



RESERVES



ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE DIVING BRANCH FACTSHEET – AUGUST 2014

RNR Diving Branch Role: The aim of the RNR Diving Branch is to support the Royal Navy Fleet Diving Squadron (FDS) to.

- Deliver a Homeland Defence underwater search capability in the UK, providing Maritime Explosive Ordnance Force Protection (MEODFP) divers to support harbour searches in strategic UK ports.
- Generate diving teams to support UK Explosive Ordnance Reconnaissance (EOR) operations, and backfill the FDS area teams when deployed overseas in support of Fleet operations.
- Generate manpower to directly support FDS for NATO Submarine Rescue System (NSRS) Transfer Under Pressure (TUP) operations.

RNR Diver Role: The main role is to work at maximum depths of 30 metres on SCUBA type equipment as part of a specialist MEODFP diving team. The task will primarily involve underwater searches of harbours, jetties and ships hulls. Those who join could find themselves attached to one of the RN's regional diving units either on diving duties in one of the dockyards, or as part of a RN bomb disposal team. Officers will find themselves employed on similar duties but will also undertake Branch management roles. It is a highly skilled, physically tough job that demands a lot of an individual, but gives a huge amount back in return. RN Diving teams generally operate as highly trained close-knit teams and RNR Divers will be expected to integrate seamlessly into this environment.

Who Can join: The RNR Diving Branch is open to anyone who has previously military service and holds a Royal Navy or Army diving qualification. It is also open to those who have no military diving background but who possess a recognised civilian diving qualification. This can be either commercial i.e. HSE, or recreational i.e. BSAC/PADI. The minimum diving experience requirement is for 1000 minutes underwater which must be recorded in an diving log book. The Branch recruits both ratings and Officers although there is limited capacity to take on the latter due to the Branch size.

Entry Requirements and Selection Process: The RNR Diving branch is not direct entry. Candidates can apply to join the RNR Diving Branch on completion of RNR Initial Training for Junior Rates, or on completion of Fleet Board for Officers (See other pre-requisites for final Diver Branch transfer request under the 'Air Course' details below). Candidates who express an interest in the Diving Branch will be invited to attend a RNR Diver Introductory weekend where they will be given briefs about the role of the Branch as well as being asked to undertake physical training to test stamina, endurance and strength, as well as personal motivation. The Divers Physical Fitness Test (DPFT) which consists of the following will be undertaken as part of this initial selection weekend:

- 1.5m run as a squad
- 1.5m run in under 10.5 mins
- 8 chin ups (to full extension)
- 16 triceps dips
- 40 sit ups in 1 min
- 2 x 30kg load carry over 30m

On completion of the RNR Diver Introductory weekend, successful candidates will be invited to return for a Potential Diver Assessment (PDA) Selection weekend. Prior to undertaking this second selection weekend candidates will need to pass a full RN Diving Medical conducted by a Service Medical Practitioner.

The PDA weekend introduces candidates to military diving equipment and they will be required to conduct a number of dives to test their ability underwater. A Recompression Chamber dive will also be undertaken. Candidates will also have to complete another DPFT as well as other physical exercises. It should be noted that the physical exercise conducted over both the weekends is strenuous and candidates will need to be well prepared. Successful candidates who pass the PDA will be invited to attend RNR Diving training. The PDA pass is valid for a duration of two years.

Personal Attributes: Those interested in joining the Branch should enjoy working in challenging environments, working as part of a team, working with cutting edge technology, and like to get 'hands on' as part of their duties. The skills required are good physical and mental stamina, an ability to be a multi-tasker, being a good communicator, as well as being reliable and trustworthy. High standards of conduct are expected at all times from members of the Branch. Candidates should be between the ages of 17-40 although ex-military candidates may join beyond the age of 40.

Training to qualify as a RNR Diver or RNR Diving Officer:

Unless joining from a military background in which case the route may vary, all candidates will have to undertake the following to qualify:

Air course: A two week initial course that trains candidates in military diving equipment and culminates in dives to 30m. The course will also test physical stamina and endurance. This course must be passed before requests are made to transfer into the RNR Diving Branch and to progress onto further training.

Search course: A two week course that trains candidates in Explosive Ordnance Reconnaissance (EOR) search techniques in use by RN diving teams. The training will test candidates ability to operate in a physically demanding environment. This course must be passed to progress onto further training.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD): A two week course that trains candidates to safely recognise and identify explosive ordnance. The course culminates in a pass or fail underwater ordnance identification task and will qualify candidates to exactly the same level as an RN Diver.

Boat handling: Training and qualification to act as helmsman of Medium Inflatable Boats used in diving operations.

HSE Level 2 First Aid/FAW & O2 Administration: Training and qualification to act as a dedicated dive site 1st Aider.

On successfully passing all of the above, and other general RNR courses, candidates will be qualified as an RNR Diver although will still have to successfully complete a further training exercise to gain full operational status and be eligible to work with RN diving teams. Officer candidates will undertake further training to qualify them as diving supervisors.

Pay: Additional diving specialist pay is awarded based on rate/rank and level of diving/EOD supervisory qualification.

Ongoing Training: After completing initial training members of the Branch can take a range of courses to continue their professional development. Training can be undertaken in recompression chambers, NSRS TUP, Advanced Military Diving First Aid, RIB Coxswain, transportation of hazardous goods and diving equipment maintenance. Specific training for diving supervision is undertaken for promotion within the Branch. An Annual Diving Medical is required by all Branch personnel.

Commitment: By the very nature of its duties the Branch puts much emphasis on maintaining standards through regular and rigorous training. Weekend training takes place every month and qualification courses are generally run once per year. On average a new candidate can expect to achieve full qualification as an RNR Diver after two to three years. Members of the Branch can also expect to support NSRS TUP operations and will be required to commit to High Readiness Reserve (HRR) on completion of appropriate training.