

## 5.1 Standard Applying to all Leadership Training

Unless otherwise noted, a requirements listed previously under *Standards Applying to all NSS-CDS Courses* apply equally to NSS-CDS leadership training.

### 5.1.1 Prerequisites

- A. Be certified to the full Cave Diver level, or equivalent with a widely recognized diver training organization.
- B. With the exception of Cave Divemaster, candidates in NSS-CDS leadership training programs must be an instructor in Active/Teaching status with at least one other widely recognized diver training organization.
- B. Candidates must be current members of both the NSS and CDS.
- C. Candidates living in the United States of America must have current professional liability insurance naming the NSS-CDS as an additional insured.
- D. Candidates must complete and sign an NSS-CDS Leadership Application prior to the start of training.

## 5.2 Cave Divemaster

Cave Divemaster is the first step in NSS-CDS leadership development. It corresponds to Divemaster certification in recreational and technical diver training.

### 5.2.1 Limits of Graduates

Candidates who successfully complete the NSS-CDS Cave Divemaster course may:

- A. Organize and conduct guided dives for certified cave divers, provided those dives fall within the limits of training for all participants.
- B. Observe or assist with NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Diver and Cave Diver courses *under the direct supervision of an NSS-CDS Instructor*. In this role they may:
  - 1 Act as an observer/safety assistant.
  - 2 Act as a buddy for student divers.
- C. Take part in NSS-CDS Instructor Development Courses (IDCs) providing they meet the prerequisites for such training.
- D. Cave Divemasters *may not*:
  - 1. Independently teach or guide student divers.
  - 2. Conduct any student training exercises or skill performance evaluations.

### 5.2.2 Course Duration and Location

There are no set number of hours, days or dives for this course. The need to complete all of the stated requirements, including having candidates audit a complete Apprentice Cave Diver course, will dictate its length. Similarly, the inclusion to include a complete Apprentice course will require the use of multiple locations.

### 5.2.3 Candidate Prerequisites

In addition to the requirements outlined under *Standards Applying to all Leadership Training*, candidates must:

- A. Have logged at least 100 non-training-related cave dives past full Cave Diver certification.
- B. Hold a minimum of Divemaster certification, or equivalent, from a widely recognized diver training organization. Candidates wishing to progress beyond the Divemaster level must hold at least Open Water Instructor certification, or equivalent, from a widely recognized diver training organization, and be in Active/Teaching status.
- C. Submit a resume outlining the candidate's prior recreational and/or technical teaching/supervisory experience. This resume is to include:
  - 1 Number of classes in which the candidate has either taught or assisted.

- 2 Number of students in these classes.

Instructors must submit this resume to the Training Chairman for approval prior to training.

### 5.2.4 Instructor Prerequisites

Any NSS-CDS Instructor certified to teach at the full Cave Diver level or higher may teach this course.

### 5.2.5 Candidate Pre-assessment

Prior to the start of training, instructors are to ensure candidates possess the necessary knowledge and skills. This is to include:

- A. Successful completion and remediation of the NSS-CDS Cave Diver final exam or eLearning course. The minimum passing score for these is 80 percent, *provided students then review any questions missed with their instructor.*
- B. Having candidates demonstrate the ability to perform all of the in-water skills from the Apprentice and Cave Diver courses at a demonstration-quality level.

### 5.2.6 Knowledge Development

During the knowledge development phase of this course, instructors are to cover:

- A. Techniques for guiding and supervising certified cave divers.
- B. Techniques and procedures to assisting with Cave diver training.

### 5.2.6 Skill Development

Prior to certification, candidates are to:

- A. Organize and conduct at least one guided dive for certified cave divers under direct instructor supervision. If need be, the instructor may act in the role of the diver being guided. This exercise is to include:
  - 1 Pre-dive planning
  - 2 Pre-dive briefing, including site orientation
  - 3 Adequate leadership and supervision throughout the dive
  4. Post-dive debriefing
- B. Observe and/or assist with at least one complete NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Diver course.

## 5.2.7 Certification Requirements

Upon successful completion of all course requirements, instructors are to submit copies of the following to the Training Chairman for approval:

- A. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Leadership Application
- B. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Cave Divemaster Training Record
- C. Candidate's current professional liability certificate, if required, showing the NSS-CDS listed as an additional insured.

