

State of Oregon  
Department of Public Safety Standards and Training

**NFPA Surf Rescue**  
Task Book

Task Book Assigned To:	
Name	DPSST Fire Service #
Agency Name	Date Initiated
Signature of Agency Head or Training Officer	Date Completed

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Additional copies of this document may be downloaded from the DPSST web site:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/DPSST/FC/FireCertFormFree.shtml>

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Task Book Qualification Record Books (Task Book) have been developed for various certification levels within the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) system. Each Task Book lists the job performance requirements (JPRs) for the specific certification level in a format that allows a candidate to be trained and evaluated during three (3) sequential sessions. Successful performance of all tasks, as observed and recorded by a qualified and approved evaluator will result in the candidate’s eligibility for DPSST certification.

Before a job performance evaluation can be taken, all requisite knowledge and skills must be satisfied. In addition, all task book evaluations must be checked off by a qualified evaluator. When all prescribed requirements have been met, an application for Certification may be forwarded to DPSST. All certificates are mailed to the Training Officer at his/her Fire Service Agency.

**TASK BOOK SPECIFICATIONS:**

To successfully complete this task book, only an evaluator certified as an NFPA Surf Rescue may sign off on the JPR’s. ‘Requisite Knowledge’ sections may be completed during class and signed by the instructor. ‘Requisite Skills’ sections may be conducted and signed at the candidate’s fire agency.

**NFPA TASK BOOK INFORMATION:**

The JPRs covered in this Task Book meet or exceed all NFPA published standards for this certification level at the time of this publication. Mention of NFPA and its standards do not, and are not intended as adoption of—or reference to—NFPA standards. For more information on the complete job performance requirements and data, see the individual DPSST Task Book for that certification level.

**HOW TO EVALUATE PERFORMANCE:**

Each JPR has one to three corresponding boxes to the right in which to confirm a candidate’s success. The evaluator must indicate successful passing by the candidate of each JPR by initialing and dating.

**Example:**

**21.1.1 Size up a surf rescue incident, given background information and applicable reference materials, so that the scope of the rescue is determined, the number of victims is identified, the last reported location of all the victims is established, witnesses and reporting parties are identified and interviewed, resource needs are assessed, primary search parameters are identified, and information required to develop an initial incident action plan is obtained.**

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**TASK BOOK QUALIFICATION RECORD**  
FOR THE CERTIFICATION LEVEL OF  
**NFPA Surf Rescue**

Prior to becoming certified in this position, the candidate must successfully complete the following Job Performance Requirements (JPR). For each JPR there are requisite knowledge and skill requirements. The evaluator must initial and date in the box provided to indicate the meeting of those requirements.

**21.1 Awareness Level. Prior to qualification at the awareness level in surf rescue, the individual shall meet the requirements defined in Section 21.1.**

**21.1.1 Size up a surf rescue incident, given background information and applicable reference materials, so that the scope of the rescue is determined, the number of victims is identified, the last reported location of all the victims is established, witnesses and reporting parties are identified and interviewed, resource needs are assessed, primary search parameters are identified, and information required to develop an initial incident action plan is obtained.**

  

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Types of reference materials and their uses, availability and capability of the resources, elements of an incident action plan and related information, relationship of the size-up to the incident management system, information gathering techniques and how that information is used in the size-up process, and basic search criteria for surf rescue incidents.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to read technical rescue reference materials, gather information, use interview techniques, relay information, and use information-gathering sources.

**21.1.2 Recognize incident hazards and initiate isolation procedures, given scene control barriers, personal protective equipment (PPE), requisite equipment, and available specialized resources, so that all hazards are identified; resource application fits the operational requirements; hazard isolation is considered; risks to rescuers, bystanders, and victims are minimized; and rescue time constraints are taken into account.**

  

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Resource capabilities and limitations; types and nature of incident hazards; equipment types and their use; isolation terminology, methods, equipment, and implementation; operational

requirement concerns; common types of rescuer and victim risks; risk/benefit analysis methods and practices; hazard recognition, isolation methods, and terminology; methods for controlling access to the scene; and types of technical references.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to identify resource capabilities and limitations, identify incident hazards, assess potential hazards to rescuers and bystanders, place scene control barriers, and operate control and mitigation equipment.

