ROV COURSE FAQs (Frequently asked questions)

What effect is the current economic situation having on the ROV industry?
For several reasons we have seen a reduced demand for trainees in the Australasian region. IMCA estimates indicate that is and will continue to be a shortage of ROV plot/Techs for some time. The greatest shortfall is in the Senior Pilot-Tech/Supervisor ranks but we all start somewhere.

Several additional factors have influenced the availability of work for trainee ROV pilot/technicians over the last few years including tax law changes in Australia.

The Western Australian Maritime Training Centre reduced introductory courses to try to match demand for graduates rather than train people for no jobs. We apologise if this was inconvenient but feel that it is in the best interests of our clients.

How much does the course cost?
The latest price is listed on the Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Operation short course page.

What is included in the price?
Course fees cover:
- Tuition at Challenger Institute, including course notes
- BOSIET
- Assistance with job placement

Is the course accredited?
The Certificate IV in ROV Operation is accredited with Australia's national training framework, the AQTF (Australian Quality Training Framework).

The most visible ROV industry body is the International Marine Contractors’ Association (IMCA), of which the Centre is a member. The IMCA does not accredit courses but does provide guidance on issues such as competency and course content. The ROV courses at Challenger Institute all follow IMCA guidelines.

What is a BOSIET?
Basic Offshore Safety Induction and Emergency Training. This is a 2 ½ day course run by either the International Foundation for Accident Prevention (IFAP) in Fremantle or ERGT in Jandakot and is a requirement for offshore workers worldwide. There is a shorter course (TBOSIET) for tropical waters only, but the full BOSIET is valid worldwide.

What if I have a TBOSIET – is the course shorter or cheaper?
If you have a TBOSIET you will need to complete the FOET (Further Offshore Emergency Training), the upgrade to a TBOSIET or BOSIET extension. You will receive a rebate for the BOSIET component but the course will not be shorter, as the BOSIET is conducted outside the course duration. You will need to complete the FOET in your own time as IFAP and ERGT do not usually run this course at the same time as the BOSIET.

What are the entry requirements?
The minimum entry requirement to be considered for the course is to have a trade qualification in industrial electrical/electronics and/or hydraulics, together with 3 years’ experience.

There are rare opportunities to enter the industry without having these qualifications but this is at the discretion of the employing company. IMCA has recommended trade qualifications as a minimum (IMCA R 004) and most operators are following that guidance. All ROV operators in Australia have expressed support for the employment of graduates from this course.
If I don't have the required trade background, can you recommend a short course to bring me up to the minimum standard?

No. There is no such thing as a short course to substitute for a trade.

What is the selection process?
All applications are vetted by the College to check that they meet minimum entrance requirements. The résumés of those that do are passed on to an industry panel to be ranked in their order of employability to each company.

The average of these rankings is used to determine which applicants will be offered a place on the course. This process maximises the opportunities for graduates to be employed, as industry has already had the chance to vet their training and experience and also influence the selection of course participants. It also reduces the risk of people taking the course when they would be unlikely to gain employment.

How do I apply?
1. Send a full résumé of no more than 3 pages by email to Vera Kloczonek: commercial.maritime@challenger.wa.edu.au

Tips for the resume:
- Keep it concise
- Tailor it for this application (don't just submit your 'standard' job application)
- Focus on your technical skills and minimise information not relevant to becoming an ROV pilot/technician
- Avoid narrative ("I was responsible for…."). Stick to dot points where possible but give clear information about your skills and experience.

The resume file should be in .PDF format or Microsoft Word

2. Include a letter of introduction stating why you want to be an ROV pilot/tech and why you think your skills and experience will be valuable to the industry. It has become apparent that this letter is very important to some of the selectors so think about it carefully.

3. Other certificates etc. should be scanned as .PDF documents

4. Include your name (i.e. <Evans, Bill Resume.pdf> not just <resume.pdf>) for ALL files submitted including letters and certificates as we get a lot of resumes and documents and yours may get lost among others that are incorrectly named!

What happens if I get selected?
You will be contacted to inform you of your offer. Please make sure (before you apply) that you:
- have the time to do the course
- can afford it

If you have to pull out, it makes it very inconvenient for the next person in line waiting for the course.

The timing of the selection process is generally as follows:
- Applications open
- Eligible resumes sent to selection panel
- Successful applicants notified

7 weeks before the course
5 weeks before the course
4 weeks before the course

Unsuccessful applicants notified as soon as all available places have been accepted.
If a successful applicant withdraws before the course commences, unsuccessful applicants may be contacted and offered a place. This is not rare and happens more frequently than we would like – right up to start date!

**What is the likelihood of getting a job after finishing the course?**
There is currently a low demand for trainee pilot/techs. Consider your career options carefully. Our advice from our industry contacts is that work prospects will improve late 2014-2015.

**How soon can I expect to get a job?**
It depends on many factors, such as current projects and industry trainee assimilation capability (you can only really afford to have 1 trainee in a 3-man crew). Having said that, in peak times most graduates have been employed within a reasonably short time frame. Don't forget that doing a course does not guarantee you a job. It will help, but your core competencies are what the employer is looking for.

