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# **ERDI Standards and Procedures Manual**

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**EMERGENCY RESPONSE DIVING INTERNATIONAL**

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## **ERDI Standards and Procedures Manual:**

**Publisher: International Training**

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v.0122**

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**ISBN:** 1-931451-92-3

**Product ID #:** 320100-01





part 1

# introduction

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## **Introduction**



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Revision History		
Revision Number	Date	Changes
2.0	03/16/2002	The manual has been restructured.
3.0	08/01/2004	The manual has been completely rewritten.
6.0	11/01/2005	Punctuation corrections made.
7.0	10/27/2006	Language corrections made.
8.0	11/13/2007	Minor editorial changes.
9.0	11/14/2008	Clarifications and updated language added
10.0	12/31/2009	2009 Updates incorporated + minor edits
11.0	01/01/2011	Minor edits and formatting
12	01/01/2012	Minor edits
12.1	06/01/2012	3.3 Added Definitions
13.0	01/01/2013	No changes
14.0	01/01/2014	No Changes
14.1	10/01/2014	Added NFPA 1953 Guidelines to 3.5
15.0	01/01/2015	No Changes
15.1	04/01/2015	Added 4.5 International dive leader registration procedures
15.2	08/01/2015	No Changes
15.3	11/01/2015	Page Two: Headquarters information updated
16.0	01/01/2016	No Changes
16.1	04/01/2016	Added new 4.13 Requirements for Dive Leader Crossovers
16.2	07/01/2016	Added 4.6.6 requiring annual medical for Dive Leader Renewal
17.0	01/01/2017	No Changes
18.0	01/01/2018	3.3 Added definition of prerequisites Removed 4.6.6 requiring annual medical for Dive Leader Renewal



**Revision History**

Revision Number	Date	Changes
19.0	01/01/2019	3.1.2 Clarified medical form requirement Added new 3.1.3 – Diver registration form 3.2 Replaced accident section 4.11.6 Step 4 – removed last sentence. Formatting updated
0120	01/01/2020	3.1.3 Defined the valid term for a physician signed medical 4.14 "Note" Expanded upon
0121	01/01/2021	No Changes
0221	02/01/2021	No Changes
0122	01/01/2022	No Changes





## **1. Disclaimer**

Emergency Response Diving generally is a hazardous activity requiring significant training, good physical fitness, and a working knowledge of the inherent risk associated with these activities. This manual is not intended to and cannot replace a comprehensive training program conducted by a qualified instructor.

Neither the authors of this manual, Emergency Response Diving International (ERDI), Scuba Diving International (SDI), Technical Diving International (TDI), International Training (IT), nor any party associated with Emergency Response Diving International (ERDI), Scuba Diving International (SDI), Technical Diving International (TDI), International Training (IT) can nor will accept responsibility for accidents or injuries resulting from the use of the materials contained herein, the activity of scuba diving generally, or the activities associated with emergency response diving specifically.

## 2. Code of Ethics and Conduct

### The ERDI Professional:

Always maintains their personal, physical, and mental fitness as they relate to diving.

- Always maintains their equipment and never begins a dive with defective equipment.
- Strives to maintain an attitude of professionalism and objectivity, and supports the concept of safety in diving.
- Will not encourage or recruit other individuals to dive if unqualified.
- Will make every effort to pass on their knowledge to novice divers and to the greater public safety diving community if requested to do so, whether through formal instruction, answering questions or via appropriate publication in books, journals and magazines.
- Strives to encourage and practice an awareness of conservation of the underwater environment at all times.
- By virtue of their voluntary membership in ERDI, recognizes a responsibility and obligation to promote ERDI and support the official decisions adopted by ERDI. In fulfilling this obligation to the organization, the ERDI Divers and Instructors shall:
  - Publicly support ERDI as an organization
  - Make every effort to bring about necessary changes in a professional manner by direct contact with those fellow ERDI Members and Divers who are in positions of authority and responsibility.
- Publicly support ERDI as an organization
- Make every effort to bring about necessary changes in a professional manner by direct contact with those fellow ERDI Members and Divers who are in positions of authority and responsibility.
- Has an obligation to report violations of ERDI Standards and of the Code of Ethics.
- Should strive to set an example of professional behavior and ethical conduct in all activities including, public speaking, articles and books, and various forms of Internet style discourse.
- Unwarranted critical comment and deliberate inflammatory statements about diving and diving professionals are inappropriate, undesirable, and will not be tolerated within the organization.

