



## U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

### District Eleven North Region DISTRICT STAFF OFFICER COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

January 4, 2021

To: Dean McFarren

Cc: Curtis Han

Cc: District Board and Staff, ADSO-SO CM

From: Larry Stanton DSO-CM

#### HIGHLIGHTS/"3 UPS":

1. D11 CC requested an Auxiliary response to an inland EPRB (San Jose area). Desmond Thorsson agreed to respond and quickly located the device. See attached report.
2. AUX OP CM course is going well.
3. Ventrilo VHF link is working well. I will send out invitations to SO-CM team in an attempt to have at least one member from each division participate in our weekly net.

#### Highlights/ DOWN:

1. Mt Diablo repeater is still down. We are attempting to gain access to the security fencing around the repeater hut. This is CG controlled. The system failed following a restoration from CH 16 to normal mode. The radio gear is approximately 20 years old and the batteries are likely worn out.

#### **ADSO Reports:**

1. CM-Dep-Vanderhyde- Rob has officially retired from our program. Carol Paz has graciously agreed to step in as DDSO-CM. Welcome Carol.
2. ADSO-ARMS-Firehock: Supporting testing of Ventrilo system, no ARMS report. End of report.
3. ADSO-ACV Busch- No activity. Attending Aux Op Cm course.
4. ADSO-Simmons- No activity. Planning to meet with Sta. Rio Vista to discuss potential EM-CM training with station.
5. ADSO-CC Scholz- Work continues with planning for web based training event 1-15/16. The program will cover the VARA digital modem that will be used in support of digital communications exercise this spring. The training link should be found on the district calendar.
6. ADSO-CM UTAH- WILLIAMS- Participating in HF net.
7. ADSO-MT Maddox-No report
8. ADSO-CM-AA Farmner- Net control for local division radio net.

9. ADSO-CM CC/RDF Thorsson-Responded from Treasure Island at 1200 hours local time to a report of an EPRIB Activation over land in a neighborhood in San Jose, CA.

At 1300, I arrived in the vicinity of the last reported location but was not able to hear a signal. Began driving a spiral pattern through the neighborhood out from the initial position and received a hit on the 121.5 MHz beacon shortly after.

1330, Localized the signal to a house in the neighborhood using radio direction finding equipment.

Contacted a person at the home who is a commercial fisherman. He was initially unaware of a potential activation, but soon remembered that a spare, older EPIRB unit from a boat he had purchased in the past was stored in the backyard of the residence. I could hear the beacon deactivate as the contact went to retrieve the device. According to the owner, this device had been stored in a plastic bucket which filled with water during the recent rain storms, triggering the alarm. Serial number on the device was confirmed with the D11 Command Center as the device in question. Owner surrendered the obsolete device to me and I rendered it inoperable.



A.J. "Desmond" Thorsson  
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary  
District 11 North, Assistant District Staff Officer - Communications

10. ADSO-CM-TK Sellstrom- Planned site visit to Mt Diablo 1-7-22 to investigate system failure. Working with LCDR. Jojola on access to site. A report will be filed on completion of the investigation.

## SO Reports/FSO Reports:

Division 1-SO-PAZ\_–

### Highlights/Topics:

### Details:

### FSO Reports:

Flotilla 12:No Report received.

Flotilla 14: Report on file.

Central Marin Mobil 3 and Novato Mobile 1 participated in Monday Radio Nets.

Novato Mobile 1 continues to be the AWO on Saturdays and Central Marin Mobile 3

AWO on Tuesdays

One member just completed the TCO.

Flotilla 17:No report received.

Flotilla 19:Report received. Participated in Monday night Nets. No call outs.

### Projects:

### Goals and Objectives:

Flotilla 14: Goal to add one more Radio Communicator

Division 3 SO-STANTON

3-1 No report filed.

3-3- No report filed.

3-5 – Highlights

\* The CG Crew had their **Christmas Party** on the 17<sup>th</sup> at the Station. Good time had by all. My wife, **Joyce**, particularly liked the “Pie in the eye” fund raiser event in which the highest bidders get to throw a pie at selected individuals. Not me thank goodness.

