



**USCG Auxiliary District 11 North - Surface Operations Report
August 2022**

To: COMO Dean McFarren, District Commodore
 Curtis Han, District Chief of Staff
 District 11 North Board & Staff
 From: COMO Wally Smith, District Staff Officer – Operations (DSO-OP)

This report covers D11N surface activities for the month of July.

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Check Ride Due Dates – Updated
2. OPTREX Calendar
3. OPTREX Planning
4. “MiniOPTEXs” will be approved on a case-by-case basis only.
5. ‘QE Corner’ – 2 inclusions this month
 - A. Committing Auxiliary facilities to events.
 - B. Importance of current photos & registration posted for OpFacs in AUXDATA.

DETAILS

1. ***Repeated with updated statistics:*** Boat crew and coxswains that last qualified in 2017, 2018, or 2019 are due for check rides this year. As of 31 July 2022, the number of members due for check rides this year stands at 105 not including initial qualifiers. Of this number, 53 are in REYR / REWK status and may not be seeking requalification. Please see the “QE Checkride Due Dates Report” as of 31 July posted on the Response / Surface page on the District website. If a member will not be seeking requalification, please let me know as soon as possible so that the Report may be kept accurate.

2. Upcoming OPTREXs currently listed on the District Calendar are below:

OPTREX CALENDAR - 2022

<u>Division</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
7	Jordanelle Reservoir	5-6 August
6	Santa Cruz	09-10 September
10	Millerton Lake	24-25 September

With the developments described in Item 1, it will be incumbent on all of us to accommodate as many candidates as possible. This may include not qualifying candidates this year if they are not due for a check ride ... at this time, there are zero requalifiers due in 2023 (no one qualified in



2020). Support will be needed from all quarters including facility owners ... more vessels may be needed to successfully host an OPTREX. If a Division has not already done so, it is recommended to reserve a date on the District Calendar if you are planning to hold an OPTREX in 2022.

3. We are in the “OPTREX Season”! Please contact our Chief QE Coordinator COMO Angelo Perata at least 30 days in advance ... more advanced notice is preferable ... and let him know how many candidates are expected, the dates QEs will be needed, and the venue. This information will provide for adequate staffing of QEs. Also, please be sure that all candidates are fully vetted prior to an attempt to qualify; this is the responsibility of the Flotilla Commander.

4. Revised Item: While we were hamstrung during the pandemic with severe surface operations restrictions, “miniOPTREXs” were a great way to get a few members certified or recertified in the boat crew program. At the Qualification Examiner (QE) meeting at D-TRAIN, this topic received a good amount of attention. It was agreed that miniOPTREXs would be approved only on a case-by-case basis and only for ‘good cause’ e.g., a new facility owner needs coxswain qualification, or there is a crew shortage in a particular area and a couple of check rides are necessary to get facilities underway. Well, we now have ‘good cause’ to schedule not only additional OPTREXs but also mini-OPTREXs as opportunities are presented to requalify a few crew or coxswains ... it doesn’t take a lot ... a couple of boats, legal crew, and a QE or two. Also keep in mind that 31 December is the cut-off date for requalification but also be advised that planning for an event in early October is “iffy” due to the Federal fiscal year ending on 30 September, and then Fleet Week, and then Changes of Watch begin, and so does deteriorating weather!

QE Corner

5. The Qualification Examiner Corner (Q.E. Corner) contains various tips on best practices that will be featured monthly (hopefully). Please send me your best tips / suggestions for an on-the-water evolution and ... maybe ... your write-up will show up here.

A. Committing Auxiliary Assets (Written by Terry Blanchard with minor edits by DSO-OP)

The relevant group in this is Sector, not DIRAUX or the OTO. Auxiliarists make this mistake from time to time and it is a serious one and the Aux doesn't do enough to make sure every member, not just coxswains or boat crew, understand what is at stake here. No one in the Aux has the authority to commit CG/Aux assets for any purpose. We are reimbursed with taxpayer funds and also have liability coverage when on an authorized mission. Only a duly authorized member of the CG can authorize commitment of government funds.

An example: A fireworks sponsor in Sausalito should have filed a Marine Event Permit Request with the appropriate department at Sector. When filling out the request there is a question



about requesting CG assets (which would include any Aux assets). Sector decides if the event is something they want to support, with CG assets, Aux assets or both, and if so, they should pass the word to most likely LT Kenney, our OIA. They could then pass that to Sue Fry, our ASC, who would usually reach out to me (Terry Blanchard as he coordinates facilities on the SF Bay), or they might copy Sue and ask me to find an asset. If the sponsor had contacted an Auxiliarist (you) first, they could remind them of the correct process, but they could also tell Sue or me and you would most likely be the one assigned after it is approved. Hopefully, Sausalito filed a request and maybe our AUXLOs could have checked to see if they asked for CG help. If they didn't file a permit request or didn't ask for CG help, then they might have a problem. The AUXLOs would deal with either of those situations. If a permit request is on file, but they didn't ask for CG/Aux assistance, I suppose Sector could still authorize you to help out, but it would be up to them.

