

7. Open Line Diving

7.1 Introduction

This program is designed to provide open line diving for PFI or equivalent certified Freedivers at the Snorkeler, Freediver, Intermediate, Advanced, or Specialty Freedive areas with the opportunity for supervised buddy diving sessions in pool or depth disciplines. These sessions will provide a diving support system which may include counter-balances or similar FRS under the supervision of a trained PFI Professional.

7.2 Course Objectives

The objective of these open line diving sessions is to provide individuals a training environment that allows them to practice diving and skills with a buddy. Freedivers are limited to the maximum depths for which they are certified with the proper safety protocols in place. Specialty Freediver areas governed by limits of that particular specialty or their primary certification.

7.3 Program Prerequisites

1. Minimum age of 18 years (10 with written consent of legal guardian)
2. Certified as a PFI Snorkeler, PFI Freediver, PFI Intermediate Freediver, PFI Advanced Freediver or equivalent skill level if defined
3. For 'Open Line Diving' certified freediver must have finished a recognized course, refresher, or coaching session in the last 12 months and provide proof of such experience to the satisfaction of the PFI Professional.
4. Qualified freedivers may participate in Open Line Diving outside of the 12-month limitation if they have continually participated in open water sessions and can provide proof of such sessions to the satisfaction of the PFI Professional.
5. A PFI Professional may at any time require that a qualified freediver take a coaching session or refresher course if necessary, before participating in Open Line Diving.

7.4 Required Student Equipment

1. Freediving quality mask / fins / snorkel, wetsuits, weights and belt, Freediving computer or timing device, line cutter/knife (as required by the local environment) or any specialty equipment deemed necessary by the local environment of specifics of the training session such as lanyards.

7.5 Support Materials

Student materials

1. *PFI Liability and Assumption of Risk form*
2. *PFI Medical Statement*

Supervisor materials and systems

1. PFI approved Freediver Support / Retrieval Systems (FRS)
2. BLS / First Aid support equipment

7.6 Qualification of Graduates

1. Upon successful completion of this open line diving session the Freediver receives no certification.
2. Upon successful completion of this open line diving, graduates receive no pre-qualification to enroll in any PFI courses, except those that may require proof of Freediving experience with a PFI Freediver Supervisor within the last 12 months.
3. Upon successful completion of this open line diving session the Freediver may request a signature on their Freediving Record card as proof of recent diving experience.

7.7 Who May Teach

This open line diving session may be conducted by any active status PFI Freediver Supervisor.

7.8 Student to Instructor Ratio

Classroom / Briefing

1. Unlimited, so long as adequate facility, supplies and time are provided to ensure comprehensive and complete training.

Confined Water

1. Maximum of twelve students to one PFI Freediver Supervisor (12:1).

Open Water

1. Maximum of 6 students to one PFI Freediver Supervisor (6:1).

7.9 Open Line Diving Structure and Duration

General Execution

1. Confined and Open water maximum depth restrictions are limited to experience and the qualifications of the participant.
2. All dives must use appropriate buddy safety rotation or teams (buddy A diver – buddy B safety)

Structure

1. PFI Allows Instructors to structure sessions according to the number of students participating and their skill level.

7.10 Knowledge/Briefing Overview

The following topics must be briefed during the training session. Instructors may use additional texts or any other materials to present these topics.

1. Introduction:
 - a. Open Line Diving Overview
 - b. Paperwork and Prerequisites
 - c. Equipment Requirements Check
 - d. Boat / Pool Protocols and Conduct
 - e. In-water Protocols and Conduct
 - f. Safety / Supervision Practices
2. Open Line Diving Session Overview:
 - a. Welcome
 - b. What an open line diving session is and isn't
 - i. Opportunity to practice your skills and abilities
 - ii. Support rig provided
 - iii. Training not coaching - There will be no instructor supervising directly
 - iv. Not a means of getting greater depths beyond certification level

- c. Responsibilities
 - i. Conduct yourself in a safe and responsible manner as outlined by your training level
 - ii. Provide back-up safety according to your level if a situation or accident would require
- 3. Paperwork and Prerequisites:
 - a. Participant Information Form
 - b. Liability
 - c. Medical forms
 - d. Standard Safe Freediving Practice Statement of Understanding
 - e. Verify certification as PFI Snorkeler through Advanced Freediver or specialty Freediver programs or equivalent
- 4. Equipment Requirements Check:
 - a. Appropriate Freediving mask, fins, snorkel
 - b. Appropriate exposure protection for local environment
 - c. Appropriate weights and weight belt
 - d. Appropriate Freediving computer or timing device
 - e. Appropriate knife or line cutting device for local environment if required
 - f. Lanyards if required by depth and level of certification
- 5. Boat / Pool Protocols and Conduct:
 - a. Boat / Pool important areas
 - b. Suiting up / down and gear storage
 - c. Entries and exits
 - d. In-water communication with boat / pool staff
 - e. Drifting procedures
- 6. In-water Protocols and Conduct:
 - a. Swimming to and from support station
 - b. Rig set-up and breakdown
 - c. Rig rules
 - d. Freediving rotations
- 7. Safety / Supervision Practices:
 - a. Direct Supervision Protocols
 - b. Proper Buoyancy
 - i. Neutral Buoyancy at no less than 10m / 33ft
 - ii. At a minimum, positive on the surface with exhalation
 - c. Counter-balance and plate depth adjustments

- d. Line rotations for supervision:
 - i. 2-person alternating, break between performing and safety
 - ii. 3-person alternating, safety after performing
 - iii. 4-person, buddy team rotation
 - iv. 5-person, alternating with break before safety
 - v. 6-person, buddy team rotation
- e. LMC / BO Procedures Review
 - i. Surface LMC protocols
 - ii. Surface BO protocols
 - iii. Depth bail-out
 - iv. Underwater blackout protocols
 - v. No Freediving after LMC/BO
 - vi. BLS protocols & calling for help

7.11 Graduation Requirements

In order to successfully complete an open line diving session Freedivers must:

1. Attend all knowledge / briefing sessions and confined water or open water training sessions
2. Demonstrate proficiency in in-water buddy diving technique
3. Demonstrate mature and sound judgment concerning planning and execution.

PFI Freediver Supervisors or higher professional members must:

1. Keep all paperwork on file for no less than 7 years.