized by DAN as a "Gold Diving Safety Partner".

DSP: Platinum

HIRA Level 3
This level of recognition is provided only to a limited number of facilities, who show an exceptional commitment to diving safety. The service provider will typically:

- Be previously recognized as a Silver or Gold Diving Safety Partner and have maintained a good safety track-record, with clear and traceable records;
- Have logs available which reflect all incidents and "near-misses", including denominator data (number of persons trained, number of persons taken on dives, number of boat launches, etc.), provide an analysis of this data on a continuous basis, and show a clear commitment to improving safety. This is typical of an organization that has an effective, recognised quality assurance program in place.
- In addition to the facilities and equipment required for the Gold level, have an active instructor trainer on site offering all the DAN (or equivalent) training courses.

Assessment
In order to assist these facilities in their quality assurance program, DAN will make a risk assessment expert available to these facilities. The expert will assist the facility in the risk assessment process in a more structured and "formal" manner. A final report is then forwarded by DAN to the facility, which can be used for reference and advice on further improvements of their safety practices. Specific critical control points will be identified, with specific suggestions on how these risks could be controlled in practice, how these may be monitored and what appropriate safety targets could be set.

Recognition
Service providers and facilities that are committed to this level of safety will be recognized by DAN as "Platinum Diving Safety Partners". Details of these safety partners will by published by DAN in the Alert

Diver – additional advertisement for these operators who have shown their total commitment to safe diving!

THE DAN HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT (HIRA) PROGRAM FOR SCUBA DIVING SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL BE LAUNCHED DURING 2011. For more information please contact: dsp@daneurope.org