



OFFICER WATER SURVIVAL (OWS) TRAIN the TRAINER COURSE OUTLINE

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 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.



In addition this “Train the Trainer” offering will prepare the professional agency sponsored trainer the skills and knowledge to deliver the NASBLA curriculum within his agency and to his marine law enforcement partners.

The five day/40 hour course will focus on the basic elements of the Officer Water Survival Course and the subsequent teaching skills to deliver the course curriculum.

The first two day/16 hour portion of the course will provide a course of instruction that will give the maritime law enforcement officer the skills necessary to survive in and on the water and will prepare 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 second three days/20 hours of the course will focus on “Train the Trainer” delivery of the curriculum and will prepare the professional agency sponsored trainer the skills, knowledge and ability to deliver the NASBLA curriculum within his agency and to his marine law enforcement partners in accordance with the policies, procedures and techniques established through the NASBLA BOAT Program as a National Standard of Training. It will focus on the basic elements of the Officer Water Survival Course and the subsequent teaching skills to deliver the course effectively.

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 | Pre-requisite Swim Test |
| 2.0 | Officer Water Survival Course Introduction |
| 3.0 | Understanding the limitations of the patrol uniform |
| 3.1 | Treading water while in uniform |
| 3.2 | Swimming while in uniform |
| 3.3 | Swimming while in uniform and wearing an inflatable life jacket |
| 3.4 | Swimming while in uniform and wearing an inherently buoyant life jacket |

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|--------|--|
| 4.0 | “Water proofing” activities |
| 5.0 | Water disengagement techniques |
| 6.0 | Extrication techniques |
| Module | Subject Areas for Trainers |
| 7.0 | Officer Water Survival Train the Trainer Course |
| 7.1 | Risk Mitigation for OWS |
| 7.2 | Administering teach-back skills |
| 7.3 | Pool Hazards /Safety gear |
| 7.4 | Student distress & signs of drowning |
| 7.5 | Demonstration of Skills |
| 7.6 | Extrication techniques |
| 7.7 | Class designs and set up an obstacle course |

Elements Not Covered in this Course

This course is a skill based training and it requires that agency sponsored trainers possess excellent swimming and basic classroom instructional skills. Training which involves placing students in the water comes with inherent risk.

The following elements will not be covered, but are necessary to fully participate as an instructor in this course: Third party *certification in First Aid, Adult, Child and Infant CPR*

Course Purpose

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 during the execution of their duties, or to disengage from a suspect if pushed into the water. It is further designed to prepare the agency sponsored instructor the knowledge and skills to replicate the NASBLA delivery of training and use of the curriculum, provided that only the most recent version of the course will be utilized and not modified in any manner.



The Officer Water Survival Course and the Train the Trainer component, 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 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 and the effective delivery of this course curriculum for potential trainers in order to ensure a rewarding learning experience. Secondly, and equally as important, it is the purpose of this course and the entire BOAT Program, to enhance the maritime safety and response capabilities throughout the country.

Method of Delivery



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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, skill assessments and verification of course pre-requisites.

Course Structure

This course consists of instructor lecture, which will be aided (and assessed) by slide presentations, class interaction, practical exercises, and a skills assessment. The instructor 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) with a minimum of 2 nationally certified safety divers, provided by the host agency at all times that students are in the pool.

Course Requirements

Students will be required to pass a swim test at the beginning 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)
- 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 personal flotation devices (PFDs) and manually inflatable PFDs
- 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 five day/40 hour is \$32,000 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 \$1800 with a minimum of 12 students.



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CONTACT INFORMATION

David M Considine, BOAT Program Director

NASBLA

1648 McGrathiana Parkway

Lexington, KY 40511

(o) 859-225-7375 (m) 978-314-1839

(e) dave.considine@nasbla.org (w) www.nasbla.org/boat



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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.**

The majority of the OWS course is completed while wearing uniform, body armor and a simulated duty belt. The practice test and the administered pre-test are only a means of evaluating swimming skills and comfort in the water. **Students should be mentally prepared that the OWS courses will be completed while wearing uniform, body armor and a simulated duty belt.**

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.

1. 300 YARD SWIM:

- A. 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.
- B. The participant may employ any desired swimming stroke or combination of swimming strokes for the completion of this assessment.
- C. 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.
- D. 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.
- E. 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.



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2. TREADING WATER:

- A. 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.
- B. 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.
- C. 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.
- D. A stopwatch will be used to measure the five (5) minute time and a pass or fail will be recorded.
- E. 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.

