OUTREACH RESCUE



WATER & FLOOD RESCUE SUPERVISOR

Goal:

To develop experienced water rescue technicians into competent Water Rescue Supervisors capable of leading, coordinating and overseeing water and flood rescue operations, integrating technical understanding with robust non-technical skills, risk management and decision-making under pressure.

Target group:

Personnel who hold an in-date DEFRA Mod 3 (Water Rescue Technician) or recognised equivalent award and who are expected to supervise, coordinate or manage water rescue teams at the operational level.

Highlights:

- Triple certified - Mod 3 recertification, DEFRA Asset Commander (ex Team Commander) and Water Rescue Supervisor which is a sector competent IC award for Water Rescue Operations
- A robust solution to ensure Water Rescue Asset Commanders are practically trained to a level to make operational decisions and safely manage their team in the operational environment.
- Tailored to those who who lead water rescue teams and make decisions at the operational level at large scale flooding incidents or for local/cross border water rescue incidents.

Water Rescue Supervisor, including Asset Commander and Mod 3 Recertification

Course length

36 hours (5 days)

Instructor

2:7

Period of validity

3 years

Certification

Outreach Rescue Certificate of Achievement for Asset Commander, Mod 3 recertification and Water Rescue Supervisor

Venue

Outreach Rescue, Tan-y-Bwlch Centre, Llanllechid, Bangor, Gwynedd, North Wales LL57 3HY

Description

This 5-day course is designed for experienced water rescue technicians who are progressing into supervisory roles. It focuses on how to lead and coordinate rescue teams in dynamic water and flood environments. Delegates explore the DEFRA Flood Rescue Concept of Operations 2025, incident management structures, spans of control and supervisory responsibilities within multi-team and multi-agency responses.

The course combines the initial 2 day Asset Commander course with a Mod 3 recertification (which would be 4-5 days time commitment regardless), and then has additional input specific to the water rescue environment to give delegates authentic practice of applying incident command skills across a range of demanding incidents.

The course combines structured teaching on legislation, guidance and command frameworks, with intensive development of non-technical skills such as leadership, briefing, decision-making, situational awareness, risk management and shared mental models. Whereas the DEFRA Asset Commander is predominantly focused on large scale flooding incidents, this course covers both large scale and local water rescue response making it suitable for supervisors of any asset type.

The course includes roughly 2 days of classroom based input, combined with an equivalent of 3 days of realistic scenarios using live role-players, manikins and demanding environments. On top of this are two practical night exercises. These scenarios include time-critical rescues, submerged casualty searches, body recovery, multi-casualty incidents and a range of demanding scenarios forcing delegates to make difficult decisions and weigh up the risk benefit of their actions. Scenario complexity is progressively increased with environmental, multi-agency, human-factors and equipment injects to test leadership, communication and decision control.

This course is aimed at Mod 3/Type C team supervision, though the skillsets covered are applicable to cover a supervisors or Asset Commanders role for Mod 2/type D or Mod 4/Type B teams also. Delegates are issued a pre-course question paper to ensure an adequate level of understanding in advance.

Compliance:

DEFRA FRCO 2025 Water Rescue Technician Mod 3 Recertification (for both 2 or 3 day recertification requirements)
DEFRA FRCO 2025 Asset Commander Initial training (2 days)

Previous knowledge:

In-date DEFRA Mod 3 compliant award, First Aid Award (FREC 3 or equivalent with Oxygen use), operational experience as a Water Rescue Technician, working knowledge of DEFRA Flood Rescue Concept of Operations 2025, Working knowledge of your services Incident Command structures (preferably IC Level 1+ or equivalent) and JESIP working knowledge.

Requirements:

Age 18+. Delegates must be fit for this physically demanding course requiring the ability to demonstrate all Water Rescue Technician (Mod 3) skillsets with a high degree of competence.

Progression:

Recertification is recommended every 2 years by means of attending the 3 day Water Rescue Supervisor Recertification. The recertification covers recertification of the Mod 3 Water Rescue Technician, Asset Commander and Water Rescue Supervisor awards.

Theoretical elements:

- Flood Rescue Concept of Operations – roles and responsibilities, interoperability
- Legislation and guidance relating to Water Rescue Incidents
- Health, safety and welfare – deployment limits, rest and rotation, decontamination, welfare and supervisor responsibilities.
- Non-technical skills – leadership, assertiveness , communication, briefings, handovers, debriefing, decision making
- Situational awareness, risk management and human factors – Swiss Cheese model, heuristic traps, bias recognition, dynamic risk assessment, risk benefit and shared mental models.
- Resources and credentialling – team typing, capability, CPD, NCAF credentialling, PPE and specialist equipment characteristics.
- Search theory – PLS/LKP, systematic high/low assurance searches, subsurface rescue and ROLE/DVI considerations.
- Record-keeping, documentation and evidence – notes, diagrams, photos, video, radio logs and written products (M/ETHANE, credentialling forms, reflections and progression plans).
- Theoretical content on Vehicles in Water, Locks and Sluices, Unstable surfaces, Animals in floods, Helicopter considerations
- Delegates produce written M/ETHANE reports and complete a FRCO Credentialling form for an incident they command.
- A course manual is issued for Mod 3 skills, and slide printouts of presented material given,
- A short written paper confirms learning

Practical elements:

- Practical sessions involve putting the theoretical knowledge into practice.
- Supervisor-level scenario training across a variety of rivers, quarries and flood environments, all with diverse and demanding variables.
- Integration of multi-agency injects (Police, HART, helicopter, utilities/dam operators) and environmental injects (rising or falling levels, darkness, deteriorating visibility) to test leadership and decision-making.
- Management of non-compliant, distressed and vulnerable casualties, including paediatric and body recovery contexts.
- Application of search methods (bank, shallow water, sled-based, parallel and pendulum patterns, bathyscope work) in supervised search teams.
- Supervision of rescue techniques including wading systems, craft use under paddle or with lines, tethered swimming and rope-supported water systems (e.g. tensioned diagonals, simple reeves, V-lowers).
- Specialist equipment is provided.
- Continuous holistic assessment of cognitive, interpersonal, behavioural and function skills takes place throughout the week both as delegates are IC and working as technicians.