## 3. General Course Standards

These general course standards apply to all ERDI training courses.

### 3.1 Administrative

Instructors must ensure that all students complete the following forms – for each and every course and ops component (specialty) the student participates in. These records must be kept for a minimum of seven years and must be complete prior to the start of the course. They are:

1. *ERDI Liability Release and Express Assumption of Risk* form
2. *ERDI Medical Statement* form (unless specifically not required in a non-diving course standard)
  - a. *If a student answers yes to any question in the ERDI Medical Statement under the medical history section then the student must provide written permission from a physician before participating in any confined or open water training or any course or specialty training*
3. If a student answers yes to any question in the ERDI Medical Statement under the medical history section then the student must provide written permission from a physician before participating in any confined or open water training or any course or specialty training Diver Registration form (upon completion of the specific program). A physician-signed medical is valid for up to 12 months with no change in medical condition unless a longer valid term is indicated on a specific medical form.
4. *ERDI Student Record* form (must be kept for 7 years)

### 3.2 In the Event of an Accident

If an accident were to occur, your primary concern is to care for the victim

Additional concerns include:

- Secure the victim's equipment - in a serious accident, local authorities may take custody of the equipment
- Gather all relevant information, using the International Training accident/incident report form
- Be sympathetic to victim's family and friends
- Do not speculate about the facts of the incident
- Make no comments regarding anyone's potential liability
- Take photographs of everything

As soon as possible, email or fax the completed accident/incident report to International Training or your local regional office. Include a copy of any applicable liability release. If the accident occurred during training, also include copies of the medical statement and all student training records. Every accident should be reported (even relatively minor ones). If your insurance company requires certain reporting procedures, those should be followed as well. If the incident occurred during a training program conducted through another agency, the instructor should follow the procedures of that agency. Whenever possible, submit the same report to all parties (avoid multiple versions of the report).

Cooperate with any subsequent official investigation. This may be conducted by International Training, local authorities, and other training agencies. Refrain from making statements to the news media or to anyone else.

Prudent dive professionals will have established emergency procedures and have established emergency plans for all training locations used. Staying current with CPR and first aid certifications demonstrates prudence. Verify that you have proper contact information for emergency services for each location. Be ready to control the scene, assign tasks, and evaluate the equipment used and surroundings. Take copious notes, establish a timeline for the report, and photograph equipment and the surrounding area. Interview witnesses and get observations from numerous witnesses if possible to help with the report. Be sure to complete the accident report in a timely manner, submit it to the proper entities or individuals, and do not share with third parties.

### 3.3 Definitions

**Assistant or Assisted by** = A person who is assisting a primary and certified instructor, IT staff instructor or instructor trainer for a course that they, the “assistant”, is not certified to teach. Assistants can be used for the purposes of additional supervision and to increase ratios where standards and environmental conditions allow. Assistants listed on registrations will receive experience credits for courses they have assisted with only if listed on the initial registration form.

**Co-Teach or 2nd Instructor** = A person who is certified to teach the course taking place and is working together with an also certified instructor, IT staff instructor or instructor trainer. The 2nd instructor will receive equal credit for the course if listed on the initial registration form.

**Student Prerequisites** = conditions that must be met by students prior to beginning a course. These cannot be completed during the course unless specifically outlined in the standard. Conditions listed here cannot be waived by the instructor. Written standards waivers for prerequisites may be issued by the HQ training department depending on the course, dive site, and the specific prior experience of course participants.

### 3.4 Confined Water Training

Confined water training must be conducted in a swimming pool or a confined body of water with the following conditions:

1. Approximately 3 metres/10 feet of visibility
2. Calm surface conditions
3. Easy access to depths that allow the student to stand with their head above water
4. Depths that allow skills (as defined in the confined water lesson guide) to be adequately demonstrated
5. Equipment appropriate for the site
6. Confined water training sites other than pools must be approved by ERDI Headquarters

### 3.5 Open Water Training

The instructor, with the following considerations, must carefully choose an open water training site:

1. The body of water similar to the regional diving conditions (oceans, lake, etc.)
2. Swimming pools are not considered an open water environment
3. Water clarity
4. Temperature above and below the water
5. Weather conditions
6. Water access
7. Equipment appropriate for the conditions
8. Thermal protection appropriate for the conditions
9. No dives are to require a decompression stop

10. No dives will be conducted in an overhead environment
11. A complete briefing that includes
  - a. The dive site
  - b. Water conditions
  - c. Skills to be performed
  - d. Entry/exit to be used
  - e. Emergency procedures
12. A complete debriefing that includes
  - a. Performance of divers as a whole
  - b. Areas that need improvement
  - c. Environmental observations
  - d. Questions and answers.

