

Course Overview

In accordance with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program, the following outline provides a course of instruction to give the maritime law enforcement officer the skills necessary to survive in and on the water. This course prepares the officer for the unexpected immersion into the water. A key element of this course will be the preparation of participants to become proficient in water survival skills and awareness on how to modify both duty and survival equipment to increase your chances of survival.

The two day/16 hour course will focus on the basic elements of the Officer Water Survival Course. Participants in this course will be participating in swimming, treading and other drills in uniform, with body armor and a simulated duty belt. This course is physically challenging and is not designed to teach a person how to swim or tread water. In addition, students should be familiar with and have a basic skill to swim using front crawl/free style stroke, breast stroke, side stroke and swimming under water.



Module	Subject Areas
1.0	Officer Water Survival Course Introduction
2.0	Understanding the limitations of the patrol uniform
2.1	Treading water while in uniform
2.2	Swimming while in uniform
2.3	Swimming while in uniform and wearing an inflatable life jacket
2.4	Swimming while in uniform and wearing an inherently buoyant life jacket
3.0	“Water proofing” activities
4.0	Water disengagement techniques
5.0	Extrication techniques
6.0	Participant evaluation/Practical Skills

Elements Not Covered in this Course

This course is a skill based training which involves placing students in the water. Training which involves placing students in the water, comes with inherent risk.

Course Purpose

The Officer Water Survival Course, as part of the entire Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program, was created to establish a national standard of training, qualification, credentialing and typing of the marine law enforcement officers and emergency first responders throughout the maritime domain. It is the purpose of this course to establish a basic understanding of officer survival on the water. Secondly, and equally as important, it is the purpose of this course and the entire BOAT Program, to enhance the safety and response capabilities throughout the country.



Method of Delivery

The course is exportable and delivered to the location of the host agency, provided the host can assure adequate pool and classroom facilities. The course is delivered using “team teaching” as the model, where all instructors are engaged in every module within the course, so the students get multiple views and experiences to support and enhance the learning environment.

Criteria Performance Standard

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will demonstrate proficiency of each of the subject areas outlined in the course modules through a compilation of measure including objective testing, scenario review, class discussion, practical activities and verification of course pre-requisites.

Target Audience

The class is designed to provide federal, state, county, local and tribal marine law enforcement officers a basic framework of knowledge and skills to survive an unexpected immersion into the water or to disengage from a suspect.

Course Structure

This course consists of instructor lecture, which will be aided (and assessed) by slide presentations, class interaction, practical exercises; skill based testing and final assessment. The Instructors will emphasize student interaction and discussion throughout the course to ensure that the information taught is being understood and can be applied in a real-world environment.

Class Size/Student to Instructor Ratio

The minimum class size is 12 students, the maximum number is 20. Instructors for each class will meet a maximum of 4 students per instructor for each class (4 to 1 Student to Instructor Ratio) including a minimum of 2 safety divers, provided by the host agency at all times that students are in the pool.

Course Requirements

Host agency will be required to provide two fully outfitted and nationally qualified divers for the duration of the course. Students will be required to pass a swim test at the bringing of this course to remain in the class.

Students will be required to bring the following items to participate in this course:

- swim suit to wear under uniform,
- uniform pants,
- uniform shirt,
- undershirt to wear under the uniform shirt,
- thin neoprene or other thermal layer (i.e., wet suit, top, and/or bottom) to help retain heat while in pool,
- patrol shoes,
- socks,
- separate bags for dry and wet items,
- lock for locker,
- swim goggles,
- dry clothes and shoes,
- towels,
- drinking water,
- snacks – energy bars, bananas, etc.,
- eye lubricant/drops,
- (If corrective lens eyewear is required) old eye glasses that can be worn in the pool,
- sunscreen and ball cap if taught at an outdoor pool,
- optional - items for shower (shampoo, soap, flip-flops), and
- personal items like medicines, contacts, etc.

