



PRESS RELEASE

THE CHAMBER OF DIVING AND WATERSPORTS - A SHORT HISTORY

The Chamber of Diving and Watersports (CDWS) is a dedicated body under the umbrella of the Egyptian Tourist Federation committed to all diving and watersport activities which take place throughout Egypt's coastal waters.

The Chamber was established mid 2007. Prior to its formation there was no official body to regulate or support Egypt's booming diving and watersports industries. In the absence of an official body to support the industry, non government organisations such as Red Sea Association, SSDM and HEPCA were formed in an attempt to set regulations & standards, educate and inform both members and visitors resulting in various levels of success.

Elections in November 2008 selected a new board which will be in place for three years. All board members are key figures in the diving and watersports industries:

Chairman	Hesham Gabr Ali
Vice Chairman	Hamed AbdAllah
Treasurer	Amr Abou EISood
Board Members	Amr Aly Osmaan, Dr. Omar Adly Abdel Aziz, Eng.Zeyad Mamdooh ElBassel, Mostafa Farouk Hanafy, Essam Mohamed Hassan Eid, Asharf Ahmed Saleh, Mahmoud Abdel Hadi Hassan Gad, Sherif Boushra Ebeid, Volker Clausen

WHO BECOMES A MEMBER OF CDWS?

Diving Centres, Safari Boats and all types of Water Sport Centres.

DIVING CENTRES:

A diving centre cannot legally operate without a license from the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and the Centre must be a member of CDWS to renew this license.

SAFARI BOATS

Safari Boats are now also required to hold a license from the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and a pre-requisite for this license is membership of CDWS. The deadline for application for Safari Boats is end of November 2008.

WATERSPORTS

A Watersport Centre is now also required to hold a license from the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and a pre-requisite for this license is membership of CDWS. The deadline for application for Watersport Centres is end of October 2008. Centres will be classified as CDWS members authorised to offer specific Watersports services such as Kitesurfing and / or Windsurfing etc.

NORMS AND STANDARDS

The CDWS have successfully signed an agreement to adapt and implement the European Norms (EN) with the Austrian Institute of Norms (ON) - the certification arm of European Underwater Federation (EUF). The certification is for the standards EN 14467/ISO 24803 for Recreational Diving Services. The CDWS also acknowledges all training agencies recognised by the EUF.

*For further information please contact Mary Gleeson, Marketing and PR Co-ordinator, CDWS
on (00 20) 12 039 8576 or by email board.marketing@cdws.travel*

AUDITING

The CDWS have assembled a team of 5 independent auditors and each centre or boat must undergo a 2 - 4 day audit, a process which is now mandatory in Egypt. The Chamber is currently recruiting and training a further 4 Auditors to help complete this procedure. Members must meet the criteria of a list of standards before having their membership renewed. Potential members must meet the same criteria before obtaining a license. The auditing process began in June 2008 and is expected to continue until the end of 2009. During the audit the inspectors will be checking the following:

- **Services on offer**
- **Documentation**
- **Premises**
- **Equipment**
- **Files**
- **Employee information**

MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

At present over 320 Diving Centres and 80 Safari Boats are holders of CDWS membership. Membership numbers will increase throughout 2008 as the deadline to apply for Watersport Centres (end of October) and Safari Boats (end November) passes.

THE ROLE OF THE CDWS

A summary of the current role and recent achievements of the CDWS

- To co-ordinate with the various parties concerned with the marine environment in the area to find a more efficient system to maintain it's sustainability
- To ensure a general standard of services and facilities that is to the same high standard of the internationally recognised EUF Certification Body (European Underwater Federation)
- Supervision of the work of the technical inspectors team and issuing the technical validity certificate required for the Ministry of Tourism
- Adapt and implement the European Norms (EN) with the Austrian Institute of Norms (ON) and those of the EUF
- Technically investigate incidents and accidents and provide recommendations, statistics and data to help minimize accidents and improve service and safety
- Marketing - CDWS will exhibit at dive shows in UK, Germany, Russia and France promoting the industry and providing the opportunity for members to exhibit along side
- Advertising - CDWS will implement a major 12 month advertising campaign promoting the industry in dive publications and web portals across 11 countries

Amongst others, CDWS is currently working on solutions to and discussing the following issues:

- The jetty situation in Sharm el Sheikh, short term and long term solutions
- The environmental concerns including putting a stop to illegal fishing
- The mooring lines needs and long term environmental solutions
- The need for new daily boats for licensed centres in Sharm
- The need to ease the administration and daily permit process with the local authorities
- The opening of new dive sites around Tiran Island
- The improvement of search and rescue facilities and services

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Updated: 30 November 2008