During all open water training there will be an ERDI Supervisor, Instructor or Instructor Trainer present and equipped to respond to an in-water emergency at all times. During any in-water training, NFPA 1006, NFPA 1670 and NFPA 1953 standards must be followed, or for regions not governed by NFPA, any regulatory or legal requirements that apply to professional and/or volunteer public safety and emergency response divers.

### **3.6 Student Diver – Minimum Equipment Requirements**

The student diver must have the following equipment during open water training

1. Mask and fins
2. Appropriate buoyancy compensator device (BCD) with a low pressure inflator
3. Regulator appropriate for the environment
4. Redundant air source; pony cylinder of at least 3 liters / 18 cubic feet
5. Appropriate instrumentation: submersible pressure gauge, depth gauge, underwater timing device \*
6. Compass
7. Exposure protection appropriate for the training conditions
8. Compressed gas cylinder
9. Cutting tool: 1 primary, 1 backup
10. Rescue signals; audio and visual
11. Weight system
12. USCG approved personal floatation device (PFD)
13. Dive tables

\* Student may use a dive computer to meet these requirements.



### **3.7 Student Tender – Minimum Equipment Requirements**

The student tender must have the following equipment during open water training

1. USCG approved personal floatation device (PFD)
2. Cutting tool: 1 primary, 1 backup
3. Rescue signals, audio and visual
4. Gloves, latex and work

### **3.8 Instructor – Minimum Equipment Requirements**

The ERDI Instructor must have the following equipment

1. Mask and fins
2. Appropriate buoyancy compensator device (BCD) with a low pressure inflator
3. Regulator appropriate for the environment
4. Redundant air source; pony cylinder of at least 3 liters / 18 cubic feet
5. Appropriate instrumentation: submersible pressure gauge, depth gauge and underwater timing device\*
6. Compass
7. Exposure protection appropriate for the training conditions
8. Compressed gas cylinder
9. Cutting tool: 1 primary and 1 backup
10. Rescue signal, 1 audio and 1 visual
11. Weight system
12. A dive flag (unless in a pool) must be carried in accordance with local laws or regulations
13. Any specialized equipment unique to the subject material
14. USCG approved personal floatation device (PFD)

\* Instructors, assistant instructors or ERDI Supervisors may use a dive computer to meet these requirements.

### **3.9 Certification**

Upon successful completion of any ERDI course, the ERDI Instructor must issue the appropriate certification and submit the ERDI Registration Form to ERDI World HQ or the respective regional office, or register the student online.

For ERDI Supervisor and ERDI Instructor, application for certification will be made directly to ERDI World Headquarters.

## **4. General Membership Standards**

### **4.1 ERDI Supervisor**

Current ERDI Supervisors are qualified to assist ERDI Instructors where appropriate.

### **4.2 ERDI Instructor**

ERDI Instructors are qualified to teach the ERDI Tender, ERD I, ERD II and ERDI Supervisor courses in accordance with specified standards. ERDI Instructors must be ERDI Full Face Mask and ERDI Dry suit certified.

### **4.3 ERDI Operations (OPS) Components Instructor**

Each ERDI Specialty Course (OPS component) will require a separate certification for instructors who desire to teach these components.

Some of these certifications will be merely administrative while others will require attendance at a formal training program. Specific course standards should be referenced for further details.

### **4.4 General**

1. ERDI Instructors and Instructor Trainers must comply with the Two Year Renewal/Refresher Policy detailed at 4.12 in these ERDI General Standards.
2. Members must ensure they are in renewed, active teaching status and that they hold the appropriate instructor level prior to teaching any ERDI course
3. ERDI Supervisors must assist with at least one ERDI course every 2 years from the date of the last course assisted with.
4. All ERDI courses must be completed within 12 months unless otherwise stated.
5. Recommendation for all ERDI courses; any student must demonstrate skills required in previous courses to the new instructor.

