



Ghost Fishing UK



Training Standards

Document Overview

This document outlines the requirements of Ghost Fishing UK trainers and trainees when engaging in courses run by Ghost Fishing UK.

This document is supported by the Ghost Fishing UK Standard Operating Procedures, the Ghost Fishing UK Course Outline and the Ghost Fishing UK Standard Operating Method Statement.

Joining Ghost Fishing UK

Joining Ghost Fishing UK as a follower, supporter, fundraiser or diver is entirely voluntary and free from any cost. We welcome non-divers to join as boat crew, help with recycling routes or attending events and fundraising.

To engage with underwater activities as a scuba diving team member, divers will be signposted to the Ghost Fishing UK training course.

To conduct a Ghost Gear Recovery dive, divers must have successfully completed the Ghost Fishing UK Training Course.

Divers belonging to our parent organisation 'Ghost Fishing Foundation' may join Ghost Fishing UK recovery dives on a guest basis, subject to committee approval. In this circumstance, some or all course components may be waived.

Ghost Fishing UK acknowledges that other similar training programmes exist outside of Ghost Fishing, but there is no current cross over programme. To be certified as a Ghost Fishing UK diver, the individual must pass the Ghost Fishing UK training course.

Ghost Fishing UK Training Course

The course comprises 6 modules of theory and 3 diving days. The theory component will be completed prior to the diving component. The course is modular and can be spread out over time or completed in one complete block.

Theory sessions can be in person or via Skype or similar online programmes. Candidates should aim to complete the course within one year. Should they take longer, the theory component may have to be repeated should there have been any updates.

Ghost Fishing UK Course Pre-Requisites

- Minimum SCUBA qualification: Sports Diver/Rescue Diver or equivalent.
- Nitrox Certification.
- Minimum 100 logged dives.
- Training or minimum 25 dives in a manifolded twinset.
- Minimum 25 dives in a drysuit.
- At least 20 logged dives to have been undertaken in the year preceding the class start date.

Costs

The Ghost fishing UK course is completely free of charge.

There is a £200 commitment fee, which must be paid to Ghost Fishing UK before commencement of the in water training component. If the trainee cannot complete the course within a year from commencement of the course, the fee will be donated to Ghost Fishing UK. On completion of the course within the 12 months, the fee will be refunded.

The course is run by volunteers who give up their free time, annual leave and in some instances salary, to make the time to train you in Ghost Fishing activities. We ask that divers are mindful of this throughout the course. Trainer's expenses are not covered and all divers are expected to cover their own accommodation, fuel, food, diving gas and boat fees and any other associated costs.

Please ensure that you arrive on time and leave when the course is complete. Divers who 'drop out' at the last minute are frowned upon. In this circumstance, the commitment fee will not be returned until the candidate has completed the course within the one year timeframe. Course spaces are at a premium so if you book a slot you are expected to attend the whole course.

Following successful completion of the course you will be invited to join a 'live' ghost gear recovery. On safely completing a "Live ALDFG Recovery Project" you may be 'signed off' by the committee to receive your certification.

Ghost Fishing UK Standard Operating Procedures

- Please attend all safety briefings and follow instructions set out by the skipper, crew and daily team captain on your boat.
- No Smoking on or around the vessels at any time.
- Analyse cylinder gas contents yourself and label your cylinders accordingly. This must be done prior to EVERY DIVE.
- Nitrox 32% to be used for dives shallower 34m depth.
- Trimix standard gasses 21/35 or 18/45 as appropriate for in excess of 35m.
- No Solo Diving. Divers must descend, remain with and ascend with their team-mates on all dives.
- Complete buddy checks before entering the water. Divers must agree on the dive plan before entering the water and stick to it.
- Always dive according to minimum gas rules. You must reserve enough gas for you and one other diver to safely reach the surface whilst sharing gas with an elevated SAC rate
- Do not damage any wreckage, reef or wildlife. Do not destroy or remove any items that may be providing a habitat for wildlife unless previously agreed.
- Do not tamper with, damage nor remove any fishing gear that is still active or buoyed.
- Keep all areas of the vessels neat and tidy. Deck areas should be clear and free of trip hazards. Keep all boxes stowed under benches. Keep all cylinders tied in and stowed where they cannot fall, roll or cause damage.
- Ending a dive is done by giving a steady "Thumbs up". Once one diver ends the dive, the whole team must surface together.
- Lift bags must be inflated with separate gas supplies. Breathing gas must never be used for lift bags.
- If you are unsure about any of these procedures, please ask for clarification from your daily team captain.

Ghost Fishing UK SOPs are supported by the Ghost Fishing UK Method Statement, which has been agreed by the Marine Management Organisation. Deviation of these procedures may compromise the legal standing of Ghost Fishing UK.

Ghost Fishing UK Course Equipment

Divers must dive Open Circuit for the duration of the course. This may be in the form of a manifolded twinset or sidemount with gas sharing capability and competence. Divers should be fully kitted out for 3 days diving in the sea. This list is advisory:

- Adequate thermal protection for at least 2 hours diving per day. Dry suits are strongly advised.
- Sturdy, strong fins. Avoid split fins.
- 1 primary mask and one back up mask.
- Depth gauge or computer and a compass.
- Personal knife which should be quickly accessible and sharp. It is advisable to carry a line cutter in addition. Ghost Gear knives will be in addition to these.
- Wetnotes or small slate and pencils.
- Hood and gloves.
- SMB and reel (ideally a small spool, avoiding large ratchet reels which cause extra entanglement hazards when in close proximity to ghost gear).
- Primary regulator and alternate regulator. Divers should be trained and practiced in donating gas to an out-of-gas buddy and this will need to be demonstrated during a mid-water ascent on the course.
- Minimum one source of buoyancy other than suit i.e wing or BCD.
- Correct amount of lead and weight belt.
- All equipment should be streamlined. Nothing should be dangling and ancillary items should be stowed in pockets to avoid entanglement.