Once the Training Chairman receives and approves the application package, we will direct the candidates to where he or she can pay the Divemaster registration fee on the NSS-CDS online store.

## 5.3 Assistant Cave Instructor

This is the second step in NSS-CDS leadership development. At its core is the *Instructor Development Course* or *IDC*.

### 5.3.1 Limits of Graduates

Candidates who successfully complete the requirements for NSS-CDS Assistant Cave Instructor, including the Instructor Development Course may:

- A. Continue to perform all the duties and responsibilities of an NSS-CDS Cave Divemaster.
- B. Act as a teaching assistant under direct instructor supervision during NSS-CDS Cave Diver courses.
- C. Teach all aspects of an NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Diver course *under direct instructor supervision*.
- D. Assistant Cave Instructors *may not*:
  - 1. Independently teach or guide student divers.
  - 2. Conduct any student training exercises or skill performance evaluation unless under direct instructor supervision.

### 5.3.2 Course Duration

The minimum duration for the NSS-CDS Instructor Development Course (IDC) is two full days.

### 5.3.3 Candidate Prerequisites

- A. In addition to the requirements outlined under *Standards Applying to all Leadership Training*, candidates must meet all requirements for NSS-CDS Cave Divemaster certification.
- B. Candidates must present a letter from either an NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Trainer or Cave Instructor Evaluator who is acting as their sponsor, attesting to their readiness to attend an IDC.

### 5.3.4 Instructor Prerequisites

NSS-CDS IDCs must be staffed by at least one NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Trainer and one Cave Instructor Evaluator, or two Cave Instructor Evaluators.

### 5.3.5 Knowledge Development

Prior to the start of the IDC, candidates must successfully complete either the NSS-CDS Assistant Cave Instructor eLearning course or Assistant Cave Instructor final exam. The minimum passing score for these is 80 percent, *provided students then review any questions missed with their instructor.*

### 5.3.6 Skill Assessment

IDC staff members are to follow the current outline for IDC curriculum provided by the Training Chairman. This will include:

- A. Evaluation of at least one prepared and one impromptu academic teaching presentation.
- B. Evaluation of various land-drill and in-water exercises.

### 5.3.7 Certification Requirements

Upon successful completion of all course requirements, instructors are to submit copies of the following to the Training Chairman for approval:

- A. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Leadership Application
- B. The letter from the candidate's sponsor indicating readiness for training
- C. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Assistant Cave Instructor Training Record
- D. Candidate's current professional liability certificate, if required, showing the NSS-CDS listed as an additional insured.

Once the Training Chairman receives and approves the application package, we will direct the candidates to where he or she can pay the Assistant Cave Instructor registration fee on the NSS-CDS online store.

## 5.4 Apprentice Cave Instructor

This is the third step in NSS-CDS leadership development. At its completion, successful candidates may begin to teach a range of NSS-CDS courses.

### 5.4.1 Limits of Graduates

Candidates who successfully complete the requirements for NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Instructor may:

- A. Continue to perform all the duties and responsibilities of an NSS-CDS Cave Assistant Instructor.
- B. Independently conduct the following NSS-CDS programs:
  1. Cavern Diver.
  2. CDS Basics orientation.
  3. Apprentice Cave Diver

### 5.4.2 Course Duration and Location

The need to teach the equivalent of two complete NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Diver course under Instructor Trainer/Evaluator supervision dictates the length of this program.

### 5.4.3 Candidate Prerequisite

- A. In addition to the requirements outlined under *Standards Applying to all Leadership Training*, candidates must meet all requirements for NSS-CDS Assistant Cave Instructor certification.
- B. Prior to their final evaluation, candidates must present a letter from either an NSS-CDS Instructor Trainer or Instructor Evaluator who is acting as their sponsor, attesting to their readiness to take part in the final part of this program.

### 5.4.4 Instructor Prerequisites

NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Instructor evaluations must be staffed by at least one NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Trainer and one Cave Instructor Evaluator, or two Cave Instructor Evaluators.

### 5.4.5 Program Content

The Apprentice Cave Instructor program consists of two parts: Internship and Evaluation.

- A. *Internship*: During this part of the program, candidates conduct all land- and in-water skills from the NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Diver course under the direct supervision of at least one Instructor Trainer or Evaluator. This may take place over the course of one or more such courses.

