U.S. Department of Homeland Security
United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

# USCG Auxiliary District 11 North
# Surface Operations Update
# August 2020

Virginia Luchetti – DSO

## 2020 D11N OPTREX Calendar

| Date | Division | Location | Contact | Deadline for candidate names to be submitted to DSO-OP |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| October 16-17 | 12 and 1 (Victory) | Marina Bay, Richmond | TBD | August 27 |
| November 6-7 | 10 | San Joaquin | TBD | September 26 |

**Surface Operations have been canceled until further notice**

Please advise all coxswains and facility owners to refrain from requesting orders. However, coxswains should conduct a beta test order request to make sure the coxswain understands how to request orders in AuxData II and to verify that their facility meets AuxData II requirements. If there are any problems in requesting orders, please contact our Operational Training Officer, BOSN 2 Dustin Finkleson.

**Fleet Week 2020 has been postponed until 2021**

**Risk Management and Operations Workshops**

In the 1 May ALAUX Communication, we learned that webinar format for the Risk Management Workshop has been approved. It will take some time to organize and schedule online training sessions. As soon as trainers are ready with the new format, we will send out notices to Division Commanders. The REYR date for RM is 30 September.

The deadline for the 2020 Operations Workshop has been extended to 30 September.

## Boat Crew and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

*Information from our District PPE Manager, Michael Brown*

Shipmates, recently, it came to my attention that a PLB was being used for activities outside the Auxiliary. When you are issued a PLB thru the Auxiliary, that device may only be used while acting as crew under an assignment to duty. That's it. If you possess a PLB that you acquired elsewhere, do not use it when participating in an authorized Auxiliary mission. If you are a trainee, you are to use the facility PLB for the duration of the mission.

During our operational shutdown, please refrain from testing your PLB until we have that restriction lifted. Not only does this preserve the battery but also keeps any accidental activation from occurring. Please continue to conduct virtual inspections on your gear. Review your crew manual and practice your knots frequently. Lookout for each other and safety first!

## Paul's Tips

*Navigation and Safety Reminders from Qualification Examiner Paul Verveniotis*

**Acting as a Man Overboard is Not a Competency**

If you were to look at the narratives of past Auxiliary mishaps across the nation, you'd see a lot of them involve crew falling into the water. Not a good thing, especially in cold weather or at night. At a minimum you'll have a wet and exhausted crewmember and some paperwork to complete. The worst case could be tragic. The following is an excerpt from an actual MOB mishap report:

> *During a PATON patrol, an Auxiliary OPFAC was maintaining position in order to photograph the aid for a report. The coxswain notified the crew that he was going to reposition the vessel and pushed the throttle forward. The Auxiliarist taking the photo was not able to react in time and was thrown from the vessel. The PIW came to the surface and was disoriented and had difficulty maneuvering. A PWC facility came alongside the PIW with a rescue device and assisted them back to the vessel. With help from the coxswain and crew, the PIW was able to climb the ladder and onto the swim platform. Time in the water was ten to fifteen minutes…*

The reality is that nearly all MOB events are totally preventable, and there are things the crew should do together to prevent them. It all starts even before the patrol with a self-assessment of your physical capabilities and the particulars of that facility. Can you adequately work on that facility or would a larger boat be more appropriate for you? Be honest with yourself.

On the patrol day, a pre-underway briefing should highlight location of handholds, rules about going forward, and any other particulars. On my facility, there are two cutout areas on either side where the railing is lower and only at knee height. I highlight these to the crew before EVERY patrol.

We've all heard "one hand for yourself, one hand for the boat" – you should always maintain three points of contact, particularly when outside of the cabin. Use your hands and get low when moving about the cockpit. If you are reaching over the side while working you should have another crewmember hold your PFD from behind as an added safety precaution.

The coxswain's management and boathandling skills play a major part in mitigating the possibility of mishaps. Communication is key, and the helmsperson should always be announcing COMING UP, COMING DOWN, COMING ABOUT TO PORT, etc. to let the crew know of the upcoming maneuver. And announce it before you execute the change to give folks time to reach for a handhold if necessary. Good situational awareness of the surroundings means there would be less chance of being surprised by a hazard that would require a rapid evasive action.

When underway in forward gear, the pivot point of a boat is roughly one third of the boat's length back from the bow. That means that when you turn to starboard the stern swings to port quite rapidly, and anyone standing at the aft end of the cockpit could easily be ejected if not ready and holding something. When maneuvering to evade an object in the water it is generally safer to slow down quickly rather than throw the helm over. Sure, the crew might bump in to things on board but that's better than going over the side. Besides, remember the importance of the throttle in safety management – you should not be carrying more speed than necessary for the situation at hand to minimize surprises.

