

## Extension to the Validity of Diver Medicals During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Your attention is brought to the following change to the validity period of certificates of medical fitness to dive during the current emergency.

### Background

Section 6.4 of the [IMCA International Code of Practice for Offshore Diving](#) (IMCA D 014) requires that all divers at work must have a valid certificate of medical fitness to dive issued by a suitable doctor, i.e. by a Medical Examiner of Divers (MED) considered competent to conduct diver medicals to the standard cited in [IMCA D 20/01](#).

The certificate of medical fitness to dive must be renewed prior to expiring if a diver wishes to continue diving at work. The certificate of medical fitness to dive is a statement of the diver's fitness to perform work under water and is valid for as long as the doctor certifies, normally up to a maximum of 12 months.

### IMCA Policy for the Validity of Diving Medicals During the COVID-19 Pandemic

If a diver is unable to undertake a medical re-examination with a competent MED for reasons associated directly with coronavirus or as a result of complying with related national government advice, IMCA Members may accept the validity of current certificates up until **30 June 2020** provided that the diver's current certificate of medical fitness was issued with a full 12 months validity.

Anyone taking advantage of this extension should be able to describe clearly their reasons for delaying undertaking a medical examination and demonstrate the steps that they have taken to try to obtain a medical examination, if required. They should also be able to confirm that they have not been diagnosed with or suffered any illness or injury that could impact on their medical fitness to dive. If there is any doubt about their medical fitness, they should seek further advice from their competent MED.

This guidance comes into effect for certificates expiring on or after 16 March 2020, and any diver who wishes to dive at work but does not hold a current certificate of medical fitness to dive issued by a MED on or before this date must undertake the full examination as required by IMCA D 014.

IMCA will review this matter over the coming months and will issue further statements as necessary.

Please share this information with your staff as appropriate.

### Compliance with National Requirements

A number of countries in the world have national regulations, codes and/or standards which apply to medical fitness for diving at work. These must always be complied with.