

This is a one time response to the post by Krzysztof Starnawski, on cave diving forum. It is not the practice of IANTD to respond publicly to things of this nature. But with the threats, disrespect of a professional QA board the decision was made to do so. In this response you will also find the QA standards including the ethics standards

Krzysztof Starnawski, has definitely worked at creating his personal agenda on the accident at Fontanazzi cave. Regardless of the findings of facts found by a QA board.

IANTD has a Quality Control process that totally reviews all accidents and incidents that involve IANTD leaders, facilities etc. In this particular incident the original QA board was dissolved due to the disclosure of its membership being discovered, which is kept confidential so the QA board can review, question without the possibility of harassment from outside people, threats such as happened with first QA board, that if their conclusions were not those of Krzysztof, regardless of their findings, resulted in the need to disband the original QA board due to these threats and loss of confidentiality. These threats would have demanded that regardless of the findings of their investigation if they did not concur with the ones of those making the threats, the threats given would be enacted. Krzysztof, continues to demand the QA board adapt his position or else. As a result of that the original QA board was dismantled.

A second QA board was formed which consist of three exceptionally qualified members. Each has investigation experience, each one has extensive cave diving experience, each one is quite famous and all have served on QA and other processes. All are cave ITs, NSS/CDS members, they are all trained in cave rescue and recovery, members of the IUCRR, and all renowned as cave divers, instructors and explorers. Two are from the European locations and one from the USA. Each has reviewed all that Krzysztof and associates had referenced, all the public and investigative information from all sources and came to the conclusion that even though the accident itself was tragic, the instructor in charge was acting within standards and determined the accident was not the fault of the instructor. For everyone's information those on this QA board have served on other QA, which when found fault have either expelled or suspended those the QA was about. None of them knew the individual instructor and were only following the evidence to reach their conclusions.

Yet being aware of this, Krzysztof, insisted on pursuing his private agenda and totally disrespecting the expertise of the QA board. He has issued threats, tried bullying, made slanderous remarks, if he could not reverse the findings of the QA and board he would do all in his power to discredit all. Due to his actions threats and violation of ethic and QA, his instructor agreement his insistence that only his view mattered not the view of the independent QA board the result of all his actions (threats, bullying etc) led to another INTERNATIONAL member, QA board recommending his being expelled from IANTD.

One of Krzysztof's statements that this decision by three professionals would lead to a lowering of standards is in fact a lie he tries to state. For everyone's information each of the members of this board have served on other QA boards that expelled or suspended those that had been investigated. They spent time investigating completely and came to the decision they did and regardless of Krzysztof their

findings are official and stand. Another threat he is if his agenda does not prevail he will do he can to cause harm. He of course is still pursuing his agenda.

General information

IANTD reviews, all accidents, complaints, inquiries and allegations against or involving its members and Instructors.. The IANTD standards and procedures plus QA polices outline the response to allegation or complaints or dive accidents or ethics, involving our members and instructors. IANTD follows these standards to insure that the general standards, professional ethics as well as course specific standards have been complied with. To accomplish this a full and impartial investigation usually including a QA board conclusion of the circumstances that surround the incident/accident/standards violation.. Per legal advice, IANTD does not publish the results of these investigations to the general public. It does provide the results to those who have a need to know such as employers, dive insurance providers and in the case of Rebreathers to those companies affected by the results and other training agencies when applicable.

IANTD has an established and proven system of education that has been in existence for over a 30 years. In most cases IANTD courses and standards exceed the Diving industry standards.

If there is ever a question as to the status of an instructor you can check our instructor listing located on the IANTD web site <http://iantd.com/> .or or go direct to <http://instructors.iantd.com/>

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact us at IANTD HQ located at 119 NW Ethan Place Lake City Florida 32055. Phone number (386)438-8312

QA ethics within IANTD is

IANTD PROFESSIONAL IANTD ETHICS STANDARD FOR ELECTRONIC AND WRITTEN PUBLIC MEDIA

In recent years it has become commonplace for IANTD instructors to utilize email, Internet websites, and particularly social media sites to communicate with students, customers, potential students as well as peers and others within the dive industry. IANTD members should make every effort to ensure that their public communications whether it be via the internet, social media, or publications always be of a positive nature. Examples of such communications would be announcing events or classes, and posts, comments or articles that enhance the public image of diving. Negative communications that are accusatory or critical of others are unprofessional and shall be avoided. Publically posting such negative communications to email, social media and/or internet websites may be considered a violation of this IANTD ethical standard.