The following can be provided by Ghost Fishing UK for the course but you should consider bringing or purchasing the following if you do not already have them:

- Aluminium stage bottle (4, 7 or 11 litre)
- First stage with pressure gauge, inflation hose and over pressure valve. NO second stage regulator.
- Snoopy loops (car tyre inner tubes)
- Camera (surface) and underwater camera (advisory but not mandatory)

Sidemount Systems

Owing to the growing popularity of open water sidemount, Ghost Fishing UK does not preclude sidemount divers from joining the course.

However, they must be aware that sidemount has its limitations with this sort of work and sidemount divers should give due consideration to gas planning within a team, hose routing and donation and how they will go about carrying stage bottles for lift bags.

Due consideration should also be given to the lift capacity of some sidemount wing systems and whether these are adequate for supporting 2 divers on the surface in an emergency.

Rebreathers

Currently, rebreathers are not permitted on the Ghost Fishing UK course. They add complexity to an already complex task and in the main are not necessary for the majority of Ghost Fishing work.

As the size of the team and number of trainers grows, this may be reconsidered in the future.

A small number of Ghost Fishing UK core team members who have extensive technical diving experience and rebreather experience are permitted on certain dives to use their units on certain projects. However, these divers are trained to dive rebreathers with a strong team ethos and they have a unique open circuit configuration in addition to their units, to allow for safe mixed team diving.

This is unique to only one agency and at this moment in time. Rebreather diving on Ghost Fishing projects will be by permission of the committee only.

Course Scope

The Ghost Fishing UK course is designed to train divers in the safe survey and recovery of 'Abandoned, Lost and Discarded Fishing Gear' (ALDFG). The course is not designed to teach people how to dive. However, the Basic Skills day will assess where divers are with their skill set and Ghost Fishing UK trainers will aim to help them improve where necessary and prepare them for Ghost Fishing work.

Divers who have recently been diving with any of the course trainers and are deemed safe to progress onto survey or Ghost Gear recovery, may be signed

off by the trainer after discussion with the committee. In this circumstance they will not be required to attend the 'Basic Skills' in water training (Module 2).

Divers who have successfully completed the Marine Conservation Society 'SeaSearch' observer course may be permitted to waive the in water survey component (Module 3).

What to expect from Ghost Fishing UK.

Ghost Fishing UK trainers are hand picked by the committee. They will have formed part of the 'core team' and will have had plenty of experience in live Ghost Gear recoveries.

They will be technical and/or full cave trained and will have experience in working in close proximity to hazardous Ghost Gear in less than ideal conditions.

Some trainers are instructors and some are expedition and exploration divers. All of the Ghost Fishing UK trainers are project divers and can pass on their knowledge of project diving in terms of efficiency and team work.

There should be a ratio of no more than 3 students to one trainer.

Ghost Fishing UK courses are not under the 'Diving at Work' regulations nor the HSE, but we follow good codes of practice in any case such as team briefings and de-briefs, running diving log sheets and providing surface cover.

Trainers should act in a professional manner and safety will always be a priority. Trainers will give feedback to the students and this may be verbal or written. Successful completion of the course will rest with the trainer's decision as to whether or not divers are safe to progress to 'live' projects.

What Ghost Fishing expects from course candidates.

Please arrive on course and project days with the correct equipment and on time. You must be self sufficient and organised.

Ghost Fishing UK does not rent or loan out diving gear. We only provide tools for the job such as lift bags and knives.

Please behave in a polite and courteous manner and always aim to show ghost Fishing UK in a positive light.

Please be a team player. Inseparable buddy pairs can be a problem in a team of 3, so do not assume you will always be diving with people of your choosing.

Divers and associates are expected to follow Ghost Fishing codes of practice at all times as set out in the Method Statement. Divers may not recover Ghost Gear during survey dives without the authority of the committee. Divers may not engage in recovery dives under a license belonging Ghost Fishing UK

without prior committee approval. This may lead to a breach of the MMO license and divers found to be doing this risk being removed from all Ghost Fishing UK activities.

A qualified Ghost Fishing diver should be dedicated to the cause, have a safe, meticulous and responsible attitude both in and above the water. They should be safe in poor underwater conditions and be a strong team diver with a high level of hazard awareness and quick to respond to potentially hazardous situations.

Committee Statement

The Ghost Fishing UK committee reserves the right to change the contents of this document at any time. Please ensure you have the latest version.

The Ghost Fishing UK committee reserve the right to remove anyone from the course, project or team who they feel is a risk to safety or the reputation of Ghost Fishing UK.

Media

By undertaking activities under the banner of Ghost Fishing UK, it is assumed that any audio, video or images that you create during Ghost Fishing activities will be made available to Ghost Fishing UK for promotional or media purposes.

Ghost Fishing UK will always credit the creator of the media.

If you do not wish your video or images to be used, please inform the committee prior to the start of the project.

Likewise, if you do not wish to be filmed or interviewed, please inform the project leader.

It is accepted that you may end up in some footage unintentionally and all participants must be aware of this and accepting of it.

Ghost Fishing UK project or course participants must NOT produce video, images or audio of any Ghost Fishing UK project to the media, social media, video platforms or any other publicly viewable platform without permission from Ghost Fishing UK.

The project leader or the committee will let you know when it is permitted to release footage or images.

Divers or associates who publish media which could be perceived as harmful to Ghost Fishing UK or the cause it represents, will be removed from the organisation with immediate effect.

The Ghost Fishing UK Committee

Prof. Richard Walker	Chairman
Mr Fred Nunn	Treasurer
Miss Christine Grosart	Secretary