

propaganda material such as has appeared recently. The journal should dedicate itself to diving medicine, physiology and an on-going analysis of diving accidents. The less rigorous unscientific material should be left for the lay diving press and agency propaganda documents.

A clear uncompromised voice with no vested interest other than the safe conduct of diving for the individual divers sake is to be encouraged. Divers should be encouraged to dive together to enjoy the splendours of the undersea world safely. They should not be considered the property of the agency that trained them nor should the training agencies let business ideals interfere in any way with diver safety.

Peter Mosse

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October 1992

Dear Editor,

I have been an associate member of SPUMS for the past 8 years and think that the Journal is an extremely good publication. Your medical authors provide very useful and up to date diving medical facts and information.

Over the past years I have been surprised that you have allowed PADI to publish so many of its propaganda articles in the Journal, then I thought SPUMS was, in its own way, supporting the ideas expressed in these articles, despite adding editorial comment to some articles.

I was surprised to read Dr Gorman's editorial and Dr Carl Edmonds' letter expressing your dissatisfaction about these training agencies' articles. I agree completely with Dr Edmonds' sentiments regarding these financially orientated organizations. I would have thought that SPUMS expressed a medical opinion based on experience and knowledge and it is up to us, the divers, to accept or reject it. I would be very disappointed if SPUMS altered their point of view to facilitate a commercial organisation.

In Ireland we have annual medicals for all sports divers and you would be surprised at the number of people who are screened out. Well I am sure you know what I am talking about. We have some people who falsify the medical forms, but generally they get caught out. As a result we have a small but healthy population of divers.

I can see why training agencies do not advocate medical check ups. It would probably reduce their intake by 20% at least, so they allow the prospective client to accept all the risk by filling in their own medical form without fully understanding the implications for their safety. Then to add

to the ridiculous, a non-medical person, the instructor, assesses the medical questionnaire and the acceptability of the candidate. I presume they reckon that candidates will be with them for such a short time and with careful watching they will get through the course without any mishap. What happens after is not their problem. The candidate goes away thinking he, or she, is physically fit and has sufficient knowledge to go diving on their own which is debatable. This is my biggest objection to these agencies, their lack of proper "after care".

SPUMS should hold its ground and state the medical facts, regardless of what other agencies think. It is up to us (the diving community) to make up our own minds. You state that PADI puts through its courses more people than all the rest of the training agencies combined, this may be so. However, does it make them right in everything they say or do. It simply means that this is the best way to present information so that they can make more money. I find it very interesting that PADI tries so hard to get recognition from SPUMS for almost everything they do. I think that articles presented from any training agency should not be written in a propaganda fashion

As you may be aware, PADI are trying to get back into CMAS. They say they do not need the support of CMAS or SPUMS or such organisations, then why do they bother to try to get recognition from them!

I could go on and on. But I will finish now and just say I have no objection to the function of training agencies, i.e. to train divers. I do object though, to their propaganda and the fact that they try to infiltrate every prestigious diving organisation in order to use them to their advantage.

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September 1992

Dear Editor,

The Hyperbaric Technicians and Nurses Association (HTNA) held its first AGM in Adelaide on the 28th and 29th August, 1992. As well as being attended by nurses and technicians from all the hospital based hyperbaric units in the country, there were also personnel from private hyperbaric facilities, the Royal Australian Navy, the SA Police force and the commercial diving sector.