Some examples of unacceptable conduct on email, social media, internet websites or any other public media include but are not limited to:

- ▶▶ Publicly criticizing other professionals, diving agencies, manufacturers or individual divers.
 - ▶▶ Publicly criticizing a rescue or attempted rescue.
 - ▶▶ Publicly releasing information regarding body recovery or other law enforcement operations without the permission of appropriate law enforcement and/or the families of the deceased.
 - ▶▶ Publicizing any complaint regarding training agencies, regarding manufacturers, or between instructors outside proper channels.
- IANTD considers violation of this standard to be serious unprofessional conduct. Punishment will be appropriate to the severity of the violation up to and including expulsion from the organization.

IANTD QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

The objective of the IANTD Quality Assurance Program is to establish a minimum level of quality provided by each and every Member/Instructor of the IANTD system, for public safety and satisfaction. Without a Quality Assurance Program, IANTD cannot assure the uncompromised credibility of their programs. To achieve this, IANTD must monitor and enforce IANTD Standards and Procedures with fair, honest and ethical intentions in all venues. The Quality Assurance Process involves a protocol that strictly adheres to a system that includes;

1. **Due Process** – consistent internationally and made available to every Member inaugurated into the system.
2. **Equal and Fair Opportunity** – for each member and Licensee to present their issues and protect their interests.
3. **Standards and Procedures** – are made available to each and every member of the IANTD family and are clearly explained. This process also involves a presentation of IANTD's Training Philosophy.
4. **Confidentiality** – maintained through all matters and stages within a Quality Assurance Inquest. The Licensee will hold students, Instructors, Instructor Trainers, other Members and divers names in confidence.

A failure to respond to an inquest regarding Quality Assurance by IANTD or the Licensee, will result in an IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION of a Member/Instructor, IANTD/IAND, Inc. and their Licensees reserve the right to issue a Non-Teaching Status, SUSPENDED STATUS or an EXPELLED STATUS should IANTD or the Licensee have solid grounds or evidence supporting a direct violation of any items published in the IANTD Standards and Procedures Manual.

▶▶ Note: In cases involving a fatality during training the Instructor/member will be temporarily placed on Non – Teaching status.

Recommendations for Quality Assurance Maintenance

IANTD World HQ shall maintain a degree of quality and standard adherence by implementing a Quality Assurance program. This program is designed to guide instructors in abiding by the high standards and procedures outlined in the IANTD Standards and Procedures Manual and Standards.

Suspected Standards Violation

Due Process

1. **News of disciplinary failure** – Information is gathered by IANTD or the Licensee in a timely manner that

suggests or indicates that a particular Member/Instructor is in either direct violation of IANTD Standards or compromising the reputation or level of minimum quality required by IANTD. With sound evidence and indication of violations, IANTD or the Licensee (CAN) then place that Member/Instructor on Non-Teaching Status or Suspension

2. **Communication** – Once Information has been gathered and IANTD determines that standards have been violated the Training director shall send the Instructor/member a letter advising of the complaint and the reporting requirements.

3. **Preliminary Defense** – Once the Instructor/member replies in writing, The instructor may respond in a simple and objective manner, solving a misunderstanding or baseless accusation or the instructor may request a people or witness to be heard, documents presented, evidence presented or any materials that he deems necessary for his defense. (5 Days)

4. **Formal Accusation** – Once The Training Director is not convinced of the defense of the Instructor, or the evaluation of the evidence and documents and it is determined that a clear violation has been alleged, The Training director will appoint a 3 member Quality Assurance Board and And they will analyze all the acts of the process. One secretary of the Board (secretary) will prepare a summary of the allegations along with any letters of complaint, witness statements and evidence. This information will be sent to for the investigated instructor, with a clear indictment of which faults this instructor has committed. (10 days)

5. **Final Defense** – Once the Instructor/member replies in writing, using all the materials produced and others he deems appropriate, defending himself against the accusation(s) that is (are) imputed to him. (05 days)

6. **Report and decision of the board** - the QA board has submitted their findings the Training director will present the case to the IANTD BOD for final approval. Once approved the Training director will prepare a letter and send to the Instructor/member advising the results of the QA board. This letter will advise what standards they were found guilty of. This letter will also state the appeal process. (15 days)

A Member/Instructor on Non-Teaching Status or Suspension shall not conduct or supervise IANTD programs or receive all the benefits of Membership with the following exceptions;

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a. They may not apply for any additional levels of Instructor or Instructor Trainer programs until the probation has been lifted.

b. They may not be allowed to renew Membership/Instructorship unless they have satisfied all the requirements

to lift the **Non-Teaching Status STATUS**.

c. They may not teach or apply to teach or supervise outside of that Licensee's territory until they have satisfied

all the requirements to lift the **Non-Teaching Status, Suspension or Expulsion**.