**21.1.3 Recognize the need for technical rescue resources at an operations- or technician-level incident, given AHJ guidelines, so that the need for additional resources is identified, the response system is initiated, the scene is secured and rendered safe until additional resources arrive, and awareness-level personnel are incorporated into the operational plan.**

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Operational protocols, specific planning forms, types of incidents common to the AHJ, hazards, incident support operations and resources, and safety measures.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to apply operational protocols, select specific planning forms based on the types of incidents, identify and evaluate various types of hazards within the AHJ, request support and resources, and determine the required safety measures.

**21.1.4 Support an operations- or technician-level incident, given an incident, an assignment, an incident action plan, and resources from the tool kit, so that the assignment is carried out, progress is reported to command, environmental concerns are managed, personnel rehabilitation is facilitated, and the incident action plan is supported.**

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** AHJ operational protocols, hazard recognition, incident management, PPE selection, resource selection and use, and scene support requirements.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to apply operational protocols, function within an incident management system, follow and implement an incident action plan, and report the task progress status to a supervisor or incident command.

**21.2 Operations Level. The ability to apply operational protocols, function within an incident management system, follow and implement an incident action plan, and report the task progress status to a supervisor or incident command.**

**21.2.1 Develop a site survey for an existing surf site, given historical data, PPE for conducting site inspections, rescue equipment for effecting surf rescues, tide tables, currents, and wave heights and meteorological projections, so that life safety hazards are anticipated, risk/benefit analyses are included, site inspections are completed, ocean conditions are projected, site-specific hazards are identified, routes of access and egress are identified, boat ramps are identified, access and egress points to surf sites are identified, methods of entrapment are considered, and areas with high probability for victim location are determined.**

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Contents of a site survey; types, sources, and information provided by reference materials; hydrology and influence of hydrology on rescues; types of hazards associated with ocean rescue practice scenarios, inspection practices, and consideration techniques; risk/benefit analyses; identification of PPE; identification of rescue equipment for effecting surf rescues; factors influencing access and egress routes; behavioral patterns of victims; and environmental conditions that influence victim location.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to interpret reference materials, perform a scene assessment, evaluate site conditions, complete risk/benefit analyses, select and use necessary PPE, and select and use appropriate rescue equipment for effecting surf rescues.

**21.2.2 \* Demonstrate survival swimming skills in low-surf environment, given safety equipment and a water body with low surf, so that basic survival skills are demonstrated in a representative environment as found in the jurisdiction, performance parameters are achieved, and problems can be identified prior to working in a low-surf environment.**

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Types of fundamental swimming skills to enter a surf zone, maneuver within the surf zone, and exit the surf zone, and fundamental surf knowledge that includes knowing how waves form, why waves are seasonal, how to judge wave heights,

recognizing the difference between plunging and spilling waves, knowing the dynamics of surf-related currents such as long-shore and riparian (or rip) currents, and familiarity with the user groups in the surf zone and the types of equipment they use.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to perform fundamental swimming skills in a surf zone, including the ability to enter, maneuver in, and exit the surf zone; swim in different surf conditions with and without flotation aids or swim aids; apply water survival skills; complete a distance swim in any open body of water using any stroke and without the aid of any surf rescue equipment; identify different types of waves, different types of currents, and the user groups in the surf zone and the types of equipment they use.



**21.2.3 \* Deploy a nonmotorized watercraft and rescue a water-bound surf victim, given watercraft used by the AHJ, so that watercraft predeployment checks are completed, watercraft launch or recovery is achieved as stipulated by AHJ operational protocols, both onboard and surf rescue operations conform with watercraft operational protocols and capabilities, communications are clear and concise, and the candidate is familiar with watercraft nomenclature, operational protocols, design limitations, and launch/recovery site issues.**



**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Types of fundamental skills to enter a surf zone, maneuver within the surf zone, and exit the surf zone on a nonmotorized watercraft; fundamental surf knowledge that includes knowing how waves form, why waves are seasonal, how to judge wave heights, recognizing the difference between plunging and spilling waves, knowing the dynamics of surf-related currents such as longshore and rip currents, and familiarity with the user groups in the surf zone and the types of equipment they use; and victim retrieval and removal techniques.



**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to perform fundamental deployment and maneuvering skills in a surf zone on a nonmotorized watercraft, including the ability to enter, maneuver in, and exit the surf zone; perform in different surf conditions; negotiate a measured distance in any open body of water using the watercraft used by the AHJ; identify different types of waves, different types of currents, and the user groups in the surf zone and the types of equipment they use; and maneuver in the surf zone after retrieving a victim and demonstrate appropriate victim removal techniques.



