

Prosecution of a Diving Supervisor

The UK Government's Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Diving Inspectorate has recently prosecuted a diving supervisor as it was found that the standby diver was not in a state of immediate readiness to provide assistance to the diver in the water as detailed in the relevant HSE approved code of practice (ACoP). The supervisor in question had already been caught and served with an enforcement notice for a similar failing in the past. Following his first infringement his employer had spent time retraining and mentoring him before allowing him to continue in his role, but the supervisor ignored the guidance given. He was fined £5,000 with costs of £2,000 awarded against him.

Whilst this lesson is from the inland sector, [IMCA D 014 Rev. 1](#) – *IMCA international code of practice for offshore diving* – also states that the standby diver should be at a state of immediate readiness to provide any necessary assistance to the diver whenever the diver is in the water. This requirement is also enshrined in the legislation of several other countries.

It is clear that the enforcement authorities in Great Britain treat breaches like this seriously and are not afraid, where there are appropriate company standards, to take formal action against an individual, in this case the diving supervisor.