

INTERNATIONAL DIVING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

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NEWS

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ANNUAL MEETING 2009 WILL BE HELD IN PALERMO, SICILY

Hosted by the Commercial Diver Training School **CEDIFOP**

Monday 5 to Wednesday 7 October 2009



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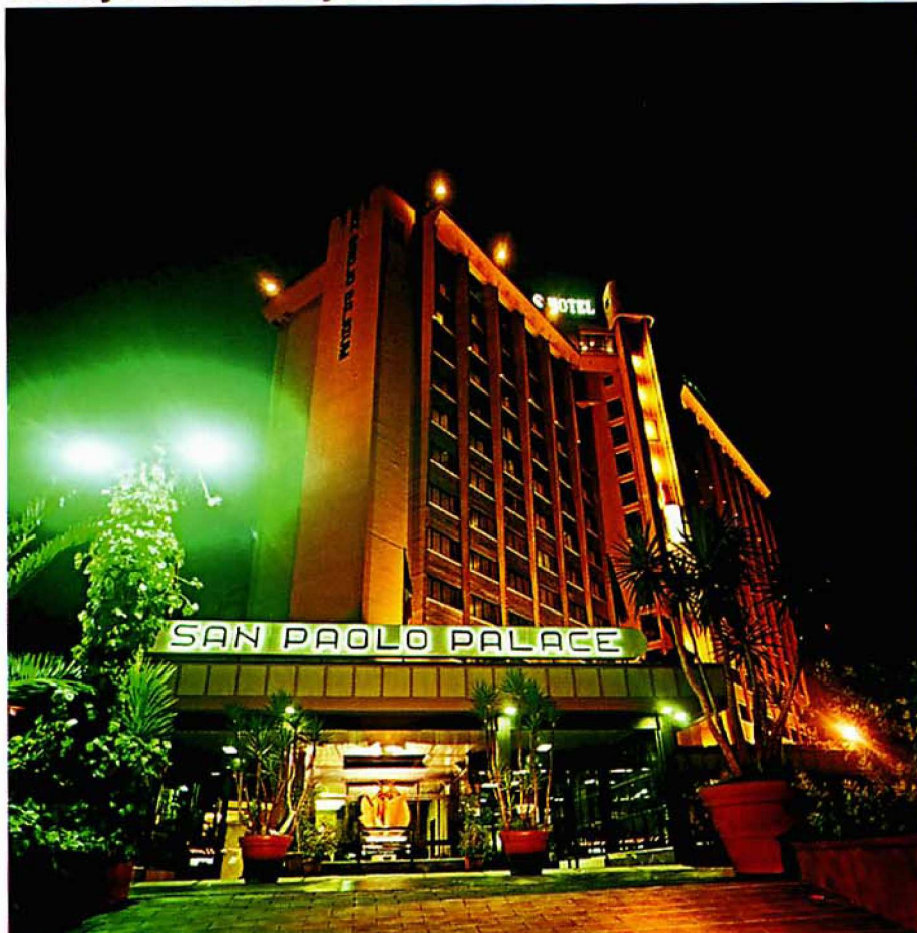
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Front Cover

*Photograph shows a
Finnish diver from the
Commercial Diving
School Innofocus in
Helsinki 'at home'*



THE CONFERENCE HOTEL

The Conference Hotel is the
San Paolo Palace Hotel

Address:

San Paolo Palace Hotel
via Messina Marine, 91
Palermo
Tel.: +39.091.6211112
Fax: +39.091.6215300
e-mail: booking@sanpaolopalace.it
Web : www.sanpaolopalace.it

The preferred rates for IDSA in this 4 star Hotel are: double room for single use with breakfast and taxes included €120 per night, and for double occupancy €150. These rates will apply to delegates arriving early, or staying on in Palermo after the meeting.

ATTENDANCE

In addition to delegates from member schools and organisations, the meeting will be open to non members by invitation; interested individuals and organisations should contact the Administrator. info@idsaworldwide.org

Wives or Guests wishing to attend meals and other social occasions, for example the Association Dinner, are welcome on payment of an appropriate fee.

