
Competence & Safety

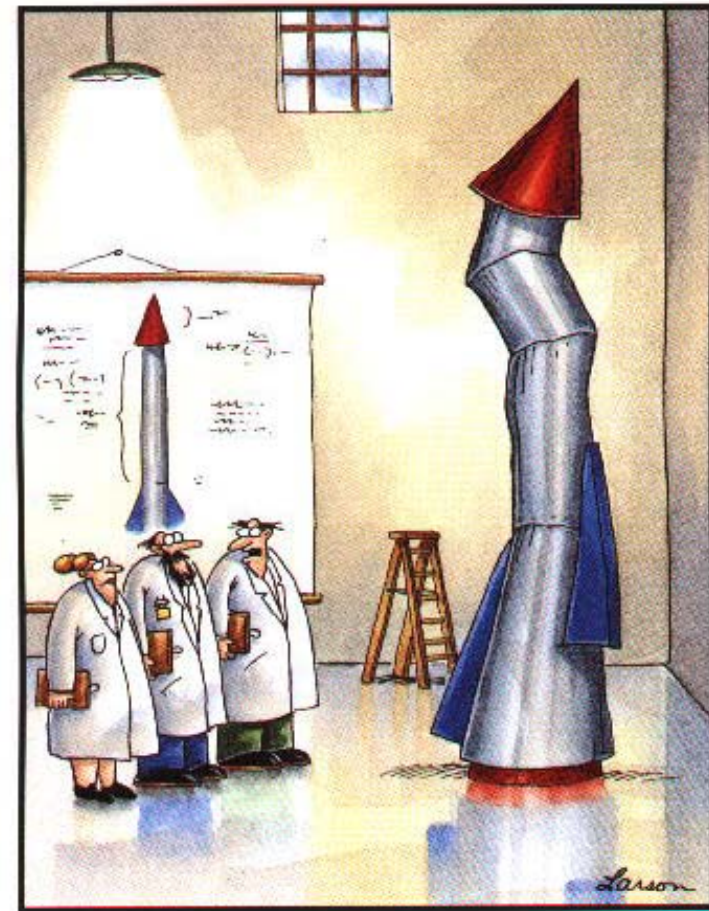
in Commercial Diving Operations

Chris Sherman

Chief Inspector of Diving

What is competence?

- Competence - the ability to do something successfully or efficiently



"It's time we face reality, my friends. ...
We're not exactly rocket scientists."

Competence and Health & Safety



- Competence is a term used frequently in health and safety legislation.
- Competence is a confusing and ambiguous concept to many employers. Interpretation of the term varies widely between, and even within organisations
- **So what is a competence?**
 - Having the necessary technical expertise, training and experience to carry out the task.
 - A combination of knowledge, skills and practical experience which a person has to have to be able to do a particular task properly. This includes not only the routine task, but also covers unexpected situations and changes.
 - The continuing ability of individuals and teams to perform reliably the safety elements of their roles, responsibilities & tasks, and for this to be demonstrable against standards

Diving at Work Regulations 1997



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- The Diving at Work Regulations 1997 refer to competent or competence at least 8 times.
 - *The diving contractor shall ensure that there are sufficient people with suitable competence to carry out safely and without risk to health both the diving project and any action (including the giving of first-aid) which may be necessary in the event of a reasonably foreseeable emergency connected with the diving project;*
 - *No person shall be appointed, or shall act, as a supervisor unless he is competent*
 - *No person shall dive in a diving project unless he is competent to carry out safely and without risk to health any activity he may reasonably expect to carry out while taking part in the diving project;*

Approved Code of Practice (ACoP)



- The ACoP for Offshore Diving has no fewer than 43 references to competence/competency and does offer some more detailed advice:
 - *The diving contractor must consider the competence of a person before appointing him as a supervisor. When considering competence, the diving contractor should consider whether the person is knowledgeable, practical, reliable; capable of conducting the diving operation in a safe manner; capable of managing members of the diving team appropriately; capable of acting sensibly in an emergency; and so on*
 - *The diving contractor and the supervisor must satisfy themselves that each diver has the competences for the specific tasks required during a particular diving operation. Previous experience of a similar task may demonstrate competence but care should be taken that the diver's true experience is established beyond reasonable doubt. On-the-job or other training may be necessary for individuals to gain competence. When an inexperienced diver is gaining experience in a dive team the other team members and the supervisor should be aware of this and provide support.*

Competence v Qualifications

Competence

- Supervisor
- Diver
- 1st Aid
- Tender
- Life Support
- Tender
- Technician
- Client Rep

Qualification

- Supervisor
- Diver
- 1st Aid

Assessing Competence (1)



Initial assessment of competence

- Training & certification
- Experience
- Knowledge
- Practical Assessment
- Attitude & Behaviour



Assessing Competence (2)



Ongoing assessment of competence

- Observation/supervision
- Peer review
- Direct assessment/examination
- Further training
- Exercises & drills



Summary



- Competence assurance should be a key part of a safety management system
- Competence assurance is ongoing and not a one off process
- Certification is important but is only one part of the picture
- Industry has a key role in development of standards, training schemes and qualifications

Questions?



“Now! That should clear up a few things around here!”