And finally – no jumping when approaching a dock! Even the smallest jump could turn out badly. I make sure crewmembers STEP off the boat while holding the rail in one hand and a dockline in the other – this should be mentioned in the pre-docking briefing you conduct just like for any other evolution.

## Cutterman's Corner

*Helpful Tips from Gary Kaplan*

Coast Guard Auxiliary Cutterman
Boat Crew Academy Instructor
District 11 NR Assistant Staff Officer - Operations (Training)

**Adding ASPECT to Your Sighting Reports**

By adding just one more parameter to your report of a vessel sighting, you will greatly improve the quality and usefulness of the information that you give to the coxswain. Adding ASPECT to your report will tell the coxswain not only where and how far away the vessel is, but it will also tell which way it is travelling.

ASPECT is the part of the other vessel's hull that you can see from your vantage point. If you see the bow of the other vessel, it is heading toward you. If you see the stern, it is heading away. This simple addition immediately informs the coxswain of which vessels must be kept under observation, and which may be ignored.

There are eight ASPECTS that can be reported, bow and stern ASPECTS, port and starboard beam ASPECTS, port and starboard bow ASPECTS and port and starboard quarter ASPECTS. Each provides an important piece of information that is usually overlooked when only bearing and range are reported.

A typical vessel sighting report might sound like this:

> Sailing vessel at 270 degrees relative, range 1000 yards, starboard beam aspect. This lets you and the coxwain know that your vessel and the sailing vessel are on parallel courses, and, that for now, no additional action has to be taken.

## News from the Field

*From ADSO-OP and SO-OP Division 3 John Hardin:*

**A closer look at the Nav. Rules** After passing the rigorous Nav Rules test, coxswains proudly possess an exceptional knowledge of the Rules. However, to gain an even deeper understanding of the Rules, check out the classic book FARWELL'S RULES OF THE NAUTICAL ROAD, by Craig H. Allen. It was first published in 1941 and is now in its 8th edition. My crew, FREEDOM, pictured below agrees that it's a great read.

In a previous report I discussed the day shape or anchor ball required for anchored vessels. However, I failed to indicate the size of these shapes. Per **Annex I, Section 84.06 Shapes of the Nav Rules,** anchor balls shall be black and shall have a diameter of not less than 23.6". However, vessels less than 39.4' may use shapes of "lesser dimensions but commensurate with" the vessel's length. I'm using a 12" diameter ball for my 18' facility.


John's "crew" FREEDOM enjoying FARWELL'S RULES OF THE NAUTICAL ROAD

## Reminders from our Operational Training Officer

Coxswains and boat owners should continue to request patrols and practice with AUXDATA II. BOSN2 Finkleson is working with the new OIA for Sector San Francisco. The more patrol requests the new OIA is able to see, the more familiar he will be when the missions open back up. If there are any AUXDATA II issues related to surface operations, please contact BOSN2 Finkelson directly.

One more reminder . . . . facility owners should upload into AUXDATA II photographs their facility's port bow, starboard bow, port quarter, and starboard quarter. You also need to upload a photo of your vessel's registration. Your flags and patrol signs must be displayed.

## Keeping Skills Sharp

**A big Bravo Zulu to Qualification Examiner Mark McLaughlin for creating a challenging navigation exercise.**

Here's the scenario (chartlets were included with this exercise):

You are on patrol in Carmel Bay south of Monterey. The sun goes down, and there is an electrical failure. Your GPS has been disabled. You have a visual sighting on a lighted buoy that is flashing 2.5 seconds. You hear a gong.

This exercise has several components.

1. What are the proper steps to take when there has been an electrical failure?
2. Assuming that you have some type of auxiliary power, chart your course back to base. (Provide course and distance for each segment.)

- Chart course to Pt. Pinos Buoy (Red Buoy, Flashing red 6 seconds, bell)
- From Pt. Pinos Buoy, chart course to Mile Buoy (Red Buoy, Flashing 4 seconds, bell)
- From Mile Buoy, chart course to the end of the Coast Guard break wall (Sight beacon occulting 4 seconds, horn)
- You are home

3. Is there any other way to get back to the marina?
4. Assuming you are able to maintain 8 kts, approximately how long will it take for you to return to base?
5. What steps do you take at the end of this patrol?
6. What could have been done to prevent this situation?

