



# M.O.S.T.

*McMillan Offshore Survival Training*

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## **M.O.S.T. Newsletter – January 2006**

*From the desk of John McMillan*

**To Our Friends:**

### **CAN YOU SWIM?**

We've all heard the saying, "Man survives best on land". I can also add "best in tropical areas". This is true as we have had to adapt certain movement patterns to participant in aquatic activities. Man is not meant to be in the water. We do not have scales, gills or web feet & hands.

Here lies the dilemma. You are now told by your supervisor to schedule for a water survival class. When you hired on, there was nothing said about your swimming abilities. Can you swim? Yes or No?

If you answer No, then the answer is clear but if you answered Yes, what are you basing that answer on? We all have a definition of what being able to swim is to us. It may be based on distance, speed, technique utilized or past experiences.

For those of you who would answer No on the application, I submit the following guidelines/suggestion. First, most people grade their abilities while swimming in a bathing suit in a pool. When they get tired, they grab the ladder, catch their breath and start again. Well, in an offshore environment your dressed fully clothed, in colder water with a current & waves and don't forget the mental anguish.

My feelings are a non-swimmer will never go into the water without a PFD securely on and will probably have a few extra. They will not try to swim to the next platform but will remain near the location (1st place rescuers will respond) and will pay close attention to the safety briefings. They will also be the first to inflate their aviation vest once out of the aircraft which will remind other to do the same. The inflation of the vest is a much forgotten action even if you have watched the pre-flight vides hundreds of times.

Don't think that when a person drowns that he/she was a non-swimmer. Most people who drown are competent swimmers but did not protect their magic circle (area of mouth/nose) for one reason or another or overestimated their ability.

If you find yourself in water fully clothed REMEMBER to keep all movement underwater, slow, steady movements are best and limit your kicking as upper body movements are what propels you.

How far do you have to swim to be a survivor? Our definition is 10 feet. Get out of danger, swim to the life raft or group of survivors. Remember, it's not the fastest swimmer that survives but the one that demonstrates superior skills in an environment that man is not meant to survive.

Happy Stroking!

**John McMillan, President**  
McMillan Offshore Survival Training