



The Origins of the Warwick Police Department Dive team started in 1956. All police related diving relied on a volunteer diver named, Sherrard "Knobby" Lindell who was also employed by the city of Warwick in the Public Works Department. Mr. Lindell, who was an accomplished diver, performed in this capacity for over 30 years conducting several recoveries.

The Warwick Police Department Underwater Search and Recovery Team was formed in the summer of 1988 by Sgt. Ray Wells. The original team consisted of 20 divers who attained certification over a 6-month period before becoming fully activated. Since that time the U.S.R.T. has performed numerous recovery operations for the Warwick Police Department, other municipalities, Department of Environmental Management and federal agencies including U.S. Customs, and Drug Enforcement Administration.

The mission of the Warwick Police Department dive team is to conduct underwater crime scene investigations and evidence recovery. The team is trained in specialized areas of diving including vehicle and aircraft recovery, ice diving, and hull search operations. The U.S.R.T. was recently selected and trained by the United States Coast Guard to perform helicopter rescue operations for capsized vessels.

U.S.R.T. helicopter operations with U.S.C.G.

Currently the team is headed by Lt. Ray Gallucci who supervises 11 divers. Members of the U.S.R.T. are full time police officers with a minimum of one year of police experience. Divers are certified in law enforcement recovery, ice, hull search and rescue diving. Several members have also attained Dive Master rating. Dive Team Training Officer Detective Steven Branch, who is an active State Bomb Squad Technician, is also certified in handling underwater explosive devices. The team is equipped with customary search and recovery equipment including Viking dry suits, Interspiro full-face masks and O.T.S. underwater communications.

Above illustrates diving in challenging conditions. Hull search performed for U.S. Customs in January, in rainy conditions at 2300 hours in the evening.

In 1992, the Maritime Assault Team was formed. The team was comprised of officers who possessed dual membership with the S.W.A.T team and U.S.R.T. The purpose of this team was to provide tactical maritime response to incidents located on or near Warwick's estimated 38 miles of coastline. Warwick Police hosted a maritime training seminar with instructors from U.S. Navy Special Warfare.