

# ASSESSING THE STATUS OF COMMERCIAL DIVING SECTOR IN KZN COASTAL DISTRICTS



## Project overview

The study evaluated the current structure and operations of the commercial diving sector in KZN coastal districts, identify challenges affecting the commercial diving sector, including workforce training and regulatory compliance, as well as assessing the economic impact and growth potential of the commercial diving sector in the coastal districts. Respondents covered 37 divers and 3 diving companies.

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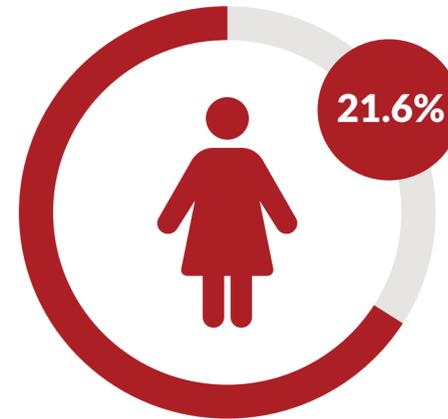
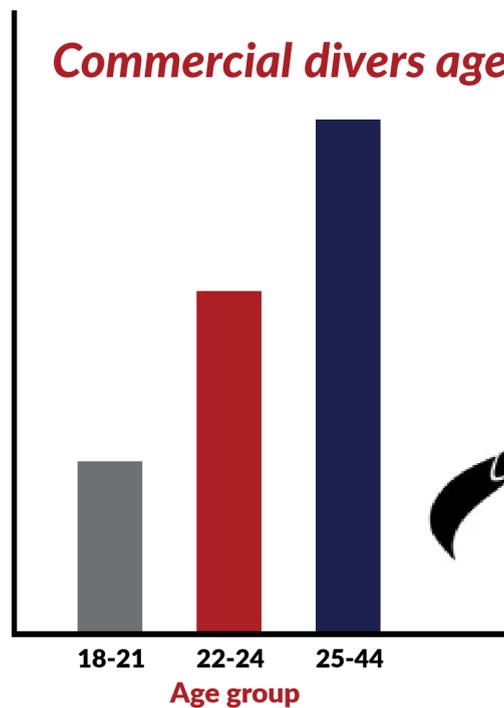
## RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

**92.5%** Individual Commercial Divers

**7.5%** Diving Companies

The majority hold Class 2, 3, or 4 diving qualification, with only a small percentage possessing specialised certifications such as DMT

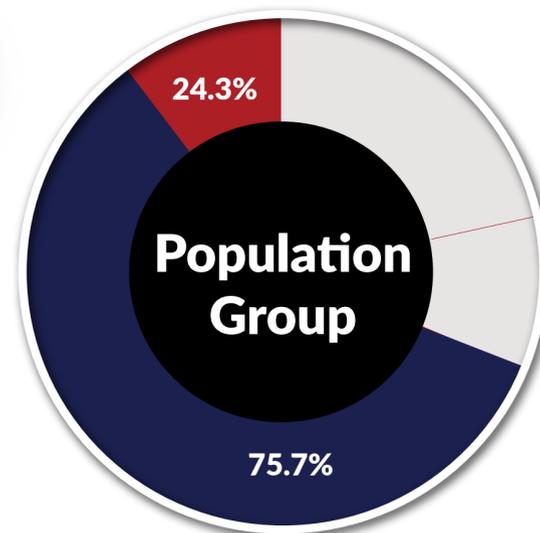
### Commercial divers age profile



The Industry Female Divers



The Industry Male Divers



● Black African ● White

**61,5%** Divers earn between R10, 001 and R20, 000 per month.

Most divers operate in eThekweni Metropolitan **81.1%**

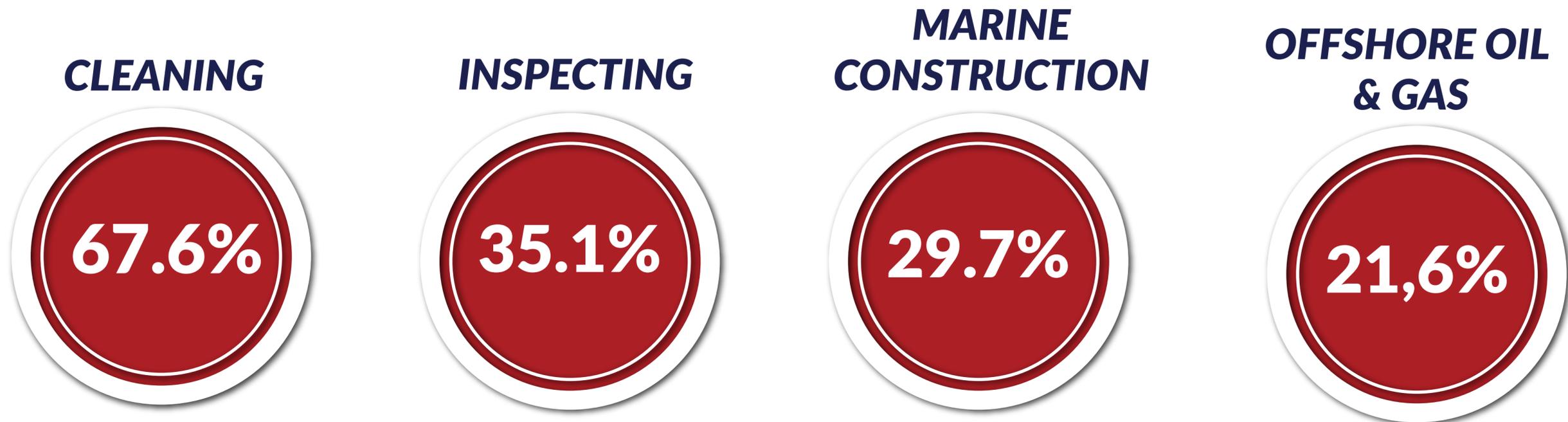
Divers have over 4 years of experience **78.3%**

Employed Commercial Divers **70.3%**



## COMMERCIAL DIVING OPERATIONS AND CHALLENGES

### Most common work areas for divers



#### Recommendations:

- **Strengthening Safety Regulations and Oversight:** Improve enforcement of existing diving safety regulations and ensure diving companies meet minimum safety equipment and supervision standards
- **Expand Access to Technical and Supervisory Training:** Increase opportunities for divers to obtain in-demand skills such as underwater welding, rigging, inspection, and supervisor certification.
- **Support Workforce Development in Underrepresented Districts:** Promote commercial diving opportunities beyond eThekweni through incentives, training centers, and infrastructure support in other coastal districts.
- **Facilitate Employment Linkages and Job Placement Support:** Establish a platform to link qualified commercial divers with employers and contract opportunities, reducing unemployment and underemployment in the sector.
- **Promote Gender and Racial Inclusion:** Develop support programs for women and historically disadvantaged groups in the diving industry to address workforce dynamics and improve diversity.
- **Conduct Further Research and Market Mapping:** Undertake targeted studies to explore demand patterns, contractor practices, and the economic impact of commercial diving to inform policy and investment.

- Perceptions of demand are mostly positive, with **94.6%** rating it as High or Moderate in their districts.
- Training quality is rated highly, with **100%** rating it as Excellent or Good.

- The job market is viewed as moderately competitive **51.4%** and growing **64.9%**, though **24.3%** believe it is declining.

- Employment challenges and environmental/safety issues were each cited by **27%** of divers as primary challenges.
- **24.3%** of respondents reported experiencing safety incidents, including decompression sickness, equipment failure, and fatal accidents.