## 4.5 Regional Office Affiliation Procedures

1. Members (ERDI Supervisors, Assistant Instructors, Instructors, IT Staff Instructors, and IT's) are required to be affiliated with the Regional Office (RO) that is managing their country of residence with the following guidelines:
  - a. Member resides in the region for a period of 4 months or longer.
  - b. If member travels to a different region to teach, they are not considered a part of that Regional Office unless they are spending more than 4 months in the location continuously.
2. All new members are required to be registered and affiliated with Regional Office of their country of residence .
  - a. Instructor Trainers must submit leadership application paperwork to the appropriate regional office.
  - b. Instructor Trainers who are unsure of the region to register a new dive professional should contact SDI/TDI/ERDI World Headquarters for directions.
3. Members must have an address in their user profile that coincides with the region they are affiliating with.
4. It is strongly recommended that any member that is traveling outside their region they are affiliated with to conduct courses, contact the Regional Office in the area they are teaching in to become familiar with local law, rules and regulations should they apply and as a courtesy to the local Regional Office.

## 4.6 Active Teaching Status

An ERDI Instructor given the designation of active teaching status must agree to the following criteria:

1. Annual dues must be paid in full
2. All account balances from previous years must be paid in full
3. Submit proof of current liability insurance in accordance with applicable local regulations
4. Having taught or assisted in at least one ERDI course. All instructors must hold active teaching status to be authorized to teach ERDI Courses and to certify ERDI Divers
5. Ability to perform all the leadership skills

## **4.7 Probation Status**

An ERDI Instructor may be placed on probation status for any of the following reasons:

1. Account balance is 90 days or more
2. Failed to meet the contractual obligations of active teaching status
3. Violated teaching standards

**An ERDI Instructor placed on probation status is authorized to teach ERDI Courses and to certify ERDI Divers. Further standards violations can result in an instructor being moved from probation status to suspended or even expelled Status.**

## **4.8 Non-Teaching Status**

An ERDI Instructor can be placed on non-teaching status for any of the following reasons:

1. Account balance is 90 days or more
2. Temporarily placed on suspension
3. Failed to meet the contractual obligations of active teaching status

**An ERDI Instructor placed on non-teaching status is not authorized to teach ERDI Courses or to certify ERDI Divers**

## **4.9 Suspended Status**

An ERDI Instructor can be placed on suspended status for any of the following reasons:

1. Account balance is 120 days or more with no attempt to rectify the situation
2. Failed to meet the contractual obligations of active teaching status
3. Violated teaching standards

**An ERDI Instructor placed on suspended status is not authorized to teach ERDI Courses or to certify ERDI Divers. Further standards violations can result in an instructor being moved from suspended status to expelled Status.**

## 4.10 Expelled Status

An ERDI Instructor can be placed on expelled status for any of the following reasons:

1. Account balance is 120 days or more with no attempt to rectify the situation
2. Placed on Suspended or probation status on more than one occasion.
3. Failed to meet the contractual obligations of active teaching status
4. Violated teaching standards
5. Displayed conduct unbecoming a professional instructor

**An ERDI Instructor placed on expelled status is no longer authorized to teach ERDI Courses or to certify ERDI Divers. An ERDI Instructor placed on expelled status is no longer a member of Emergency Response Diving International.**

**Note:** Emergency Response Diving International reserves the right to suspend, expel or terminate an individual based upon the determination that standards violations have occurred.

## 4.11 Quality Assurance (QA) Procedures

Quality assurance issues are handled at ERDI World Headquarters by the Training Department. This is to ensure that regional offices and sales managers remain neutral in the final decision.

### 4.11.1. General Quality Assurance Procedures

General quality assurances are defined as random Q&A letters sent out to students who were recently registered by members in good standing. General Q&A letters are sent out to maintain the quality of instruction and ensure that proper training materials were used.

- Letters are sent with a self addressed, return postage paid envelope or via electronic e-mail course survey form.
- All course survey letters are forwarded to ERDI World Headquarters Training Department.
- Non-English speaking student's letters are translated to the student's language.

There are four possible actions that may be taken when an ERDI Professional's standing comes into question. They are:

- No Action Required
- Probation
- Suspension
- Expulsion

### **4.11.2. No Action Required**

No action required means that the information provided to the training department was insufficient or unfounded.

