



Extract from the « code of sport », the french law applied to diving

The following text has been translated from the regulatory text. Only the French regulatory text is authentic.

https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/section_lc/LEGITEXT000006071318/LEGISCTA000018751673/2024-11-21/#LEGISCTA000025393884

Article A322-71 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

The provisions of this section apply to the establishments mentioned in article L. 322-2 which organise the practice of underwater diving. They do not apply to archaeological diving, underground diving or underwater orienteering training and competition courses.

Article A322-72 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

On the site of the underwater activity, diving is under the responsibility of a dive director (a least CMAS Instructor **) present at the place where the divers are launched or immersed. He or she is technically responsible for the organisation of the dive, the measures to be taken to ensure the safety of the divers and the activation of the emergency services.

He ensures that the rules and procedures in force are applied.

He sets out the characteristics of the dive and draws up a safety log, which includes the divers' surnames, first names, skills and their function in the group, as well as the various parameters of the dive that have been planned and carried out. This sheet is kept for one year by the establishment by any means.

The diving supervisor holds a qualification mentioned in appendix III-15 a.

In the case of mixed diving, the Diving Supervisor shall also provide proof of PN-C or PTH-120 qualifications corresponding to the mixes used in accordance with Annexes III-17 a and III-18 a.

Article A322-73 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Several divers who together make a dive with the same characteristics of duration, depth and path, even if they breathe different mixes, constitute a group.

When the group is made up of divers with different skills or breathing different mixes, it must not exceed the maximum operating conditions available to the diver with the most restrictive skills or the most restrictive mix.

Minors are not allowed to dive autonomously.

Article A322-74 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

When, in the natural environment, the submerged group is led by a supervisor, that supervisor must hold a qualification mentioned in Annex III-15 b. This person is responsible for the conduct of the dive and ensures that its characteristics are appropriate to the circumstances and the abilities of the divers.

When at least one of the supervised divers or the person supervising the group uses a mixture other than air, the latter must also demonstrate the skills corresponding to the mixtures used in accordance with Annexes III-17 b, III-17 c, III-18 b and III-18 c.

Article A322-75 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

For the purposes of this section, exploration diving means diving without any teaching.

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Article A322-76 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Depending on the gases used, the level of qualification of the supervisors and the skills of the divers, the diving areas are defined as follows:

0 to 6 metres;

0 to 12 metres;

0 to 20 metres;

0 to 40 metres;

0 to 60 metres;

Space from 0 to 70 metres;

Space from 0 to 80 metres;

Spaces above 80 metres.

Underwater diving with air is limited to 60 metres....

Underwater diving with trimix or heliox mixes is limited to 80 metres.

Autonomous underwater diving with trimix or heliox mixes is limited to 120 metres.

The oxygen content of the nitrox determines the breathing space.

Article A322-77 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

The diver shall provide proof to the diving master of the skills mentioned in Annexes III-14 a, III-17 a or III-18 a, in particular by presenting a certificate or diploma and, where appropriate, a logbook enabling the diver's experience to be evaluated.

In the absence of such proof, the diving master shall arrange for an assessment of the diver's abilities to be made after one or more dives.

A diver holding a certificate referred to in Annex III-14b shall demonstrate the relevant skills.

For the purposes of this section, skills are defined as follows:

- skills in supervised air diving: PE ;
- the ability to dive independently in air: PA ;
- the ability to dive using a nitrox mix: PN;
- the ability to dive using a trimix or heliox mix: PTH.

In the 0 to 40 metre range, in order to demonstrate PE-12 to PE-40 and nitrox diving skills, people with disabilities may benefit from special assistance in the form of supervision or equipment to enable them to dive in a supervised group.

Article A322-78 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

I.-Practitioners have a rescue plan and the following rescue equipment available at the launch or immersion site:

- A means of communication to alert the emergency services. A VHF is necessary when the dive takes place at sea from a dive support boat;

- Fresh drinking water;

a self-filling bag with a one-way valve, an oxygen reserve bag and three masks (large, medium and small);
a high-concentration mask

- a set of normobaric medical oxygen therapy with sufficient capacity to allow, in the event of an accident, treatment adapted to the situation until the arrival of medical assistance, with pressure reducer, litre flow rate and hose for connection to the self-filling bag with one-way valve or to the high concentration mask;

- An isothermal blanket;

- evacuation sheets based on the standard model in appendix III-19.

The emergency plan is a written document, adapted to the location and the dive, which is regularly updated and brought to the attention of the dive director, the persons supervising the groups and the autonomous divers. In particular, it specifies how to be alerted in the event of an accident, the contact details of the emergency services and the emergency procedures to be applied to the victim on the surface.

II – They also have the following assistance equipment:

- an emergency air cylinder equipped with its regulator and, in the event of diving using a breathing mixture other than air, one or more emergency cylinders equipped with regulators, the contents of which, as provided for in the emergency plan, are appropriate to the dive being organised;

- a means of recalling an immersed diver from the surface, when the dive takes place in a natural environment, from a boat;

- a submersible scoring table;

- in the open water, beyond a depth of 6 metres, a set of decompression tables.