3. HEAD FIRST SURFACE DIVE:

- A. 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.
- B. The participant may have physical contact with the pool edge at the start of this event.
- C. 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.
- D. The participant must perform a head-first surface dive.
- E. The participant must fully submerge and retrieve the object.
- F. 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)



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Officer Water Survival – Instructor Course Schedule

Each instructor candidate will be assigned one teach back topic prior to the start of the course. The candidate should be prepared to teach for 5-10 minutes on the topic.

(Introduce self; introduce topic; demonstrate step-by-step; why relevant; demonstrate proper use of personal gear as needed, any rescue aids or safety equipment; discuss any safety/risk mitigation issues; and ask for questions).

Day One:

8:00-11:00AM (Classroom):

- Risk Mitigation for OWS
- Signs of drowning (YouTube Video)
- Instructor manual
- PowerPoint presentation – Instructor Notes
- OWS Participant Evaluation
- NASBLA Practice Swim Test for OWS
- Requirements for OWS
- Participant Equipment List
- Equipment list for OWS
- Instructor Candidate Evaluation
- Instructor Audit

11:00AM – 12:30PM: Lunch/Travel to Pool/Dressed and Ready

12:30-5:00PM (Pool):

- Administer swim test for instructor candidates
 - **During this time, the instructor candidate will complete the NASBLA pre-requisite swim test. (Form: NASBLA Swim Test for OWS Instructor Candidates)**
- Pool side hazards
- First aid/CPR/AED/phone/emergency contacts
- Discuss participant's responsibilities for each other's safety in the pool
- Safety gear – throw bags, flotation aids, shepherds hook, whistles, snorkel gear, and swim goggles
 - Demonstrate throw bag and practice
 - Demonstrate shepherds hook and practice
 - Demonstrate of snorkel gear – swimming, surface dives, tows
 - Flotation aids demonstration and practice
- Discuss struggles with treading & signs of drowning
- Dress in uniform and duty gear
- Personal gear, belts, vest – care of gear
- Demonstrate treading water (**teach back - techniques**) & practice
 - Drills with basketball, buckets, one-hand gun retention, two-hand gun retention, etc.



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- Demonstrate making float with pants (teach back) & practice
- Demonstrate putting life jacket on while in deep water (teach back) & practice
- Clean-up

Day Two:

8:00AM-11:30AM (Pool):

- Wet vs. dry exercise with the pool (teach back – have a 3-5 students get wet and measure weight)
- Demonstrate controlled breathing (teach back) & practice
- Demonstrate swimming techniques without an inherently buoyant life jacket.
During this time, the instructor candidate will complete their 100 yard swim according to the OWS Instructor Candidate Evaluation form. The number of lengths to complete 100 yards will vary based on the pool length. This will need to be pre-determined by the instructor. Rest periods will likely be necessary due to the level of exertion and can be given at any point during the 100 yard test period. After successful completion of 100 yards, the candidate may elect to wear an inherently buoyant life jacket for the remaining drills.
 - Free style (teach back) & test total of 1 length
Swim ½ lengths with head in and the remaining ½ length with head out to keep eyes on subject.
 - Breast stroke (teach back) & test total of 1 length
Swim ½ lengths with head in and the remaining ½ length with head out to keep eyes on subject.
 - Side stroke (teach back) & test total of 1 length
Swim ½ lengths then switch sides to finish the length. Keep eyes on subject/target.
 - Underwater swim (teach back) & test total of 1 length.
Swim 1 length. When surface for air, get eyes on the subject/target. Surface and submerge quietly, slowly with “alligator eyes”.
 - Finish 100 yard test with any forward stroke preferred by student (if needed).
 - All forward strokes with gun out (teach back). Demonstrate each style with gun out of holster.
Swim ½ length free style (head in or out) with gun out and the remaining ½ length breast stroke (head in or out) with gun out.
Swim ½ length side stroke with gun out and the remaining ½ length under water with gun out.
- Extrication techniques
 - Loop step (teach back) & practice
 - Stirrup step (teach back) & practice
 - Review swim ladder, dive door and boat engines – how are your boats rigged?
- Games (rings, leap frog)



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11:30AM - 1:00PM: Lunch/Rest/Dressed and Ready

1:00PM – 5:00PM (Pool):

- Demonstrate HELP and Huddle (teach back) & practice
- Demonstrate Carpet and Chain (teach back) & practice
- Demonstrate dead man's float (teach back) & practice
- Demonstrate use of Red Man gear (teach back)
- Demonstrate falls (teach back) & practice
- Demonstrate kick-aways (teach back) & practice
- Demonstrate suck, tuck and duck (teach back) & practice
- Demonstrate ladder technique (teach back) & practice
- Clean-up