\* **Auxiliary Food Service** made a great show now that they are back on duty after a Nationwide standdown. **Nancy & Tommy Holtzman, Linda Haynes, Patti Mcshwain and Steve Allen** provided a marvelous lunch and dinner for the Station’s crew on **Christmas Eve**. Turkey, ham, Steve’s famous “Road kill” Chili, cornbread, mashed potatoes, vegetables and dessert. Enough to last the crew for their weekend duty. **BZ Food Service Division three**. This marks the 13<sup>th</sup> year this tradition has

happened since 2007 when Steve Allen and I started it and did it for 07 years before the Auxiliary took over.

\* The 05 newly assigned personnel have all passed the AOR test and the Watchstanding Board. Now they are into Boat Crew training. I'm taking a break.

\* The Station supported the **Stockton Parade of Lights** on the 4<sup>th</sup> with a RBS29 leading the parade and the **Rio Vista Parade of Lights** with a trailered RBS29. Station unable to support the **Sacramento Parade of Lights** on the same date due to crew limitations.

\* **Ensign Cavanaugh** departed for Sector Mobile with his wife and two children towing his boat. I remember those days. He will lead a team performing safety inspections on ships coming into the port. Another excellent Coastie off to bigger and better things.

\* Gave Station tour to a new member **Mike Smith Flotilla 5-3** on the 8<sup>th</sup>. We discussed Radio Watchstanding duties and how to obtain the rating. He and **Kit Galvin, Flotilla 5-3 Commander**, stopped by the Station with a ham and other goodies on the 16<sup>th</sup> and met with **Chief Bennett** and **BM1 Montoya**. Auxiliary are always welcome.

### Activity Details:

\* CG Station Rio Vista conducted **06 SAR cases** during the last 30 days. The average December SARs over the last 15 years is 12. The most SARs conducted by the Station in one month was 70 in July 2009. The Station conducted **03 vessel boardings**. The average December boardings for the last 09 years is 12. The most boardings conducted in one month by the Station was 149 in September 2015. Low activity due to **Holiday Routine** with minimum staffing (OOD, SAR crew and two Watchstanders each day) so the rest of the crew could go home on leave to see their folks. I helped a little.

\* Attached reports for **Station SAR** activities since 2007 and **Boarding** activities since 2013. It's a busy place. It appears COVID-19 and associated "reactions" have added to the slowdown in recreational boating activity in the Delta. It remains to be seen if this reverses after COVID becomes tiresome to the boating public and the drought continues

\* Stood 13 days of **Radio Watchstanding (20B)** at the Station for a total of 86 hours. In 2021, since April 16<sup>th</sup>, stood 109 days of Radio Watch for 709 hours with 08 SARs.

### Continuing Notices

\* **The Station has permanently schedule two days per month for two boat drills with the AUX facilities in Div 3, 5 and 10 in Station's AOR.** The days are the second Wednesday and the third Saturday. These are now included on the Station's training calendar. Any facility owner or Coxn who wishes to participate, call **BM1 Montoya at 707-374-2871** or me at 707-529-2152 a few days in advance to schedule a meeting time and place with the Station's boat.

\* **Auxiliary are always permitted on the Station in uniform (ODUs).** An updated, approved Risk Assessment Form (ANSC-7101 rev02-21) on file at DIRAUX is all that's required. A mask on Station is required indoors when within 6 feet of another even with a completed COVID-19 vaccine. **Give me a call to arrange a group tour. I'd love to show you around. Cell (707) 529-2152 or Station (707) 374-2871.**

\* **Onsite interactions with CG Station personnel** are highly recommended and sought for any excuse you can think of. Radio Watchstanding is a recommended approach I've used over the past 14 years. It will pay big dividends for the Station and yourself.

### **Current Projects:**

\* **Auxiliary Unit Coordinator (AUC)** for CG Station Rio Vista for D11

\* Working with **Lisa Curtis** of Flotilla 5-3 on **Flotilla Station tour** and lunch.

\* Working with **Doug MacPherson** on **CGS Rio Vista 2022 Boating Season Kick-off Event.**

### **Challenges:**

\* To continue to be optimistic about the **future of the Auxiliary** in the Delta.

\* To obtain more active **AUX facilities** in the Station's area of responsibility.

\* To get AUX members certified as **Radio Watchstanders** at Station Rio Vista.

### **Agency Interactions:**

\* Participated as the AUX representative in the Station's monthly **DOIT (Delta Officers Intelligence Team)** meeting on the 3rd. Invited participants include; Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Yolo and Contra Costa county sheriff marine divisions, Port of Stockton and Port of West Sacramento PDs, Fish and Wildlife, CG Sector San Francisco Command Center and Sector Intelligence, Cal Boating and Waterways, Cal Guard, Delta Protection Commission, Assemblyman Jim Frasier's office.