There were three exemplary responses to this exercise. It's extremely educational to read these responses and then compare with how you would have managed the potentially dangerous situation.

**Responses:**

**From Commodore Maddox:**

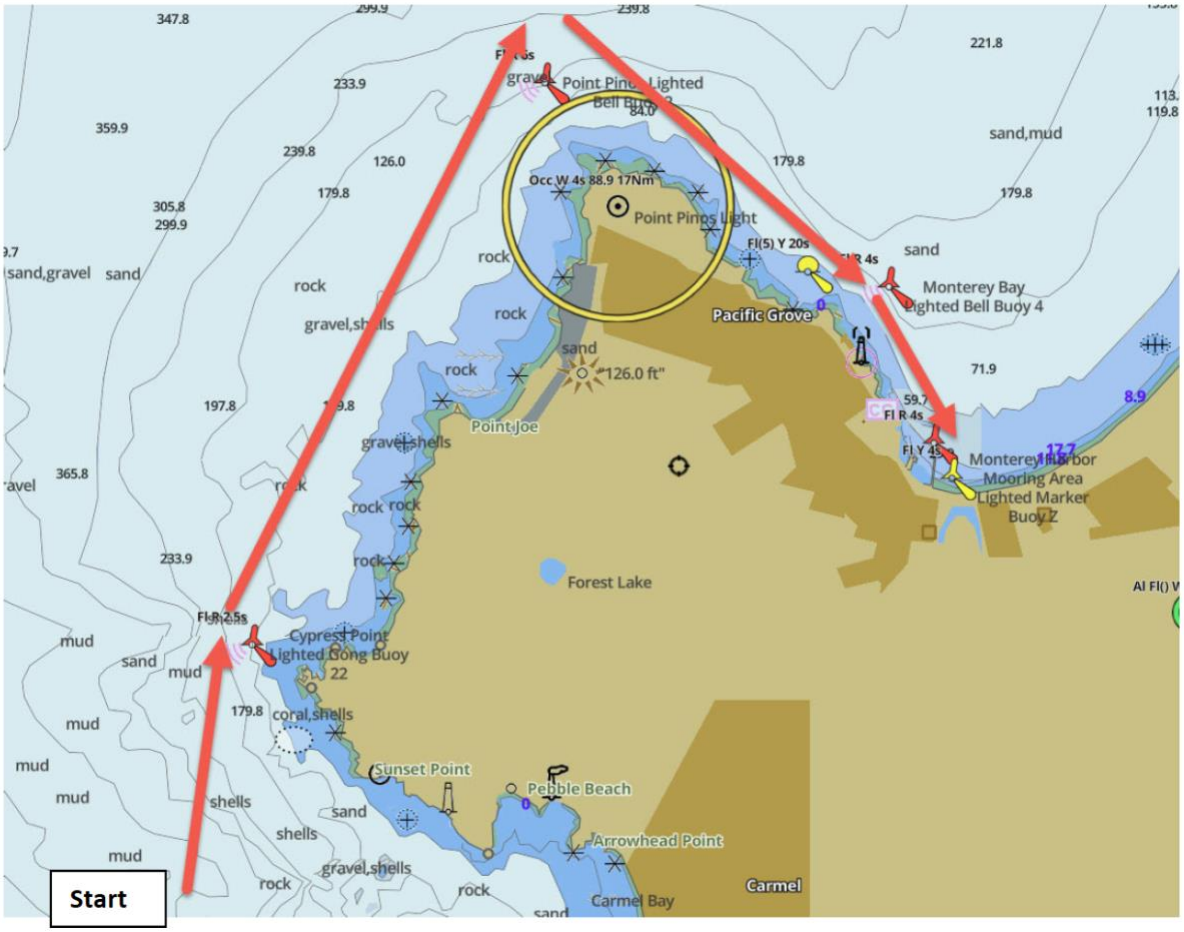
1) Steps to take for electrical failure.
   a) Make the anchor ready
   b) Notify controlling station.
   c) Check circuit breakers and fuses. Reset or replace if blown.
   d) Check battery connection. Tighten if loose.
2) Since the buoy off Cypress Point is visible, it probably is not more than 3 NM distant. a. Establish a danger bearing on R "22" _Fl R 2.5s Gong of NLT 340 (327M). If the initial bearing to the light is less than 340, then proceed westward,

avoiding The Pinnacles and breakers to the west until the bearing is greater than or equal to 340. This danger bearing will also avoid the rocks near Cypress Pt.