1. The supervising instructor must record candidate performance on the NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Instructor Training Record.
  2. This phase of the program is not over until the candidate can teach all skills to the supervising instructor's satisfaction.
  3. Upon completing this phase of the program, the candidate's sponsor is to write a letter attesting to the candidate's readiness to attend the final evaluation. This letter will go to the Instructor Evaluator conducting the final evaluation and become part of the candidate's permanent record.
- B. *Evaluation:* Final NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Instructor evaluations involve having candidates teach all phases of an NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Diver course under direct Instructor Trainer/Evaluator supervision. The candidate is to take the lead in all course activities. The evaluators will intercede only if necessary to ensure student learning and safety.
1. The course will ideally involve actual students recruited by the instructor candidate.
  2. Candidates are responsible for ensuring their evaluators are compensated for their time and expenses.
  3. To pass the evaluation, candidates must teach all skills successfully.
  4. Candidates may be placed on provisional status and will be unable to teach independently until they clear this status. The lead Instructor Evaluator is to confer with the Training Chairman to decide what provisions the candidate must clear before being granted Apprentice Cave Instructor certification.

### 5.4.6 Certification Requirements

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, instructors are to submit copies of the following to the Training Chairman for approval:

- A. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Leadership Application
- B. The letter from the candidate's sponsor indicating readiness for training
- C. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Instructor Training Record
- D. Candidate's current professional liability certificate, if required, showing the NSS-CDS listed as an additional insured.

Once the Training Chairman receives and approves the application package, we will direct the candidates to where he or she can pay the Apprentice Cave Instructor registration fee on the NSS-CDS online store.

## 5.5 Cave Instructor

This is the third step in NSS-CDS leadership development. At its completion, successful candidates may begin to teach a range of NSS-CDS courses.

### 5.5.1 Limits of Graduates

Candidates who successfully complete the requirements for NSS-CDS Cave Instructor may:

- A. Continue to perform all the duties and responsibilities of an NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Instructor.
- B. Independently conduct the NSS-CDS Cave Diver course.
- C. Conduct any NSS-CDS Special Cave Diver courses for which they later qualify.

### 5.5.2 Course Duration and Location

The need to teach or assist with several complete NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Diver or Cave Diver courses dictates the length of this program.

### 5.5.3 Candidate Prerequisite

- A. In addition to the requirements outlined under *Standards Applying to all Leadership Training*, candidates must meet all requirements for NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Instructor certification.
- B. Candidates must have taught least four complete NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Diver courses.
- C. Candidate must also observe or assist with the equivalent of at least three full NSS-CDS Cave Diver courses, during which they conduct all in-water teaching skills under instructor supervision. Instructors are to record this on the NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Training Record.
- D. Prior to their final evaluation, candidates must present a letter from either an NSS-CDS Instructor Trainer or Instructor Evaluator who is acting as their sponsor, attesting to their readiness to take part in the final part of this program.

### 5.5.4 Instructor Prerequisites

NSS-CDS Cave Instructor evaluations must be staffed by at least one NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Trainer and one Cave Instructor Evaluator, or two Cave Instructor Evaluators.

### 5.5.5 Program Content

- A. Final NSS-CDS Cave Instructor evaluations involve having candidates teach all of the land- and in-water skills of the NSS-CDS Cave Diver course under direct Instructor Trainer/Evaluator supervision.
  - 1. This will ideally involve actual students recruited by the instructor candidate.

2. Candidates are responsible for ensuring their evaluators are compensated for their time and expenses.
3. To pass the evaluation, candidates must teach all skills successfully.
4. If candidates fail to teach skills to their evaluators satisfaction, they must repeat the final evaluation process.

### 5.5.6 Certification Requirements

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, instructors are to submit copies of the following to the Training Chairman for approval:

- A. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Leadership Application
- B. The letter from the candidate's sponsor indicating readiness for training
- C. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Training Record
- D. Candidate's current professional liability certificate, if required, showing the NSS-CDS listed as an additional insured.

Once the Training Chairman receives and approves the application package, we will direct the candidates to where he or she can pay the Cave Instructor registration fee on the NSS-CDS online store.

