

Acts safe Safety Bulletin #7a

PRINCIPAL PERFORMERS USING UNDERWATER DIVING EQUIPMENT

Section 24.13(1)(a) of the Regulation requires that all divers in an occupational diving operation meet the requirements of CSA Standard 275.4-97 Competency Standard for Diving Operations. Each diver is also required to be competent to use the equipment that he or she will be using during the diving operation. The purpose of this guideline is to outline the conditions under which principal performers (actors and stunt performers) may perform underwater holding only a sport diving (open water) certification.

A principal performer for the purposes of this interpretation refers to actors and stunt performers contracted for artistic purposes. Occasionally an underwater scene will require principal performers to go underwater using a self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA) or surface supply equipment to achieve the required film sequence.

Under certain situations, a principal performer going underwater for selected shots in shallow depths may be considered not to be a diver under the Regulation. Each principal performer is, however, considered to be a worker and is subject to the requirements of other sections of the Workers Compensation Act and the Regulation, including section 2.2 of the Regulation, which states “all work must be carried out without undue risk of injury or occupational disease.”

Section 4.4(2)(a) permits the reliance on other standards which are acceptable to WorkSafeBC. WorkSafeBC will accept that a principal performer is not a diver required to meet the requirements of sections 24.10, 24.12, and 24.13 of the Regulation and that there is compliance with section 2.2 where the following conditions are met:

1. An occupational diver who meets the requirements of CSA Standard 275.4-97 Competency Standard for Diving Operations assesses the ability of the principal performer to perform the required underwater shots, and considers the performer is competent to perform such underwater shots.
2. A dedicated occupational diver who meets the requirements of CSA Standard 275.4-97 accompanies each principal performer at all times while the principal performer is underwater.
3. All performers involved in diving will be required to have a medical exam by a physician for sport diving. One of the Recreational Scuba Training Council forms such as PADI's Product No. 10063 (Rev. 06/15) Version 2.01 must be used. Medical exams are required every two years up to age 39 and annually from age 40 onwards. This signed form must be on site. No self-declared medical will be accepted.
4. All breathing mediums must meet the requirements of CSA 7275.2 Occupational Safety Code for Diving.
5. All sport diving (open water) certification for principal performers must be on site.
6. All dive logs for principal performers must be on site.
7. All support apparatus, accessories, and applicable service records must be available to workers on the dive site.
8. Only occupational dive tables are to be used.
9. A principal performer with only a valid recreational diver's (open water) certificate must not exceed 15 feet in depth.
10. A principal performer without a valid recreational diver's (open water) certificate must take an introduction to diving session (for example, PADI “Discover Scuba”), must not exceed 7 feet in depth, and must be under direct supervision of an occupational diver who meets the requirements of CSA Standard 275.4-97.
11. The water time for a principal performer who is not certified and qualified as an occupational diver to the full requirements of the Regulation is limited to the time required to perform the underwater shot.

No variance is needed where the above conditions are met. If in other situations a variance is needed, a request should be submitted to WorkSafeBC at least 30 working days prior to the scheduled shooting days.

For information on Acts safe, the application of these Regulations or to obtain copies, please contact Acts safe at 604.733.4682 (1.888.229.1455 toll free). You may also contact the WorkSafeBC Prevention Division directly at 604.276.3100 for information on the OH&S Regulations including occupational diving.