*** All clothing, shoes and items worn in the pool must be clean, free of dirt, free of items in the pockets**





NASBLA will provide the following items that will be worn:

- body armor,
- under belt,
- weighted duty belts,
- weighted training guns,
- inherently buoyant PFDs and manually inflatable PFDs, and
- Red Man Gear

Facility Requirements

In order to deliver the course a classroom area will have to be provided that will seat at tables up to 30 people. Additionally, the classroom will require a projector, a screen, a whiteboard and /or easel boards with paper, writing instruments, power cords, sound speakers, bathroom facilities, and pool in proximity to the classroom. The pool requirements should be 20-25 yards in length with a minimum of four lanes and a minimum temperature of 82-85 degrees Fahrenheit. The pool should also have a shallow end that is not more than four feet deep with a deep end of at least 7 ft but no more than 12 ft. The pool facility must allow officers to enter the pool in full uniform and footwear. The pool facility must also allow divers with full dive equipment to monitor students from the bottom of the pool at all times that students are in the water.

Course Cost

The fee for the two day/16 hour is \$18,500 for up to 20 students, and covers all instructor costs (travel, per diem, fees, etc.) administrative costs (certificates, database entry, etc.) and materials (student handbooks, practical exercise materials, etc.). The course fee on an individual student basis is \$1100 with a minimum of 12 students.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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NASBLA Practice Swim Test for OWS

Participants of an Officer Water Survival course should practice and strive to successfully complete the NASBLA Practice Swim Test for OWS. The practice swim test includes the ability to continuously swim a distance of 300 yards; continuously tread water for a minimum of five (5) minutes in at least seven (7) feet of water; and the ability to perform a head first surface dive to retrieve an object in at least seven (7) feet of water and no deeper than twelve (12) feet of water. In addition, students should be familiar with the following swim strokes: front crawl/ free style, breast stroke, side stroke and underwater swimming. **Instructor candidates will be tested on their ability to swim prior to participating in instructor training. The test will be administered in a pool while wearing a swim suit. This test will be similar to the test described below.**

Successful completion of the practice test does not guarantee success in OWS training. The rather it can be used to identify a person who lacks basic swimming skills. An agency can use this practice test to assess basic swimming skills of its employees. "Non-swimmers" escalate the risk for all participants, instructors and rescuers in an OWS course and jeopardizes the program. "Non-swimmers" will at minimum be required to wear an inherently buoyant life jacket at all times and may be removed from the course if the risk interferes with the safety of others.

300 Yard Swim:

For this portion of the testing, the participant will begin in the shallow end of the swimming pool. The number of laps and/or portion of laps required to equal 300 yards will be communicated to you at the pool side. At the audible start signal, the participant will swim the distance equal to 300 yards and a pass or fail will be recorded.

The participant may employ any desired swimming stroke or combination of swimming strokes for the completion of this assessment. The participant may use the end walls of the pool for the completion of turns, but may NOT use the sides or the bottom of the pool for the attainment of rest periods during the event. The participant should make every effort to avoid any contact with the sides and the bottom of the pool during the actual testing portion of this event.

The inability to complete this portion of the test as described above will result in a failure being recorded.

300 Yard Swim Results:

Test Administered by: _____

Laps Required: _____ Laps Completed: _____

PASS or FAIL (circle one) * Participant(s) will rest for a minimum of five (5) minutes.



OFFICER WATER SURVIVAL (OWS) COURSE OVERVIEW

Treading Water:

For this portion of the testing, the participant may have physical contact with the pool edge at the start of this assessment. At the audible start signal, the participant will disassociate from the pool edge and will tread in water at least seven (7) feet deep, for a minimum of five (5) minutes. Treading water is defined as pumping your arms and/or legs, maintaining an upright position, and keeping your head above water. Floating is not permitted.

The participant may NOT use the edges of the pool for the attainment of rest periods or make contact with the bottom of the pool during the event. A stopwatch will be used to measure the five (5) minute time and a pass or fail will be recorded.

The inability to complete this portion of the test as described above will result in a failure being recorded.

Treading Water Results:

Test Administered By: _____

Elapsed Time: _____ Water Depth: _____

PASS or FAIL (circle one) * Participant(s) will rest for a minimum of two (2) minutes.