\* Among Items discussed were: **San Joaquin and Solano Marine Divisions** are awaiting Federal Funds to cleanup the derelicts; dredging ops at mouth of Turner Slough and San Joaquin River has insufficient lights and signs on 50 feet of pipe. **Sector** put out SMIB; Five County **Fire Depts and Rio Vista Fire** will be invited to all future DOIT meetings beginning next month on the 5<sup>th</sup> per **Station OIC.**

### **My Goal and Objective for the month:**

\* To be relevant in my old age.

**Steve H**

# STATION SAR ACTIVITIES

	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Month Average 15 yrs
JAN	15	12	14	14	10	17	7	9	10	14	12	5	4	3	7	11
FEB	16	10	13	17	14	16	12	6	10	7	11	6	4	6	1	10
MAR	21	11	20	24	16	16	15	6	9	12	9	7	10	4	17	13
APR	37	23	34	23	32	20	17	12	13	9	7	4	9	3	17	18
MAY	40	34	50	41	25	28	22	20	19	15	22	12	11	12	31	25
JUN	42	27	45	49	35	36	13	19	11	18	24	22	19	18	16	26
JUL	44	54	70	22	42	34	25	17	18	28	28	17	24	13	26	30
AUG	41	47	61	30	39	38	16	11	15	20	13	16	17	15	13	26
SEP	31	28	40	36	36	26	13	7	11	26	13	9	24	10	17	22
OCT	17	32	23	26	20	18	13	8	11	10	7	9	6	16	11	15
NOV	16	25	21	14	22	7	16	7	5	7	6	8	8	2	10	11
DEC	14	19	12	20	10	15	13	12	10	10	5	3	8	16	6	12
TOTAL	334	322	403	316	301	271	182	135	142	176	157	118	144	118	168	211 Total 3169

# STATION BOARDING ACTIVITIES

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL	MONTH AVR
JAN	5	31	54	33	27	9	1	14	12	186	20
FEB	8	38	41	27	24	29	12	23	24	226	25
MAR	3	68	62	31	29	8	9	2	87	299	33
APR	4	64	44	53	31	10	30	0	66	302	33
MAY	4	74	50	52	29	18	11	0	43	281	31
JUN	7	31	40	61	18	29	12	0	33	231	26

L	22	45	34	62	10	28	28	16	65	310	34
JG	12	88	60	73	25	18	11	15	31	333	37
P	35	72	149	75	20	25	12	9	46	443	50
CT	24	68	58	37	12	15	17	12	30	273	30
DV	33	64	59	39	11	10	20	28	15	279	31
EC	16	18	32	38	12	7	7	18	3	148	19
TOTAL	173	661	683	581	248	206	170	137	452	3311	362

3-10 Sellstrom- Sellstrom, Lay and Stanton Assisting in teaching Aux Op CM course.

Division 5- SO-Sumner- No report filed.

Division 6-SO- Wormington – No report filed.

Division 7- SO-Farmer –Weekly VHF division net.

Division 8-No report filed.

Division 10- No report filed.

Division 11- Bruce Thee completed move to new home in D13. He is working on transferring to the new unit. Bruce will stay on as WCA Administrator. Bryce Leinan will be assuming the responsibility of Div 11 SO-CM. Welcome back Bryce.

Division 12- Rob Torio-Nothing to report.

**CHALLENGES/OBSTACLES/OPPORTUNITIES:**

1. Meet all SO-Cm members.
2. Increase TCO operators.
3. Get Diablo and south bay systems back on air.

**Goals:**

Promote a high level of reliable communications services to the Coast Guard and USCG-AUX using VHF, HF and digital modes (fixed and mobile). This goal can be achieved by doing the following:

Long term:

1. Increase number of HF stations in D11N. PCA Fair demonstrations.
2. Promote VHF nets in each division, voice and digital modes. When realistic, each division should initiate VHF net utilizing available frequencies.

Short term:

1. Hold large and small scale communications exercises to enhance training of members.
2. Train with gold side communications team. Planned training includes Radio Direction Finding, HF and VHF field training exercises within next 8 months.

**PHOTO GALLERY:**

See attached EPRB photo.