



## **16. TDI – Introductory Cave Diver Course**

### **16.1 Introduction**

This course is an introduction to the basic principles of cave diving utilizing a single primary guide line. Introductory cave diving is the second level in the development of safe techniques for cave diving, directly building upon the cavern diver course. This introduction to cave diving is not intended to train divers for all facets of cave diving. The objective of this course is the perfection of skills taught in the cavern diving program, in addition to the adoption of additional techniques and procedures required for elementary cave dives.

### **16.2 Qualifications of Graduates**

Upon successful completion of this course, graduates may engage in single guideline cave diving activities without direct supervision so long as the following limits are adhered to:

1. Penetration is limited to one-third (1/3) of a single diving cylinder or 1/6<sup>th</sup> if using double cylinders.
2. Forty (40) msw / one hundred thirty (130) fsw maximum depth.
3. No decompression diving.
4. Maintain a continuous guideline.
5. Proper Cave diving equipment is used.

Upon successful completion of this course, graduates are qualified to enroll in:

1. TDI Cave Course.

### **16.3 Who May Teach**

Who may teach this course:

1. Any active TDI Introductory Cave or Cave Instructor may teach this course.

### **16.4 Student – Instructor Ratio**

Academic:

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

Confined Water (Swimming pool-like conditions):

1. N/A.

Cave Dives:

1. A maximum of three (3) students per active TDI Instructor are allowed.
2. The ratio should be reduced as required due to environmental or operational constraints.



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## **16.5 Student Pre-Requisites**

The student must:

1. Be a minimum age of eighteen (18) or fifteen (15) with parental consent.
2. Show proof of a minimum certification of TDI Cavern Diver or equivalent.

## **16.6 Course Structure and Duration**

Water Execution:

1. Minimum of four (4) single guideline cave dives with a total bottom time of one hundred (100) minutes conducted at two (2) different sites.

Course Structure:

1. TDI allows instructors to structure courses according to the number of students participating and their skill level.

Duration:

1. The minimum number of classroom and briefing hours is four (4).
2. Course must be taught over 2 days.
3. If this course is combined with a cavern diver course it is a minimum of 3 days and a total of 8 dives and 180 bottom time minutes.

## **16.7 Administrative Requirements**

The following is the administrative tasks:

1. Collect the course fees from all the students.
2. Ensure that the students have the required equipment.
3. Communicate the training schedule to the students.
4. Have the students complete the Liability Release and Medical history forms.
5. The Instructor must review the Liability Release and Medical Forms before starting on the course.

Upon successful completion of the course the Instructor must:

1. Complete the Student Registration Form and send the Registration Form to TDI HQ.
2. Award Card.

## **16.8 Required Equipment**

The following are required for this course:

1. TDI Cavern and Cave Manual

Other suggested reading materials;

1. NACD Art of Safe Cave Diving
2. Basic Cave Diving – A Blueprint for Survival
3. CDAA - Cavern / Sinkhole Manual
4. NSS-CDS Cave Diving Manual
5. The Darkness Beckons – Martyn Farr
6. Cavern Measureless to Man



The following equipment is required for each student:

1. Primary cylinder (s) - volume appropriate for planned dive and student gas consumption.
2. Dual-orifice (Y) or (H) closed valve or dual valve manifold.
3. Two independent first and second stage regulators. One regulator equipped with a long hose at a recommended minimum length of two (2) meters / seven (7) feet.
4. Submersible pressure gauge.
5. Buoyancy Compensator with power inflator.
6. Exposure suit adequate for diving environment.
7. Mask and fins - NO snorkel.
8. Line cutting device.
9. Three (3) battery powered lights – one (1) primary and two (2) back-ups, each with a with burn time suitable for the planned dive time.
10. Safety reel with a minimum of thirty (37) meters / one hundred twenty five (125) feet of guideline.
11. One (1) primary cave-diving reel with length appropriate for intended dive.
12. Computer or watch (bottom timer) and depth gauge.
13. Slate or wet notes with a pencil
14. Submersible dive tables or backup dive computer.
15. Three (3) directional line arrows.

**Instructor must use full cave diving equipment during all water exercises.**

## **16.9 Required Subject Areas**

The following topics must be covered during this course:

1. Policy for Cave Diving.
2. Gas matching procedures and management to include dissimilar volumes.
3. Psychological considerations.
4. Equipment Considerations
  - A. Cylinder options.
  - B. Regulator options.
  - C. Buoyancy compensator / harness options.
  - D. Reel options.
  - E. Proper weighting.
  - F. Equipment configurations.
5. Communication
  - A. Hand signals.
  - B. Light signals.
  - C. Touch contact signals.
6. Swimming Techniques
  - A. Body posture/ Trim
  - B. Buoyancy control
  - C. Line following
  - D. Propulsion techniques
7. Physiology
  - A. Breathing techniques.



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  - B. Stress management.
8. Cave environment.
  - A. Geology.
    - I. Bottom.
    - II. Ceiling.
  - B. Local access requirements.
  - C. Land owner relations.
9. Conservation
10. Problem Solving
  - A. Emergency procedures.
  - B. Equipment failure.
  - C. Silting conditions.
11. Accident Analysis.
12. Review of Dive Tables and Decompression theory.
13. Cave diving etiquette.

## **16.10 Required Skill Performance and Graduation Requirements**

The following land drills must be covered during this course:

1. How to properly deploy a guideline.
2. How to properly follow a guideline.
3. Use of safety reel in lost diver procedures.
4. Use of safety reel in lost line drill.

The student must perform the following S-drill and skills during all dives:

1. Demonstrate adequate pre-dive planning.
2. Equipment check and gear matching.
3. Bubble check.
4. Demonstrate specialized propulsion techniques in varying types of flow.
5. Demonstrate proper buoyancy control.
6. Demonstrate proper body posture.
7. Demonstrate proper stress analysis (detection and management).

The student must perform the following in-water skills during cave dives:

1. Properly deploy a guideline.
2. Properly use line markers.
3. Properly follow a guideline with eyes open and closed (simulating loss of visibility).
4. Air share with a buddy with eyes open, following the guideline.
5. Air share with a buddy with lights off, eyes closed and use touch contact, following the guideline.
6. Remove and replace mask while in contact with guideline.
7. Demonstrate light / hand -signals and touch contact.
8. Conservation and awareness techniques.
9. Referencing as back-up navigation.
10. Demonstrate adequate anti-silting techniques.
11. Simulate a primary light failure, and use back light to exit the cave.
12. Demonstrate lost line and lost diver drills.



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In order to complete this course, students must:

1. Satisfactorily complete the TDI Intro Cave Diver written examination.
2. Perform all land drills and cave dive requirements safely and efficiently.
3. Demonstrate mature, sound judgment concerning dive planning and execution.
4. Maintain an appropriate level of awareness and respect for the cavern environment.
5. Log all dives.