

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

Environmental Health and Safety Office

TO: University of Hawai'i Scientific Divers

FROM: David Pence, UH Diving Safety Office 

RE: UH Diver Recertification, Evidence of Employment and Insurability

October 24, 2005

Upon consultation with the UH Risk Management Office (RMO), a deficiency in recordkeeping for UH scientific divers was identified. Specifically, UH Diving Safety Program (UHDSP) had no means to determine from divers' files the employment and insurability status of the diver. This is important information when determining diver eligibility for coverage under worker's compensation provisions.

Before December 31, 2005, all current UH scientific divers must complete and return to the UHDSP pages 1 through 4 of the newly revised UH Scientific Diver Application. The revised forms are available on the UHDSP web site: www.hawaii.edu/ehso/diving/uhddiverapp.pdf. This measure is required due to the recommendation of the RMO that all divers, as a condition of continuation of their authorization to dive must provide (1) documentation of their employment status with the University, and (2) evidence of their insurance coverage for diving-related injury.

THE FOLLOWING POLICIES WILL BE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2006:

EMPLOYEES: Divers who are employees of UH or RCUH are covered for injury through worker's compensation coverage. This includes part-time and student employees as well as graduate RA's and TA's whose employment includes diving activity. Also covered are formally-documented and authorized volunteers to a UH project or agency. **Employee divers should include in their submission of the UH Scientific Diver Application the Verification of Employment Form** (p.4 of the Application) signed by the appropriate administrative officer or department head. Principal Investigators who use volunteers on official UH projects should maintain on file a copy of the State of Hawaii Volunteer Application form. The form is also available on the DSP web site.

NON-EMPLOYEES: Individuals who dive under UH auspices in a non-employee/non-volunteer status are often not covered by worker's compensation. This most commonly applies to students who are diving in support of their own studies, or for a class for which they are not acting as an employee. It may also include other non-employees who are diving to assist the student. **Effective January 1, 2006, all UH divers whose diving is not part of their official duties as a UH employee or documented volunteer to a UH project will be required to provide evidence that they carry Divers' Alert Network (DAN) Diving Medical Insurance to cover the costs of medical treatment of injuries from diving accidents, and costs of emergency evacuation to a recompression chamber.** This evidence should take the form of provision of a copy of the DAN membership/insurance card to UHDSP via fax or mail. Maintenance of current insurance coverage will now be a requirement for authorization to dive under UH auspices for non-employee divers.

UHDSP realizes that a diver's employment/insurability status may vary from project to project. As part of the dive plan review process, Lead Divers and PI/Supervisors now will designate on the UH Dive Plan Application the employment status of each diver for a given project. Divers listed as "Non-compensated Non-Employees" on the dive plan will be required to have DAN insurance on file. The Dive Plan Application form has also been revised to facilitate this.