

Commercial Diver interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for commercial diver roles focus on your technical dive skills, safety judgement and ability to work in a team. Employers also want to know you understand Australian diving standards and can follow procedures without cutting corners.

- **Technical:** Questions about dive procedures, equipment, welding, inspection and decompression.
- **Safety and risk:** How you assess hazards, follow AS/NZS 2299.1 and respond to emergencies.
- **Scenario:** What you would do if something goes wrong underwater, such as losing communications or running low on gas.
- **Behavioural:** Past examples of teamwork, problem solving and staying calm under pressure.
- **Process:** Walking through how you plan a dive, complete a task and report results.

A typical process starts with a phone screen with a recruiter or dive supervisor, followed by a technical interview with the diving superintendent and a health and safety representative. You may also complete a practical assessment, sometimes in a pool or test tank, and you will need to provide current certification, medical and logbook records.

1. Walk me through how you plan a surface-supplied dive for an underwater inspection.

Why they ask

This shows whether you understand the full planning process, not just the in-water work.

How to structure your answer

Use a step-by-step walk-through: pre-dive checks, risk assessment, dive plan, team roles, gas and equipment, communication, emergency arrangements, then reporting.

Example answer

"First I review the task and the site drawings, then check the dive plan against the conditions. I confirm the permit to work and any isolation requirements. I run a risk assessment with the team, covering hazards like entanglement, low visibility, boat traffic and live pipelines. We agree on the dive plan: maximum depth, bottom time, decompression schedule, gas supplies and emergency procedures. I check my equipment, communication system and tools, and make sure the standby diver is ready. During the dive I stay in contact with the supervisor and follow the plan. After the dive I complete the log, report any defects and debrief with the team."

2. Tell me about a time you identified a safety issue during a dive and how you handled it.

Why they ask

Safety is the core of commercial diving. They want to see you speak up and act.

How to structure your answer

STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result.

Example answer

"I was inspecting a wharf pile in a busy harbour when I noticed a live cable running along the pile that was not shown on the drawings. I stopped work immediately and signalled to the supervisor. We surfaced and reviewed the site plan. The cable was confirmed as active, so we isolated it and adjusted the dive plan to keep clear. I documented the hazard and the control measures in the daily report. No one was hurt, and the inspection continued safely the next day with the correct isolation in place."

3. What would you do if your communication system failed mid-dive?

Why they ask

Tests your judgement under pressure and knowledge of emergency procedures.

How to structure your answer

Scenario response: immediate actions, then follow-up, then prevention. Stay calm, follow training.

Example answer

"If I lost comms, I would switch to line signals as per the dive plan. I would stop the task and signal to the supervisor that I was returning to the surface. If line signals were not acknowledged, I would begin a controlled ascent following my training and decompression obligations. Once on the surface I would report the fault and not re-enter until the system was checked and cleared. After the dive I would complete an incident report and review the equipment to prevent it happening again."

4. How do you ensure your underwater welding meets the required standard?

Why they ask

Welding is a specialist skill and they need to know you follow procedure and quality controls.

How to structure your answer

Technical explanation: preparation, procedure, execution, inspection, records.

Example answer

"Before welding I check the procedure specification and confirm the material and joint preparation. I make sure the surface team has the correct settings and that the weld is set up for the position we are working in. Underwater I follow the agreed technique and maintain the required travel speed and angle. After the weld I do a visual inspection and the team arranges non-destructive testing, such as ultrasonic testing, if the specification calls for it. I record the weld details and any defects so they can be addressed."

5. Describe a time you worked as part of a dive team to complete a difficult task.

Why they ask

Commercial diving is never solo. They want evidence of teamwork and communication.

How to structure your answer

STAR, with emphasis on your specific role and how you supported others.

Example answer

"We were installing a new pipeline section in low visibility. I was the working diver and my teammate was on standby. We could not see more than a metre ahead, so we relied on voice communication and touch signals. I guided the pipe into position while the surface team controlled the winch. When the alignment was off, I talked through the adjustment with the supervisor and we corrected it on the next attempt. We completed the installation within the planned bottom time, and the section passed inspection."

6. What experience do you have with hydraulic tools and ultrasonic testing equipment underwater?

Why they ask

Checks your familiarity with the tools you will use day to day.

How to structure your answer

Technical overview: tools used, tasks, safety, maintenance.

Example answer

"I have used hydraulic impact wrenches, chainsaws and grinders for tasks like removing corroded bolts and cutting steel. I always complete a pre-use check, confirm the hydraulic connections are secure and make sure the tool is suitable for the depth and the job. For ultrasonic testing, I have assisted with thickness measurements on pipeline walls, cleaning the surface first and taking readings at set points. I log the results and report any readings that fall outside the expected range."