**Where will I work?**
That depends on the company that you are employed by. There is currently some work around Australia but the growth areas are currently in Asia (particularly India), the Middle East and West Africa. The UK are heading into their winter quiet period but industry sources there are concerned about the shortage of suitable personnel being trained for entry into the industry.

**What are the pay rates?**
Once again, this depends on the company you work for but also where you work and your qualifications.

You will start as a trainee on somewhere around AUD$700-1000/day in Australia but this may be considerably less in Asia or other parts of the world. Australian rates have been very high since 2008. A submersible engineer may make up to $1500/day in Australia. These rates are indicative only, cannot be guaranteed and will vary.

More up-to-date information may be available at: [http://www.rovworld.com/docs/rates.html](http://www.rovworld.com/docs/rates.html) but all information on the Internet should be treated with caution!

**What are the work schedules?**
Most companies offer equal time off for time on but this is often negotiable. When working in Australia a swing is usually 4 weeks on, 4 weeks off. Overseas you would generally expect a 6-week offshore period.

**Will I be a permanent employee?**
It is very unusual for companies in Australia to have permanent ROV personnel. Generally you will be on a short-term contract or a casual. More companies are moving towards having part full-time and part casual workforces. Overseas there is more likelihood of having a permanent position.

**Do I keep the frequent-flyers?**
Many companies will allow you to accumulate the reward points from your flights in Australia and overseas.

**Can I get credit for existing qualifications?**
Yes you can. If you have a current BOSIET your course fees will be reduced appropriately.

**How long does the course take?**
We timetable for 17 days over 3 weeks, so you will work both of the Saturdays during the 3 weeks. Training times are generally 0730-1730 but may vary due to operational requirements (just like offshore!) and there are several evenings programmed to allow you to use the simulator more. We also do simulator work on one day of the week but you will be offered an option for a 3 hour period on only 1 of the 2 simulator days.

As this is a very short course, come prepared to work very hard. It is an information-rich environment that demands a lot of self discipline to get through the study. The most common complaint is that
there is too much information for such a short time and the days are too long. Get used to it! The industry we are training you for demands a minimum of 12 hours per day, 7 days a week and the information assimilation requirements out there will be much higher!

Do I need a medical?
IFAP require you to have a basic medical before undertaking training with them. You will need a recognised medical before working offshore so we recommend that you get the full UK Oil & Gas (commonly recognised worldwide) medical before attending the course, ideally as soon as you receive confirmation of a place. This has several purposes:

- It may save you spending money on the course only to find out that you aren’t fit to work offshore,
- It avoids duplication in medical costs
- You will be ready to work immediately after finishing the course if the opportunity arises (it often does!).

If you are coming from overseas, you may get the medical in your own country but please ensure that it is a recognised offshore medical otherwise it may not be accepted. The requirements for IFAP training are much lower and can be requested directly from IFAP (or email the Institute and we will forward the document to you).

We can arrange for UK Oil and Gas medicals to be carried out at the College during the course so if you still need one you can get it done then, as long as there are enough candidates to justify the doctor coming to us.

Military personnel can get the basic IFAP medical done at their medical centres but will still need an offshore medical, which the military cannot provide.

Why do you suggest I bring my passport?
You may be offered a job immediately and you can save some time by being ready to go at short notice. You will also need primary identification to get your MSIC (Maritime Security Identification Card) – for Australian residents only.

What else should I budget for?
Travel, medical, accommodation, meals, entertainment.

What could exclude me from the industry?
1. Health. If you can’t pass the medical, you can’t work offshore. This is the main reason we suggest you get the full medical as soon as you have received your acceptance email to the course. You could save yourself some money.

2. Security clearance. Since 1/1/07 there has been a new security standard for Australian vessels, ports and offshore oil and gas facilities – the MSIC. This entails a third party organisation carrying out checks with the Australian Federal Police and ASIO. If you can’t pass these clearances, you won’t get the card and you won’t be allowed to work offshore.

3. Working in an ROV team requires a high level of teamwork, consideration, initiative, resourcefulness and a willingness to learn. If you aren’t prepared to make a maximum effort to achieve these attributes, advice from industry is - “don’t bother applying - you won’t last”. This may seem harsh but the reality of the situation is that employers cannot afford to have animosity within a crew and will take all necessary measures to avoid it, including not renewing a contract or even terminating one.

What is the MSIC and how can I get one?
The MSIC is required to work offshore. Successful applicants will be provided with the necessary
Letter of Operational Need and appointments will be made to apply for the card. While we do facilitate you getting the card, this is an additional expense and is not covered in the course costs.

**Where should I stay during the course?**
As we don’t have residential facilities, it is really up to you and your budget. There is a range of accommodation available within walking distance of the WAMTC-Fremantle, from backpackers at $16/night (dorm room) to the 4 star Esplanade Hotel starting at $205/night! Most students choose to stay at the Flying Angel Club as they provide basic accommodation and an evening meal at a reasonable price. Our address is 1 Fleet Street, Fremantle.

Contact Vera for further information: [commercial.maritime@challenger.wa.edu.au](mailto:commercial.maritime@challenger.wa.edu.au)