III -The emergency equipment is regularly checked and properly maintained.

Article A322-79 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Diving activities are marked out in accordance with current regulations.

Article A322-80 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Each cylinder or set of cylinders of the same breathing gas is fitted with a pressure gauge or equivalent system to indicate the pressure during the dive.

In the natural environment, each diver equipped with open circuit equipment is fitted with a compressed gas inflatable system enabling him or her to return to the surface and remain there.

In the natural environment, each supervised diver above 20 metres and each autonomous diver is equipped with :

- diving equipment enabling a team member to be supplied with breathing gas without sharing a mouthpiece ;
- equipment enabling them to monitor the personal characteristics of their dive and ascent.

In the open water, the person supervising the group is equipped with :

- diving equipment with two independent exits and two full regulators ;
- an inflatable system using compressed gas, enabling them to return to the surface and remain there;
- equipment to monitor the dive and ascent characteristics of the group.

In the natural environment, each group has its own stop chute.

Article A322-81 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Underwater equipment used by divers is regularly checked and properly maintained.

Snorkels and regulators made available to divers by the establishments are disinfected before each dive if there is a change of user.

Article A322-82 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

The conditions for air diving are set out in appendices III-16 a and III-16 b.

Article A322-83 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

A group of beginners may dive in the 0 to 6 metre range.

During technical training leading to the PE-12 or PE-20 qualification, the group may dive in the 0 to 12 metre zone or in the 0 to 20 metre zone respectively, under the responsibility of a level 2 teacher (E2) mentioned in appendix III-15 b.

Article A322-84 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

A group of divers with PE-12 qualifications may dive from 0 to 12 metres under the responsibility of the person supervising the group.

A group of divers undergoing technical training leading to the PE-20 qualification may dive from 0 to 20 metres, under the responsibility of a level 2 (E2) instructor mentioned in appendix III-15 b.

Article A322-85 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

A group of divers with PE-20 qualifications may dive from 0 to 20 metres under the responsibility of the person supervising the group. During technical training leading to PE-40 skills, the group may dive from 0 to 40 metres under the responsibility of a level 3 teacher (E3) mentioned in appendix III-15 b.

Article A322-86 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

A group of divers with PE-40 qualifications may dive from 0 to 40 metres under the responsibility of the person supervising the group.

During technical training leading to a certificate issued by the Fédération française d'études et de sports sous-marins, the Fédération sportive et gymnique du travail, the Union nationale des centres sportifs de plein air, the Association nationale des moniteurs de plongée, the Syndicat national des moniteurs de plongée or the Confédération mondiale des activités subaquatiques, the group may dive in the 0 to 60 metre zone under the responsibility of a level 4 (E4) instructor mentioned in appendix III-15 b.

Article A322-87 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

A group of divers who hold a certificate issued by the Fédération française d'études et de sports sous-marins, the Fédération sportive et gymnique du travail, the Union nationale des centres sportifs de plein air, the Association nationale des moniteurs de plongée, the Syndicat national des moniteurs de plongée or the Confédération mondiale des activités subaquatiques and who can demonstrate PE-60 skills may dive in the 0 to 60 metre zone under the responsibility of the person supervising the group who is a level 4 (E4) teacher as mentioned in Annex III-15 b.

Article A322-88 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Divers of at least sixteen years of age with PA-12 qualifications are, by decision of the dive master, authorised to dive independently in the 0 to 12 metre range.

Divers of at least sixteen years of age with PA-20 qualifications are, by decision of the diving master, authorised to dive independently in the 0 to 20 metre range.

Divers of at least seventeen years of age with PA-40 qualifications are, by decision of the diving master, authorised to dive independently in the 0 to 40 metre range.

Article A322-89 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Divers who have reached the age of majority and who hold a certificate issued by the Fédération française d'études et de sports sous-marins, the Fédération sportive et gymnique du travail, the Union nationale des centres sportifs de plein air, the Association nationale des moniteurs de plongée, the Syndicat national des moniteurs de plongée or the Confédération mondiale des activités subaquatiques and who can demonstrate PA-60 skills are, by decision of the dive director, authorised to dive independently in the 0 to 60 metre range.

Article A322-90 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Breathing gases and mixtures are as follows:

1° Binary mixtures :

- nitrox is a breathing mixture composed of oxygen and nitrogen in different proportions to air;
- heliox is a breathing mixture composed of oxygen and helium;

2° Ternary mixtures: trimix, a breathing mixture composed of oxygen, nitrogen and helium;

3° Pure oxygen, used in rebreathers and for decompression.

Article A322-91 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

The conditions for diving with oxygen and mixtures other than air are set out in annexes III-17 a, III-17 b, III-17 c, III-18 a, III-18 b and III-18 c.

Article A322-92 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

The minimum partial pressure of oxygen inspired by the diver is limited to 160 hectopascals (0.16 bar). The maximum partial pressure of oxygen inspired by the diver during immersion is limited to 1,600 hectopascals (1.6 bar).