Day Three:

8:00AM-1:00PM (Pool):

- Class designs and sets up an obstacle course.
Course must contain: underwater swimming; falls entry; hands out of water exercise; un-holstering weapon, pointing to a target and re-holstering weapon; and an extrication technique.
- Review obstacle course (2 candidates complete teach backs & ties course to previously learned skills)
 - Risk mitigation for obstacle course
 - Placement of rescue swimmers/course instructors
 - Demonstrate how course is to be completed
- All candidates complete obstacle course without wearing a life jacket
 - **During this time, the instructor candidate will complete the obstacle course according to the OWS Instructor Candidate Evaluation form.** The obstacle course must be completed without an inherently buoyant life jacket.
- What other obstacle course can we show you?
- Final 10 minute tread
 - **During this time, the instructor candidate will complete the 10 minute tread according to the OWS Instructor Candidate Evaluation form.** After 3 minutes the candidate may begin removing clothes and duty gear and attempt to make a flotation device with uniform pants. The candidate may not use a swim aid or inherently buoyant life jacket.
- Final swim with inflatable PFD (if not already completed in the OWS Course)
- Re-tests or redo's for teach backs
- Inform each student – pass or fail
- Final clean-up and load gear/End of course



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Instructor Course

Instructor Candidate Evaluation

Instructor Candidate Name: _____ Date: _____

- * **Successful completion of the Officer Water Survival Course is required prior to becoming an instructor candidate and attending an instructor course.**

Instructor candidates are expected to be able to perform at a higher standard than those completing the Officer Water Survival Course. There are several skills that evaluate the instructor candidate's stamina and comfort in the water. In addition, there are several skills to evaluate their ability to teach a course and to provide for the safety of all participants, divers, and other instructors. The instructor candidate must successfully complete all skills.

Skill 1: Complete 100 yard Swim

Wearing officer uniform, body armor, weighted gun belt and shoes, swim 100 yards 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. The 100 yard swim does not have to be continuous; rather it can be broken into lengths or laps throughout the test period. At no point may the instructor candidate request a life jacket to aid in the completion of the skill.

Did candidate complete 100 yard swim: **YES NO**

Skill 2: Complete 10 Minute Tread

Using no swim aids and wearing the officer uniform, body armor, weighted gun belt and shoes stay afloat by treading water, or floating for 10 minutes. After 3 minutes the instructor candidate may begin to remove clothes and duty gear and attempt to make a flotation device with uniform pants. 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. At no point may the instructor candidate request an inherently buoyant life jacket to aid in the completion of the exercise.

Did candidate complete the 10 minute tread: **YES NO**

Skill 3: Design an Obstacle Course

Design an obstacle course that includes a falls entry; underwater swimming; hands out of water exercise; un-holstering weapon, point to a target and re-holster weapon; and a drill requiring the officer to get out of the water. Multiple instructor candidates can work as a team to create the obstacle course.

Did candidate design an obstacle course: **YES NO**



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Skill 4: Complete an Obstacle Course

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

Did candidate complete the obstacle course: YES NO

Skill 5: Demonstrate use of personal gear

Must discuss and demonstrate proficient use of their personal gear including: uniform, weighted belts, weapons, swim goggles, whistle, life jacket, etc. This should be evaluated based on what the candidate is wearing.

Did instructor candidate use personal gear: YES NO

Skill 6: Use rescue aids and other safety equipment

Discuss and demonstrate familiarity with rescue aids (i.e., throw bags, flotation aids, reaching poles, shepherds hook etc.) and other safety equipment (first aid kits, AED, Red Man Gear, etc.). Use rescue aids and safety equipment as needed.

Did candidate use rescue aids and/or safety equipment: YES NO

Skill 7: Demonstrate knowledge of the Risk Mitigation Plan

Discuss and implement, if necessary, the Risk Mitigation Plan for the OWS Course (drowning, entanglements, head trauma, dry/burning eyes and loss of contacts, heart attack, dehydration, hypothermia, lightning strikes and foul weather, slips and falls).

Did candidate have knowledge of the Risk Mitigation Plan: YES NO

Skill 8: Teach an assigned portion of course

Teach and/or demonstrate all the learning objectives, skills, and materials as outlined in the OWS Course for their assigned portion of the course.

Did candidate teach an assigned portion of the course: YES NO

SUPERVISORY/LEAD INSTRUCTOR: _____

SIGNATURE: _____