## 5.6 Cave Instructor Trainer

The NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Trainer rating takes the place of the old Instructor Sponsor certification. An Instructor Trainer may act as a sponsor for individual instructor candidates, however, under current standards the term *sponsor* refers to an action, not a rating.

### 5.6.1 Limits of Graduates

Candidates who successfully complete this process may perform all of the duties previously outlined for NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Trainers.

### 5.6.2 Program Duration and Location

The need for candidates to participate in several IDCs and other NSS-CDS training programs will dictate the duration and location of this process.

### 5.6.3 Candidate Prerequisites

- A. Hold an NSS-CDS Cave Instructor certification and be in Active status for at least two years.
- B. Have taught at least five NSS-CDS diver training courses resulting in the certification of at least ten students.
- C. Have observed or assisted with at least two NSS-CDS Instructor Development Courses.
- D. Have obtained letters of recommendation from the Cave Instructor Evaluators who conducted the IDCs with which the candidate observed or assisted.

### 5.6.4 Certification

Certification as an NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Trainer may only be granted by the Training Chairman, upon receipt of documentation attesting to the fact a candidate has met all prerequisites.

## 5.7 Cave Instructor Evaluator

The NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Evaluator is the final step in the leadership training process.

### 5.7.1 Limits of Graduates

Candidates who successfully complete this process may perform all of the duties previously outlined for NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Evaluators.

### 5.7.2 Program Duration and Location

The need for candidates to staff at least two IDCs and two final Instructor Evaluations will dictate the duration and location of this process.

### 5.7.3 Candidate Prerequisites

- A. Meet all requirements previously outlined for NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Trainer certification.
- B. Sponsor at least one successful instructor candidate all the way through full Cave Instructor certification.
- C. Staff at least two NSS-CDS Instructor Development Courses.
- D. Staff at least one final Apprentice Cave Instructor evaluation and one Cave Instructor evaluation.
- D. Obtain letters of recommendation from the Cave Instructor Evaluators who conducted the IDCs and IEs which the candidate staffed.

### 5.7.4 Certification

Certification as an NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Evaluator may only be granted by the Training Chairman, upon receipt of documentation attesting to the fact a candidate has met all prerequisites.

## 5.8 Instructor Crossover Program

*The Instructor Crossover program provides a means by which qualified instructors may cross over to the NSS-CDS at the full Cave Instructor level.*

### 5.8.1 Candidate Prerequisites

A. Candidates must hold the equivalent of NSS-CDS Cave Instructor certification from a diver training organization recognized by the NSS-CDS. The prerequisites for such recognition include:

1. An instructor training and certification process similar to that of the NSS-CDS.
2. Final Cave Instructor certification is awarded only after candidates have been evaluated by at least two different Instructor Trainers/Evaluators.

The NSS-CDS Training Chairman maintains a list of organizations which meet these requirements.

B. Crossover candidates must have:

1. Taught at the full Cave Instructor level for at least one year.
2. Conducted at least three cave diver courses resulting in the certification of at least five students.

C. Pass the NSS-CDS Standards and Procedures exam.

### 5.8.2 Instructor Prerequisites

NSS-CDS Cave Instructor crossovers must be staffed by at least one NSS-CDS Cave Instructor Trainer and one Cave Instructor Evaluator, or two Cave Instructor Evaluators.

### 5.8.3 Program Content

A. NSS-CDS Cave Instructor crossovers involve having candidates teach all of the land- and in-water skills of the NSS-CDS Apprentice Cave Diver course under direct Instructor Trainer/Evaluator supervision.

1. This will ideally involve actual students recruited by the instructor candidate.
2. Candidates are responsible for ensuring their evaluators are compensated for their time and expenses.
3. To pass the evaluation, candidates must teach all skills successfully.
4. If candidates fail to teach skills to their evaluators satisfaction, they must repeat the evaluation process.

## 5.8.4 Certification Requirements

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, instructors are to submit copies of the following to the Training Chairman for approval:

- A. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Leadership Application
- B. Completed and signed NSS-CDS Crossover Training Record
- C. Candidate's current professional liability certificate, if required, showing the NSS-CDS listed as an additional insured.

Once the Training Chairman receives and approves the application package, we will direct the candidates to where he or she can pay the Cave Instructor registration fee on the NSS-CDS online store.