►► **NOTE:** A Member/Instructor may be placed directly on **Non-Teaching Status** should IANTD or the Licensee

deem that the Member/Instructor's actions could possibly compromise the public's safety.

The Member/Instructor must still respond in writing within 48 Hours. Please see Item #4.

►► **NOTE:** A letter detailing the violations will be sent via email and registered mail to the Member/Instructor immediately after **Non-Teaching Status** has been granted. The

Member/Instructor will then have 48 Hours to provide a written response to the Licensee explaining their actions. The member will be advised this is confidential and shall not discuss this matter in public.

1. If after 48 Hours, and an adequate written response has not been returned to IANTD or licensee, IANTD or the

Licensee shall place that Member/Instructor on Non-Teaching STATUS and immediately inform the Member/Instructor via email and registered mail.

a. A Member/Instructor on **Non-Teaching Status** will not be able to order materials or have certifications

processed.

b. A Member/Instructor on **Non-Teaching Status** will not be allowed to renew Membership unless they have

satisfied all the requirements to lift the Administrative Suspension STATUS.

c. A Member/Instructor on **Non-Teaching status** may not supervise, teach or apply to teach until they have

satisfied all the requirements to lift the **Non-Teaching status**

Once placed on Non-Teaching Status IANTD or the Licensee must determine whether the

Member/Instructor can

be or has been a liability to the IANTD system. IANTD or the Licensee has 45 days from the date of establishing an **Non-**

Teaching Status to prepare and present to a Quality Assurance Board their recommendations for action.

2. Should IANTD or the Licensee find the Member/Instructor has violated IANTD Standards, they will then set up a

Quality Assurance Board of no less than 3 members appointed by IANTD or the Licensee.

3. The members of the quality assurance board will sign a non-disclosure agreement with IANTD prior to releasing

information to them. The QA board will remain anonymous to the Instructor/member. The Training director will

be the contact point for the QA board and the Instructor/member under investigation. Should any member of the QA board have questions of the Instructor/member they will prepare the question and send to the Training director who will communicate to the instructor/member and report back to the QA board.

a. An **Non-Teaching Status** Member/Instructor will not be authorized to present him or herself as representative

of IANTD,

b. A **Non-Teaching Status** Member/Instructor may not teach or supervise until such time that the STATUS

has been lifted.

c. All rights and privileges associated with Membership/Instructorship will be withdrawn from someone

placed on **Non-Teaching Status STATUS**.

d. The suspended Member/Instructor may within 60 days of final disposition of the complaint appeal the

suspension by submitting in writing to IANTD World HQ or to the Licensee.

e. If the Instructor does not file an appeal, then after a two year period from the date of suspension the Member/Instructor may reapply for consideration on the suspension, and that application shall be submitted to

IANTD World HQ and the Licensee respectfully.

4. **If a Member/Instructor is found;**

a. Guilty of gross violations of IANTD Standards that compromise in any way student' s safety,

b. Teaching or supervising while not active or insured,

c. In serious arrears or financially irresponsible to IANTD,

d. In any way not in compliance with the IANTD Training Philosophy, Standards or Ethics as set forth by IANTD, the member/Instructor may be put on **IMMEDIATE SUSPENDED STATUS**. If a Member/Instructor is placed on **IMMEDIATE SUSPENDED STATUS** based on violations listed in Item #4, the Member/Instructor has 60 days to appeal in writing the suspension.

5. A Member/Instructor may be **EXPELLED** if they are found;

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a. Willfully or knowingly violating IANTD standards and compromising the safety of students,

b. Discrediting IANTD or any of it's Member/Instructor or officers,

c. In a situation where one Member/Instructor speaks unfavorably of another Instructor, Member, IANTD its officers or Licensee they must go through the Due Process of Administrative Suspension while under investigation and while searching for a reasonable solution that can be made prior to further action. If none of these prove to resolve the problem, then the Member/Instructor may be expelled.

The member/Instructor may be **Expelled**. If a Member/Instructor is **Expelled** based on violations listed in Item #4, the Member/Instructor has 60 days to appeal in writing the **Expulsion**.

· An **EXPELLED** Member/Instructor may not receive any of the advantages or benefits of Membership.

· An **EXPELLED** Member/Instructor may not renew or enroll in any IANTD Leadership Programs.

· An **EXPELLED** Member/Instructor may not teach or supervise any IANTD program.

· An **EXPELLED** Member may be subject to Insurance cancellation by the Insurance Company and, upon expiration of the current policy, the expelled Instructor will not be able to renew his/her IANTD Insurance.

