

Hoses on Scuba Regulators - Long, Short or Just Right

What is the correct length for a regulator hose?

Before we continue please take a moment to think of these three comments:

- Generally standards are standards for a reason. Manufactures have provided standard recreational length hoses for year.
- Changing a standard should be accompanied with a change in need. This should need should be documents and analysed.
- Special situations call for special solutions. For example shorter people taller people may need minor adjustments in length of their regulator hoses.

What are the standard hose lengths for regulators?

- The most common hose length found on the primary SCUBA regulator is about 28 to 30 inches.
- The 40 inch hose is the common choice for the alternate second stage used on most sport diving "octopus" regulator configurations.
- The 40 inch hose is also the recommended length for hang or stage bottle regulators as well.
- The 36 inch hose is commonly used on a small pony or "bailout" bottles.

In a long hose environment

- Some divers prefer the slightly shorter hose length of 22 inches for their short hose (octopus) for those divers who use their primary regulator with a long hose.
- Many technical cross over divers believe the common hose lengths are too short in out-of-air situations and use a longer hose, often 60 inches (5 feet)
- Technical divers also have adopted a minimum length of 84 inches (7 feet) for overhead environments, and in some exceptional circumstances even use 108 inch (9 feet) long hoses.

Using a Standard length hose.

This practice has served the recreational world well and to my knowledge, I searched today (May 25, 2010) again, I cannot find any concerns from RSTC or any major agency.

Therefore I feel no need to address reasons to uphold the standard.

Using a long hose

When it comes to the pros of using long hoses on scuba regulators there is lots and lots of information on the internet. I will limit my comments to the below and leave the reader of the web to form their own opinions are the multitude of information out there. But remember that these comments are sometimes from divers with professional qualified advice but much more often these are opinions from those that are not qualified to make, change or create standards.

Here is my opinion what you are not being told.

Cons of using a Long hose on your scuba regulators

- Generally divers wrap the hose around the neck.
 - This poses a strangling risk in a rescue situation.

- There is increased danger of choking in an entanglement situation.
- In an out of air situation the response time is lengthened due to unravelling of the hose from around the neck.
- The act of unravelling increases the risk of entanglements with your gear.
- In the long hose environment divers usually attach their octopus to a necklace which too goes around their neck. All of the comments for the above point still apply.
- In an out of air situation the primary is given to the recipient.
 - In a cold water environment there is an increased risk of a free flow in the transfer from breathing to water to breathing. Especially when the initial breathes from the recipient will almost always be in an over excursion state.
 - Should the passed over regulator (the primary in this case) were to fail the Octopus which commonly uses a very short hose will be too short to safely perform two man buddy breathing upon it.
 - If you use a custom or non standard mouth piece then you increase the risk of a panic or making the situation worse due to the fact that you offer your primary.
- In a rescue situation that goes badly the long hose can actually decrease your escape options i.e. the fin/foot kick or the use of your hand.
- A diver using long hose will reduce their availability of finding dive buddies as they will now have non standard gear. It is a dangerous option for both divers in a buddy team to have one of the buddies in non standard gear. When using this system then both divers in the buddy team as well as any rescue divers should be long hose trained.

Based on the above comments it is the policy of 4D Diving and Adventures and ACUC that the use of hose lengths that are non standard for recreational diving will not be permitted.

Yours in fun safe diving,

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