### **4.11.3. Probation**

Probation status requires that a course survey letter be sent to every student the member registers; it does not restrict or preclude the member from teaching courses. This status can be placed on the member without notification and is generally only short term. Probation status is used when information is brought to the attention of the training department that suggests a member may not be conducting themselves according to the standards or ethics of ERDI. A member may also be placed on probation without written documentation by the complainant, at the discretion of the training department.

### **4.11.4. Suspension**

Members placed on suspension status are not allowed to teach at any level for a period of time or under conditions determined by the training department. These conditions, along with the reasons they are being placed on suspension, will be provided to the member in writing. Members can only be placed on suspension after they have been given a fifteen day period to respond to the allegations against them and after the training department has performed a complete investigation into the allegations.

### **4.11.5. Expelled**

Expelled members are indefinitely prohibited from teaching ERDI Programs. Members are expelled only after all attempts to correct their actions have been exhausted or their actions deem that expulsion is the only correction. Expulsions can only be approved by the President of International Training after the training department has performed a complete investigation.

All quality assurance issues are to be kept confidential and not shared with outside instructors or facilities unless authorized by headquarters training department.

Regional offices and sales managers may be asked to assist in acquiring information about the quality assurance issues.

A provisional status or remedial training requires the file be kept open until all requirements have been met.

### **4.11.6. Headquarters Quality Assurance Steps**

**Step 1:** The training department receives a written letter or course survey alleging a standards or ethics violation. The letter must be signed (electronic signature is acceptable) by the individuals who witnessed the alleged standards or ethics violation. Phone conversations will not be accepted.

**Step 2:** ERDI Headquarters Training Department will check the database for current status of the dive professional in question. Once headquarters has all contact information, they will notify the individual that a complaint has been filed against them. Notification will be attempted first by phone or email and then by letter.

**Step 3:** The notification letter will contain the alleged quality assurance violations. The individual will be notified and they have 15 days to reply.

**Step 4:** Headquarters will send course surveys to former students.

**Step 5:** When all information has been submitted and reviewed, a final decision will be made as to what action will be taken. ERDI World Headquarters Training Department will compose a letter and inform the member as to their decision.

**Step 6:** The member's status will be noted in the database.

All feedback on the material used and quality of instruction will be noted in the instructor's file in the database at headquarters.

## **4.12 Exams**

The required score for all students taking any ERDI Diver level or leadership course exam is 80%, with 100% remediation of any incorrect answers required by the course instructor. Alternate exams, where produced, are also to be used when students score below 80%.

## 4.13 Requirements for Dive Leader Crossovers

Dive leader associated with another recognized scuba training agency must provide a copy of their current rating with the other agency. If they are inactive, and have been for *less than five years*, they must secure a letter from that agency, stating what requirements must be completed prior reinstatement with that agency. They must then complete the online crossover program (if it is available in their language) complete the appropriate crossover application and submit it along with proof of current leadership rating(s), insurance (if required in their geographical location) and documentation they have completed the online program. They will then be required to complete the crossover program with a qualified individual. This can be completed either in person or via a web conference.

If they have been inactive for *more than five years*, they must secure a letter from that agency stating what requirements must be completed prior reinstatement with that agency.

Due to the length of inactivity, they will be required to complete an IEC for the highest level they wish to crossover to.

### **All ERDI Crossover candidates will need complete the following:**

1. Provide verification of teaching Full Face
2. Provide verification of teaching Dry suit
3. Current Medical Examination for Scuba diving signed by a licensed physician
4. Verification of current CPR/first aid/O2 provider certification
5. Provide 2 references from candidates familiar with your PSD teaching experience
6. Copy of Outline currently using to teach your PSD course
7. Provide verification of diving activity in the last 12 months
8. Provide verification of 100 logged dives of which 75 are PSD dives either operational or training
9. Complete an ERDI Instructor Evaluation Course (IEC) with a qualified ERDI IT



## 4.14 Two Year Renewal/Refresher Policy

ERDI Instructors and Instructor Trainers must teach a course at their highest level every 2 years from the date they last taught that course. If a course is not taught within that two-year period, teaching status for that level is will be inactive and the instructor or instructor trainer must attend an update to regain active status for that level. Members usually affected by this policy are those who have not renewed as ERDI members for two or more years. However, members who are actively teaching lower ratings but not at their highest level may also be affected for that level.

The following information details how members can regain fully active status either by verifying activity at an equivalent level with another recognized agency or by completing an update with an instructor trainer.