Head First Surface Dive:

For this portion of the testing, the participant will begin in at least seven (7) feet of water and no deeper than twelve (12) feet of water. The participant may have physical contact with the pool edge at the start of this event. At the audible start signal, the participants will disassociate themselves from the pool edge, tread water and perform a head first surface dive in at least seven (7) feet of water and no deeper than twelve (12) feet of water and retrieve an object.

The participant must perform a head-first surface dive. The participant must fully submerge and retrieve the object.

You will have a maximum of three attempts to retrieve the object from the bottom of the pool.

Attempt-1 Pass or Fail

Attempt-2 Pass or Fail

Attempt-3 Pass or Fail

The inability to complete this portion of the test as described above will result in a failure being recorded.

Surface Dive Results:

Test Administered By: _____

Surface Dive Water Depth: _____

PASS or FAIL (circle one)

Officer Water Survival – Course Schedule



OFFICER WATER SURVIVAL (OWS) COURSE OVERVIEW

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Day One:

9:00-11:30AM (Classroom):

- Course goal
- Pro's/Con's
- Learning objectives
- Wet vs. dry uniform
- Controlled breathing
- Treading water
- Life jackets
- Controlling heat loss; stay dry; stay warm
- Waterproofing with clothing
- Swimming with and without life jacket
- Water disengagement tactics & falling
- Escapes
- Extrication techniques

11:30AM-1:00PM: Lunch; dress and gear handout

- Students will wear their swimsuit, t-shirt, patrol shirt, patrol pants (no shorts), socks and shoes. Students may use swim goggles.
- Students will be issued body armor and duty belt.

1:00-5:00PM (Pool):

- Safety talk; emergency procedures; stretching
- Wet vs. dry
- Putting life jacket on while in the water, etc.

- Controlled breathing
- Treading water
- Swimming techniques – without life jacket
- Treading water drills
- Clean-up

DAY Two:

8:00AM-12:00PM (Pool):

- Gear up in uniform, duty belt and uniform & stretch
- Waterproofing with pants
- H.E.L.P; Huddle; "Dead man's float"; Chain
- Swimming techniques without inherently buoyant life jacket – 100 yard swim test administered in gear

12:00-1:30PM: Lunch

1:30PM-5:00PM (Pool):

- Controlled breathing
- Treading water – 5 minute test administered in gear (2 minutes must be without inherently buoyant life jacket)
- Disengagement techniques
- Extrication techniques
- Obstacle course without life jacket – swim obstacle test administered in gear
- Course wrap-up

Officer Water Survival Course



Participant Evaluation

Participant Name: _____ Date: _____

There are three skills that evaluate the officer’s stamina and comfort in the water at the completion of the course. The officer must successfully complete all three skills.

Skill 1: Complete 100 yard Swim

Wearing officer uniform, body armor, weighted gun belt and shoes swim 100 using a forward stroke and without swim aids such as dive mask, fins, snorkel, or an inherently buoyant flotation device. Forward strokes include free style, breaststroke or side stroke. Standing up or grabbing the sides of the pool during any of the lengths or laps will result in failure of the skill. After 50 yards the officer may request an inherently buoyant life jacket to complete the additional 50 yards. The 100 yard swim does not have to be continuous; rather it can be broken into lengths or laps throughout the test period.

Did student complete 100 yard swim: YES NO

Skill 2: Complete 5 Minute Tread

Using no swim aids and wearing the officer uniform, body armor, weighted gun belt and shoes, the officer will stay afloat by treading water or floating for 5 minutes. After 2 minutes the officer can request the use of an inherently buoyant life jacket to aid in the completion of the exercise. Stopping, leaving the pool, standing up, pushing off the bottom, or grabbing the sides of the pool at any point will result in failure of the skill.

Did student complete the 5 minute tread: YES NO

Skill 3: Complete an Obstacle Course

Using no swim aids and wearing the officer uniform, body armor, weighted gun belt and shoes, the officer will complete an obstacle course. The obstacle course will include a falls entry; underwater swimming; hands out of water exercise; un-holstering a weapon, point to a target, and re-holster weapon; and a drill requiring the officer to get out of water. At no point may the participant request an inherently buoyant life jacket to aid in the completion of the exercise.

Did student complete the obstacle course: YES NO

Evaluator Name: _____ Evaluator Signature: _____

Date: _____