· An **EXPELLED** Member may not represent himself or herself in any way as a representative of IANTD, in any country, at any time.

Appeal Process

Any Member **SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED** may appeal within 60 days by submitting in writing to IANTD or the Licensee there reasons to be considered. This appeal will be presented to the Quality Assurance Board convened to address this complaint. Final decisions on appeals by the Quality Assurance Board are final.

Investigations for Disciplinary Actions

Prior to any form of Member/Instructor Suspension, Non-Teaching Status, or Expulsion IANTD or the Licensee must

first Investigate and document written evidence justifying the change of Member' s Status

► **NOTE: IANTD or the Licensees may immediately SUSPEND or place a member on Non-Teaching Status if they**

find that Member is an immediate risk to his/her students. IANTD and Licensees must provide in writing, justifiable reasons for immediate Suspension to IANTD World HQ.

Investigative Process When A Diving Fatality Occurs During Training

The instructor will immediately contact the IANTD to provide an Incident Report. This will be followed up by a

more comprehensive report, which includes obtaining all information pertinent to the accident, statements from...

- Students
- Other divers on the dive
- A QA form being sent to all former students of the instructor
- Determinations by the ME (Medical Examiner), if available
- Reports from the recovery team
- Reports from the diving vessel
- Review of the training program conducted to the date of the accident
- Statements from other sources who are aware of the diving instructor and his practices
- Statements from others who are familiar with the capabilities of the accident
- All required paperwork regarding the course of instruction to include exams IANTD forms and any notes ect.

These include people who have dived with or observed the instructor and student during training.

Once all this information is compiled, the data shall be sent to IANTD World HQ and the Licensee involved. The

Instructor will be placed on **Non-Teaching Status** pending completion of the Investigation.

First Immediate Step: **Non-Teaching Status of the Member Involved**

Based on the IANTD Investigation one of the following will take place. These actions are for the overall protection of

the instructor; the public and IANTD while ensuring fair and just due process.

Events following an investigation:

1. If it is found that the instructor is not at fault in the accident in any way whatsoever the Administrative Suspension

status may be removed and the instructor will go back on normal teaching status.

2. If IANTD or the licensee finds that the events are questionable, but not directly controllable or preventable by

the instructor, then the instructor will be placed on Administrative Suspension status and

IANTD or the Licensee

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ee will spell out specific procedures to be followed in order to be reinstated to normal teaching status.

3. If IANTD or the licensee find that the instructor did not act responsibly, the instructor may be suspended with

the ability to request an appeal to IANTD or the Licensee.

4. IANTD or the licensee may find cause for expulsion from instructor and membership status within IANTD.

Quality Assurance Program

The International Association of Nitrox and Technical Divers, Inc. has a Quality Assurance program in operation.

This is to ensure that all students who participated in any IANTD course are pleased with the service and training experience

that they recently received. If you find any questions that do not apply to the course you took, please ignore them.

Your certification registration is currently being processed and will be forwarded directly to your Instructor.

Students are randomly (and confidentially) sent Quality Assurance forms and are asked to complete them and send

them back to IANTD, Inc. World Headquarters. These forms may also be requested by students at any time. All information

received is completely confidential and all comments (both positive and negative) will be acted upon.

Quality Assurance Preservation Protocol Section

1. Survey emails/mail-outs to students completing various programs. These mail-outs should be sent to the student within 30 days of completing the program in order to obtain a review while the student is still familiar with the program.

► *IANTD will occasionally randomly mail out to students. If a report of malpractice is received at HQ or by the*

Licensee, a series of QA's are automatically sent to that instructors students - initially covering the course in

question, then expanded to prior courses should more complaints become apparent.

2. Instructors who have failed to meet the minimum required of programs taught in a year must audit a program or complete an Instructor Development Update Program.

Establishing Quality Assurance Board

IANTD or the Licensee together with IANTD HQ will select a minimum of 3 members that hold a minimum level of certification as Instructor Trainer with IANTD to participate on the QA Board. Preferred the Board selected will not know the member in question, but sometimes this is not possible. The identity of the members shall be confidential at all times and even after the decision. This is a voluntary Board and its selected members will not receive any compensation.

In the event that the QA Board has an even number and the vote is tied. IANTD or the licensee will vote.

All members serving on the QA board will be required to sign a "Non-Disclosure" agreement prior to the QA board convening.

Quality Assurance Forms

► Incident Report - Available at IANTD HQ ProPage

► QA Complaint Form - Available at IANTD HQ ProPage

► QA Application for Appeal against IANTD Disciplinary Actions - Available at IANTD HQ