CONFERENCE FEE

Is expected to be about Euros 200.

FURTHER DETAILS

Further details of accommodation booking procedures, the Conference Fee and all other relevant information will be circulated as soon as they become known.

CEDIFOP

The Commercial Diver Training School in Palermo

by Ninni Radicini

CEDIFOP based in Palermo, Sicily, is a centre for professional training accredited by the relevant Regional Authority and with Quality Assurance to ISO 9001. Started in 1992, it has been immediately accepted into the sector for Professional Training in the underwater field. During these early years the Centre developed different courses, financed by the European Social Fund and by the Sicilian Region, focussed on the needs of Sicilian residents. More recently, development has expanded to include the provision of 'self-financed' courses not only for students from Italy but also from overseas. During the courses, 12 teachers are alternated, all of whom are well-qualified to teach both the theoretical and practical curriculum and possessing good communication skills.

CEDIFOP in Palermo represents one of the most dynamic Italian schools in the sector for teaching Underwater Technical Operators (OTS's) - a professional qualification whose standards are controlled by the Merchant Department of the Navy in Italy (today Office of the Infrastructures and Transports). Since 1979, this Government Department has maintained a "Register of Divers" which is available to the underwater operators that work inshore, including all the employers of scuba divers, whose work includes recovery or demolition of wrecks, 'salvage diving', port interventions, 'harbour diving' and for the operations of inspection, careenage, maintenance and reparation of the ships and the moorings. Additionally, it also includes simpler operations such as positioning boats and control, in the port areas and in the maritime domain (coastal and inland waters). In general, the firms that operate in Italy have the obligation to hire qualified personnel who are on the Register of the Divers and in possession of the book of recognition; the same is true for the firms that operate in the sector of aquaculture

(tonnage, breeding of fishes in sea, etc. "fish farm diving") or sea reserves.

The professional qualification of OTS can be considered, also, as the basic qualification to work with firms that operate in the industrial sector and of the hydrocarbons in off-shore oil and gas diving. This latter is an activity that has developed since World War 2 and it has absorbed increasing groups of operators and underwater professionals, to the point where, today, over three underwater professionals in four are engaged in this field. The OTS trained by CEDIFOP is an underwater operator with a technical/cultural preparation in keeping with the present demands of the market. In this way together with the ability to use specific equipment, (for example the masks and Kirby Morgan helmets) the instructors stress the necessity to acquire those basic technical & safety skills to the students, as it is essential if they are to work effectively with divers from other regions and of other Nationalities.

Since the majority of the students, before the course, have not used professional diving equipment, the program is based on a gradual development - both theoretically and practically. Practical training begins with safety and basic drills in a pool and progresses to task and tool training in open water at increasing depths. An open helmet is used during basic training in the pool in order to boost the students' confidence in the water. Similarly, the development of skills such as cutting and welding are preceded by lessons in the mechanical shop in which the technology of the metals and their characteristics are explained in order that the students have the maximum necessary understanding of the techniques.

In the last few years CEDIFOP has also been the promoter of initiatives. Of particular importance was the conference organized in April 2007



A student during training.

for the reform of the Italian legislation for the region. It had the support of important personalities drawn from industrial, sporting and recreational organisations), among whom was Giulio Melegari, then president of IDSA.

CEDIFOP information can be found on the Net; its site www.cedifop.it is frequently visited and has proved a useful source for potential students. As well as different videos of training exercises other CEDIFOP initiatives can also be found on YouTube.

ISO 9001 accreditation was received in 2007 as was Associate Membership of IDSA. The centre is now working towards further expansion and will be applying for Full Membership of IDSA. Meanwhile after the Annual Conference in Philadelphia the next is planned to take place in Palermo 5 to 7 October 2009. For CEDIFOP this will be an opportunity to make comparisons and discuss techniques with Commercial Schools from many parts of the World.

Beyond that we look forward to this prestigious opportunity to show once more the effectiveness and competence of our staff.

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