

Scientific diving at AWI in the context of the COVID-19 issue

The following generally binding rules of protection and conduct apply to all activities within the scope of the AWI Scientific Diving Centre until further notice. The rules are based on the recommendations of the Commission Research Diving Germany from 07.05.2020 and the general rules of conduct at the AWI in coordination with the AWI medical centre.

The rules and measures listed partly exceed the corresponding COVID-19 AWI rules of conduct. This is due to the fact that a COVID-19 infection has much stronger consequences for the diving AWI staff than for non-diving staff. See also www.forschungstauchen-deutschland.de. In addition, the relevant AWI notices in the diving centre (social room, sanitary facilities, etc.) must be observed.

Diving operation

1. Guest Diver¹ at the diving centre

- a. Guest researchers/guest divers must always report to the central register for guest researchers at the BAH (see <https://www.awi.de/ueber-us/locations/helgoland/guest-research.html>).
- b. In agreement with the AWI Gastforschung, no education courses with more than 3 persons are currently being allowed at the AWI Diving Centre. It has to be made sure that a maximum of 8 persons are staying together in the diving centre due to the limited space.
- c. Guest divers must undergo a 7-day domestic isolation on Helgoland before they are allowed to be integrated into the diving operation. During this time it is allowed to leave the house, but crowds of people (restaurants, shopping etc.) should be avoided.
- d. External independent non-AWI dive groups are allowed to use the filling station of the AWI dive centre, but have no access to the building. Information about the necessary hygiene measures will be posted in the compressor room.
- e. There are no guided tours of the AWI Diving Centre.

2. internal dive operations:

BEFORE THE DIVE OPERATION

- a. Refrain from diving as soon as you show cold symptoms or are uncertain about your state of health.
- b. Diving equipment of other persons shall only be touched if absolutely necessary. Regular washing of hands before and after touching diving equipment is mandatory.
- c. Suitable cleaning agents are available in the dive preparation room, in the sanitary facilities and in the recreation room. These are to be used according to instructions.
 - ATTENTION: Do not use disinfectant and ethanol in combination with diving equipment and oxygen (Nitrox equipment)! (Ethanol highly inflammable)
- d. The compressor room may only be entered by trained personnel with dry hands.

¹ Guest divers are diving colleagues who travel to Helgoland to participate in dives at the AWI Diving Centre. This includes AWI staff from other AWI locations as well as divers from cooperating institutes

DURING THE DIVE OPERATION

- a. Assign "fixed" places on the dive boat and keep distance as far as possible from each other.
- b. Add handkerchiefs to personal protective equipment.
- c. Use "defog" for masks before the dive. No saliva is allowed as an anti-fogging agent.
- d. No breathing from the alternative air supply during the check but test it by pushing the "air shower".
- e. To clean the PPE and boat always use a spray bottle with take along household soapy water (dish washing liquid). After spraying, either wipe with a suitable cloth or rinse with sea water.
- f. Take the waste container with you and dispose of it in the appropriately marked waste basket.

AFTER THE DIVING OPERATION

- a. The personalized diving equipment is first rinsed carefully and separately with fresh water. Then the equipment is thoroughly cleaned with soapy water.
- b. Everyone rinses their equipment themselves.

Always ask the dive centre for further operational instructions before departure.

Daily operation at the diving centre Helgoland

CONTACT WITH OTHER AWI HOUSES

- a. Keep the contact with colleagues in the other houses to the necessary minimum. If possible, make arrangements by telephone or e-mail.

COMMON ROOMS

- a. Enter the dive centre workshop only if necessary.
- b. If during work on a project the minimum distance can not be guaranteed, the AWI recommendations state that it is imperative that a mouth and nose protector has to be worn.
- c. Workplaces in the workshop shall, if possible, be personalised for use. Objects / tools that are lying around are NOT disinfected.
- d. Wipe-disinfect tools after your work is completed and put the tools back in their place. Check material compatibility before cleaning, use non-alcoholic disinfectants² if necessary.
 - i. ATTENTION: Do not use disinfectant and ethanol in combination with diving equipment and oxygen (nitrox equipment)! (Ethanol is highly flammable).
- e. Limit the number of persons for lunch in the kitchen and have different meal times for small groups. If this should prove not to be feasible, chairs should be removed accordingly to limit the number of people.
- f. Regular ventilation must be ensured in all rooms during and after use. This can be done, for example, by airing the room every hour or apply similar measures that ensure sufficient airflow.
- g. Non-personalised keyboards and pointer devices (mouse/trackpad) e.g. in the counting room and in the meeting room are to be used only by AWI Diving Centre staff and are to be cleaned after each use with the cleaning agents and cloths provided.

SURFACE DISINFECTION AFTER USE

Objects (keyboards, tools, etc.) and contact surfaces on vehicles (mule, trailer and hand truck) that are handled by several persons should be disinfected with 70% ethanol after each use.

² e.g. https://produktkatalog.bode-chemie.de/produkte/flaechen/bacillo1_30_tissues.php

WORK IN HOME OFFICE

- a. In case of potential overcrowding (i.e. no individual office space at AWI is available or a minimum distance can not be maintained or continuous work with a mask is not acceptable) work from home is acceptable after consulting with colleagues and supervisor.
- b. An alternative may be to be present e.g. on changing days/times of day.

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS / TRAINEES

- a. New arriving „diving hiwis“ / diving trainees have to be in a 7 days domestic isolation on Helgoland before starting work. It is allowed to leave the house, but crowds of people (restaurants, shopping etc.) should be avoided.
- b. Set up an AWI account in good time so that home office work can be started in quarantine.
- c. If necessary, apply for additional IT equipment for quarantine (laptop, screen?) to enable image analysis, for example.

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