**When an update with an instructor trainer is required, the following criteria applies:**

1. ERDI: Update covers ERDI Instructor and Ops Components,

### **Renewal Policy for Inactive Members of ERDI**

1. For an instructor who is a member of ERDI and has not renewed for 2 or more years but *has been teaching with another recognized scuba certification agency*, the requirements for renewal includes ALL of the following:
  - Successfully complete the on-line professional familiarization course (code issued by headquarters)
  - Purchase or verify possession of all current teaching materials for ratings held
  - Complete and submit membership renewal and agreement form for the current year
  - Submit an ERDI Member Update form detailing activity as a scuba instructor during the period, including verification of teaching activity at equivalent ratings with another recognized agency during the past 2 years
  - Verify no quality assurance issues with any other agency during the period of inactivity with ERDI.
2. For an instructor who is a member of ERDI and has not renewed for 2 or more years and has not been teaching with another recognized SCUBA certification agency, the requirements for renewal are as follows:
  - Successfully complete the on-line professional familiarization course (code issued by headquarters)

- Purchase or verify possession of all current teaching materials for ratings held
- Complete and submit membership renewal and agreement form for the current year
- Verify no quality assurance issues with any other agency during past 2 years.
- Complete the relevant ERDI leadership level course Skill performance and graduation requirements (at highest level held) as an update with a qualified active teaching status ERDI Instructor Trainer
- Submit a completed ERDI Member Update form, signed by the instructor trainer who completed the update
- Submit a current medical signed by a licensed physician with no restrictions or limitations for scuba diving
- Submit verification of current CPR and first aid training

**Active Teaching Status Policy for ERDI Members Who Have Maintained Renewal**

1. For an instructor who is a member of ERDI and has maintained renewal but not taught or assisted at their highest level for 2 or more years and has been teaching at an equivalent level with another recognized scuba certification agency, the requirements for regaining active teaching status includes All of the following:

- Purchase or verify possession of all current teaching materials for ratings held
- Submit an ERDI Member Update form detailing activity as a scuba instructor during the period, including verification of teaching activity at equivalent ratings with another recognized agency during the past 2 years
- Verify no quality assurance issues with any other agency during the period

**Or**

- Have a current and active ERDI Instructor Trainer (qualified to the same levels) submit a member update form verifying an update has been completed

2. For an instructor who is a member of E RDI and has maintained renewal but not taught or assisted at their highest level for 2 or more years and *has **not** been teaching at an equivalent level with another recognized scuba certification agency*, the requirements for regaining active teaching status are as follows:

- Verify no quality assurance issues with any other agency during past 2 years.
- Complete the relevant ERDI leadership level course Skill performance and graduation requirements (at highest level held) as an update with a qualified active teaching status ERDI Instructor Trainer
- Submit a completed Member Update form, signed by the instructor trainer who completed the update
- Submit a current medical signed by a licensed physician with no restrictions or limitations for scuba diving
- Submit verification of current CPR and first aid training

**Note:** Additional requirements and documentation may be required once the application for renewal has been reviewed by the ERDI Headquarters Training Department (or Regional Office). Members who have been inactive for 5 or more years may have additional requirements to regain active status and must contact the Training Department.

Online codes can be obtained from headquarters for any and all of the aforementioned procedures at no charge.

**Instructor Trainers** wishing to renew IT status after an inactive period of 2 years or longer at that level must attend an ERDI Instructor Trainer Workshop (*or IT crossover program*) conducted by ERDI Headquarters Training Department Staff (no charge is made for this). Additionally, the requirements of renewing at the corresponding instructor level must also be met.

## **5. Supervision**

### **5.1 Student to Instructor Ratios**

Student instructor ratios will be specified in the individual course standards with the following over-riding exception: in 0 visibility environments where direct supervision is required the student to teacher ratio for in water training will be 1-to-1.

### **5.2 Safety Divers and Tenders**

During all ERDI course training, each diver in the water will require a dedicated tender and back-up diver with tender. In programs where non-tethered searches are used, divers must be accompanied by a buddy and the tender may be considered to be the individual assigned to monitor electronic communications for the divers. During all open water training there will be an ERDI Supervisor, Instructor or Instructor Trainer present and equipped to respond to an in-water emergency at all times. During any in-water training, NFPA 1006 and NFPA 1670 standards must be followed or for regions not governed by NFPA any regulatory or legal requirements that apply to professional and/or volunteer public safety and emergency response divers.