**21.2.4 \* Define procedures to provide support for surf rescue operations within the area of responsibility for the AHJ, given motorized watercraft used by the AHJ, protocols and procedures, boat-to-shore communication, extraction issues, and safety procedures, so that communications are clear and concise, and the candidate is familiar with boat nomenclature, operational protocols, and design limitations.**

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Limitations and uses of available boats, dynamics of moving water and its effects on boat handling, launch and docking procedures, conditional requirements for PPE, applications for motorized and appropriate boats, operating hazards as related to conditions, and crew assignments and duties.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to ride the boat, evaluate conditions for launch, don water rescue PPE, utilize communications systems, and apply procedures for rescuing a victim in the surf zone, including assisting the victim into the boat.

**21.2.5 \* Terminate an incident, given PPE specific to the incident, isolation barriers, and tool kit, so that rescuers and bystanders are protected and accounted for during termination operations; the party responsible is notified of any modification or damage created during the operational period; documentation of loss or material use is accounted for, scene documentation is performed, scene control is transferred to a responsible party; potential or existing hazards are communicated to that responsible party; debriefing and postincident analysis and critique are considered, and command is terminated.**

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** PPE characteristics, hazard and risk identification, isolation techniques, statutory requirements identifying responsible parties, accountability system use, reporting methods, postincident analysis techniques.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** Selection and use of hazard-specific PPE, decontamination, use of barrier protection techniques, data collection and record-keeping/reporting protocols, postincident analysis activities.



**21.3 Technician Level. The job performance requirements defined in Sections 21.2 and 21.3 shall be met prior to or during technician-level qualification in surf rescue.**

**21.3.1 Demonstrate advanced swimming skills in the surf environment, given safety equipment and a water body with high surf, so that advanced skills are demonstrated in an environment representative of conditions experienced in the jurisdiction, performance parameters and objectives are achieved, and problems can be identified prior to working in a high surf environment.**

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Types of fundamental swimming skills to enter, maneuver, and exit a surf zone; wave formation theory; wave types; dynamics of surf-related currents such as longshore and rip currents; and familiarity with victim behavior and recreational equipment used.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to perform advanced swimming skills in the surf zone, including the ability to enter, maneuver in, and exit the surf zone; swim in different surf conditions with and without flotation aids or swim aids; apply water survival skills; complete a distance swim in any open body of water using any stroke without the aid of any surf rescue equipment; and identify wave types, current types, and potential victim behavior.

**21.3.2 Perform a swimming rescue for a water-bound surf victim, given PPE, including a pair of swimming fins and a rescue flotation device, safety equipment, and a water body with high surf representative of the jurisdiction's conditions, so that the victim is secured within the surf rescue tube and towed out of the surf impact zone to shore or to a surf-free zone for pickup by a watercraft, boat, or helicopter.**

**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Types of fundamental swimming skills to enter, maneuver, and exit a surf zone; wave formation theory; wave types; dynamics of surf-related currents such as longshore and rip currents; and familiarity with victim behavior and recreational equipment used.

**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to perform advanced swimming skills in the surf zone, including the ability to enter, maneuver in, and exit the surf zone; swim in different surf conditions with and without flotation aids or

swim aids; apply water survival skills; complete a distance swim in any open body of water using any stroke without the aid of any surf rescue equipment; identify wave types, current types, and potential victim behavior; and maneuver in the surf zone with a surf rescue tube, tow a victim with the tube, and demonstrate victim removal techniques.

**21.3.3 Perform a subsurface retrieval of a submerged victim in a surf environment, given PPE, including swimming fins, dive mask, and snorkel, and a water body with high surf representative of the jurisdiction's conditions, so that the victim is located and brought to the surface, removed out of the surf impact zone to shore or to a surf-free zone for pickup by a watercraft, boat, or helicopter.**



**(A) Requisite Knowledge.** Types of fundamental swimming skills to enter, maneuver, and exit a surf zone; wave formation theory; wave types; dynamics of surf-related currents such as longshore and rip currents; and familiarity with victim behavior and recreational equipment used.



**(B) Requisite Skills.** The ability to perform free diving skills in the surf zone, including the ability to enter, maneuver in, and exit the surf zone while towing a victim; swim in different surf conditions with and without flotation aids or swim aids; apply water survival skills; complete a distance swim in any open body of water using any stroke without the aid of any surf rescue equipment; identify wave types, current types, and potential victim behavior; and maneuver in the surf zone with a rescue flotation device, tow a victim with the tube, and demonstrate victim removal techniques.