Article A322-93 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Cylinders are identified according to the gases contained.

The manufacturer or distributor of a breathing mixture other than air shall record the following information on the identification sheet for each cylinder and in the establishment's register:

- the percentage of oxygen analysed and the theoretical composition of the gas mixture ;
- the date of analysis;
- the name of the manufacturer or distributor.

Before diving, the end user completes the identification sheet for each cylinder with the following information:

- the pressure of the gas mixture in the cylinder ;
- the percentage of oxygen analysed and the composition of the mixture;
- the maximum depth at which the mixture can be used;
- the date of the analysis;
- name or initials.

Article A322-94 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

When diving is carried out using rebreathers, these are certified in accordance with current standards.

After having completed a qualifying course, adapted to the rebreather in question, from the Fédération française d'études et de sports sous-marins, the Fédération sportive et gymnique du travail, the Union nationale des centres sportifs de plein air, the Association nationale des moniteurs de plongée or the Syndicat national des moniteurs de plongée, or recognised by the manufacturer of the rebreather, the user of a rebreather may access the prerogatives defined by this section if he/she can demonstrate the skills corresponding to the space in which he/she will be diving and the gas mixtures used.

When diving with a rebreather beyond 6 metres, divers must have access to an open-circuit emergency breathing system delivering one or more breathing mixes enabling them to return to the surface.

In the natural environment, when the person supervising the group uses a rebreather, the emergency breathing system must be independent of the rebreather.

Article A322-95 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

The practice of diving with nitrox mixes is subject to proof of nitrox aptitude for the divers and the person supervising the group in accordance with the table in Annex III-17 a.

The conditions for diving with nitrox mixes are set out in annexes III-17 b and III-17 c.

Article A322-96 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

The practice of diving with trimix or heliox mixes is subject to proof of aptitude by the divers and the person supervising the group in accordance with the table in Annex III-18 a.

The conditions for diving with trimix or heliox mixes are set out in annexes III-18 b and III-18 c.

Article A322-97 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

In addition to the equipment listed in article A. 322-78, the organisation of a dive using trimix or heliox mix requires the presence of the following equipment at the launch or immersion site:

- a weighted descent and ascent line which may also be used for decompression;
- a copy of the planned dive schedule(s);
- logistical support or a practice support boat with an authorised person on the surface to manoeuvre it.

Article A322-98 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

Diving in a pool or diving pit whose depth exceeds 6 metres is subject to the provisions relating to diving in the natural environment.

By way of derogation from the provisions of subsections 1 and 2, when diving takes place in a pool or diving pit the depth of which does not exceed 6 metres, the diving supervisor shall hold at least the teaching level 1 (E1) mentioned in appendix III-15 b. The dive master authorises divers with PE-12 qualifications to dive independently and dive guides (GP) or level 4 divers (P4) to carry out introductory dives.

Notwithstanding the provisions of article A. 322-72 of the French Sports Code, when diving takes place in a swimming pool or diving pit whose depth does not exceed 6 metres, the safety record is not compulsory.

Article A322-99 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

By decision of the operator of the physical activity or sports establishment, a group of divers who hold a certificate issued by the Fédération française d'études et de sports sous-marins, the Fédération sportive et gymnique du travail, the Union nationale des centres sportifs de plein air, the Association nationale des moniteurs de plongée, the Syndicat national des moniteurs de plongée or the Confédération mondiale des activités subaquatiques and who can demonstrate PA-60 skills may dive from 0 to 40 metres in the absence of a divemaster.

The operator is informed, prior to the dive, of the divers' choice of site for the underwater activity. He will ratify the organisation put in place to ensure the safety of the divers and the activation of the emergency services.

Article A322-100 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

In application of the provisions of article R. 322-41, the holder of one of the following diplomas may act as a hyperbaric prevention advisor for dives in the 0 to 40 metre range:

- State certificate in sports education (1st degree), option: underwater diving ;
- State diploma in youth, popular education and sport, specialising in sports development, with a focus on underwater diving;
- Higher State diploma in youth, popular education and sport, specialising in sports performance, with a specialisation in underwater diving.

The holder of one of the following diplomas may act as a hyperbaric prevention advisor for dives beyond 40 metres, within the limits set by this section and in application of the provisions of article R. 322-41:

- State diploma in sports education (2nd degree), subaquatic diving option ;
- State diploma in youth, popular education and sport, specialising in sports development, with a focus on underwater diving;
- Higher State diploma in youth, popular education and sport, specialising in sports performance, with a focus on underwater diving.

Article A322-101 of the French Sports Code

November 7, 2023

For the application of this section, freediving is subject to the provisions of article A. 322-81 and I of article A. 322-78.

By way of derogation from I of article A. 322-78, for freediving in the 0 to 6 metre zone, freedivers have a rescue plan and the following rescue equipment at their disposal at the launch or immersion site:

- a means of communication to alert the emergency services. A VHF is necessary when the dive takes place at sea from a dive support boat;
- evacuation forms according to the standard model in appendix III-19.