a) The course on the chart is 340, distance to the buoy is 2.9 NM = 21.8 minutes @ 8.0 knots. See Figure 1.
b) Second leg to R "2" _Fl R 6s Bell, course 027 (014M) distance 4.3 NM = 32.3 minutes @8.0 knots. See Figure 2. There is a high probability that R"2" _cannot be seen from R"22" _and you must navigate with great care until the bearing of Pt Pinos light exceeds 055. If the depth finder wakes up, you can stay outside the 10 fathom curve otherwise you need to break out the lead line and put a crewman in the chains. If you get into kelp, the current has pushed you into danger and an immediate course change to the NW is needed. An alternative would be to depart R"22" _on course 011 for 12 minutes and when Pt Pinos light bears 055 change course to 035 (direct to R"2"). This would add 1.5 minutes to the time but keep well clear of Point Joe.
c) Third leg course 090 until Pt Pinos light bears 180 (0.56 NM from R"2") = 4.2 minutes @ 8.0 knots.
d) Forth leg course 127 to light R"4" _2.3 NM = 17.3 minutes @ 8.0 knots.
e) Fifth leg course 162 to breakwater 1NM = 7.5 minutes @ 8.0 knots.

3) The direct course from R"2" _to R"4" _is shorter but gets way too close to the rocks north of Pt Pinos and into shallow water. I would not take that course. Much safer to go east from R"2" _util Pt Pinos light bears 180.
4) 21.8 + 32.3 + 4.2 + 17.3 + 7.5 = 83.1 minutes = 1 hr 23 minutes
5) Determine cause of failure. Take corrective action.
6) MAINTENANCE, MAINTENANCE, MAINTENANCE. REDUNDANT SYSTEMS. Use the GPS app on the cell phone.

**From Commodore Connell:**




From Carmel Bay, head (015) 2.12 nmi to Cypress Pt Buoy

From Cypress Pt Buoy, head (033) 4.81 nmi to Mile Buoy
From Mile Buoy, head (117) 3.18 nmi to Monterey Bay Lighted Red Buoy 4
From Monterey Bay Red Buoy 4, head (160) 1.16 nmi to CG Break Wall

1) Steps for electrical failure:
    a) Notify Boat Crew of situation
    b) Check for navigational hazards or other vessels in the vicinity
    c) Display backup light source and/or use sound signals as necessary
    d) Assess quickly possible hazard or damages on vessel which caused the breakdown
    e) Inform CG Radio Guard of the situation and plan
    f) Use charts or backup GPS to plot course and speed to waypoints

**From Hannalore Maddox . . . some excellent reminders about Radio Communication:**
The first part assumes that when I spotted the lighted buoy in the dark distance, I made for it at speed. I spotted the second buoy which seemed to be in the general direction of home and corresponded to the position and distance, according to the chart. I made for it at 8 knots and it took me half an hour to get there, a 4-mile stretch. From there, I checked the chart and found the next buoy. I looked in the indicated direction and saw the buoy that turned inward toward the northeast. At 8 knots, that leg took 20 min for the 2 1/2 miles. From there, also according to the direction of the buoy on the chart, I was able to make out the buoy on what was, no doubt, the buoy on the CG breakwater wall, and, slowing down to approximately 5 knots, we made for that buoy. At that speed; it took us 20 minutes to come in. All of this trip was verified by my on-deck charts, with each point verified by the designation of each successive buoy and spotting next buoy as advertised.

Having good radio manners, we called the station from the 2nd buoy and told them we had an electrical break-down, we politely requested to moor at their dock. We would be coming in in about 45 minutes. Permission was granted.

When we reached the wall 45 minutes later, we again called the station, told them we were at the wall and asked where they would like us to moor our electrically-challenged boat. We were given instruction which were followed explicitly. When we were moored, we called the station by radio and told them we were **safely** moored and requested permission to come aboard. Permission was granted.

So, as far as the navigation of the mishap is concerned, once we arrived at the first buoy that we had spotted and (roughly) identified by its characteristic flashing, and verified by its marking, when we got there; we saw the second buoy which was 4 miles to the NW. We verified this buoy against the chart. The 3rd buoy was 2 1/2 miles to the NE, turning inward to the Monterey Harbor, according to the chart. The 4th buoy was 1 NM in a still more easterly direction and approaching the CG anchorage wall, also according to the chart.

**Thank you very much Commodores Maddox and Connell!**
**Thank you Hannalore!!**

**End of Report**