I will make a further comment for the Aux. This can be embarrassing at times. Over the years, there were times when an Aux member who belonged to a yacht club, a rowing or swim club, a Scout organization, or another charitable group, wanted to conduct some water event. The Aux member wanting to help out, or sometimes just act important, would commit Aux resources (and sometimes CG assets), often boats, but it could be something else, to assist in some event. No marine event permit request would be submitted. The area coordinator would then hear about this situation and have to go back and say they couldn't do that. The member would then look like a fool when they said help would not be forthcoming as by then it was too late to go through the permit process. Understanding how this works I think should be something mentioned in the annual Ops Workshop for boat crew, and maybe made known to those not in the boat crew program via some other means. Maybe a mention that should be put in all annual workshops or in the BQ training process.

Note from DSO-OP – Thank you Terry!

B. Importance of current photos & registration posted for OpFacs in AUXDATA

Should there be a mishap involving an Auxiliary Operational Facility while under orders, especially if it results in injury or property damage, the Coast Guard will conduct a thorough investigation. Relevant information is available in the Operations Policy Manual as highlighted below:

D.2.a. Report of Loss or Damage: The Auxiliarist should report the loss or damage sustained or caused by an Auxiliary facility operating while assigned to duty to the OIA as rapidly as possible by any available means and the Director via the chain of leadership within 48 hours.

- Take steps necessary to safeguard the crew and damaged facility from further damage or loss without waiting for further instructions.
- Except as noted above, do not begin repairs (except in emergencies) until the investigation is completed and authorized to do so by the Coast Guard.



D.4. Catastrophic Failure: When there is a catastrophic failure to an Auxiliary facility, where the facility is damaged by reason of its use, such a claim may be payable for repair and replacement of the facility or equipment subject to the availability of funds.

An investigation MAY include a review of facility documentation included in AUXDATA II. It may be important ... very important ... that current photos and registration are on file so that current value may be more readily established. This is incumbent on the vessel owner and the vessel examiner who conducts the annual inspection and completes the current Form 7003 (Rev 03-22). Out of date photos may result in the Coast Guard depreciating the value based on amount of time passed since the last postings.

Bottom line: Keep the facility documentation current ... it's not that hard to do!

Division Reports

Division 1

From Nancy Marion, SO-OP

Highlights

1. **Division 1 OPTREX: Event Overview**
2. **Surface Operations-July 2022**

Details

1. Division 1 OPTREX Report: This year Division 1 decided to try an original approach to our OPTREX scheduling by holding the Training Evolutions and QE Check Rides on successive Saturdays. Both cycles of the OPTREX were held at Station San Francisco. Despite several equipment challenges, the event was an immense success, with all seven candidates completing their respective qualifications. Here is a brief breakdown of the event evolutions:

Saturday July 9th TRAINING EVOLUTIONS: Eleven Auxiliarist registered for Crew Training. The event was supported by the following four OPFACs and their crews:

- SEAHORSE, Coxswain Peter Shamray
- SILVER CHARM, Coxswain Terry Blanchard
- "76", Coxswain Bruce Martin-Trailerred from South Tahoe for the event
- SERVANT, Coxswain Jim Losi & Tommy Holtzman

Two training evolutions were launched over the course of the day, allowing everyone to get out on the water twice and on different OPFACs. QE Jim Losi was also able to complete the Oral Boards for our two Initial Crew Candidates, allowing us to launch our QE Check rides without delay on the following Saturday.



Communications for both days were coordinated by SO-CM Carol Paz, who arranged for the use of the ACV on both days. Carol provided OPCOM for our OPFACs and TCO training for several members throughout the two-day event.

Saturday July 16th, QE CHECK RIDES: Seven candidates registered for QE Check Rides, including two for Initial Crew Qualification and five for Crew Re-certification. These members represented three Division 1 Flotillas, and members from Divisions 4 and 6. Our QEs for the day included Paul Verveniotis (Lead QE), Steven McCann and Jim Losi.

While we planned to have three OPFACs for this evolution, OPFAC SEA HORSE encountered oil pressure issues on the way home from the July 9th event and repairs were not available in time for July 16th. This left us with OPFACs SILVER CHARM and SERVANT. Despite OPFAC SERVANT encountering intermittent engine issues throughout the day, through the exceptional efforts of Jim Losi and Tommy Holtzman, SERVANT was able to contribute the needed sea time to assure all QE Evolutions were completed.

Special Thanks go to the following individuals without whom the event would not have been a success:

- AUXLO Lt. Natasha Kenney, who was extremely supportive and helpful in securing the various approvals for the event, including arranging for DCAPT Bruce Martin to bivouac with his trailered OPFAC at StSF the night before the training event.
- ACV Drivers and Support staff John Brandenburg and David Sequeira.
- OPFAC Coxswains Terry Blanchard, Peter Shamray, Jim Losi, Bruce Martin, Tommy Holtzman, and their crews.
- SO-OP Carol Paz who managed OPCOM for both event days. Of course, the ACV went down for repairs the week leading up to the event, so Carol had her Land Mobile Unit as plan B. Fortunately, the ACV was repaired in time for the event. Carol also spent an additional hour working on radio procedures with a new Crew Trainee following the event.
- DCAPT Bruce Martin for graciously volunteering to bring his OPFAC “76” down from South Tahoe to participate in our training day. OPFAC “76” gave our crew members the opportunity to work on a twenty-four-foot RIB, broadening their OPFAC experience.
- Qualifying Examiners Paul Verveniotis (Lead QE), Steven McCann and Jim Losi.
- Jim Losi and Tommy Holtzman for their extraordinary efforts to get OPFAC SERVANT back up and running for the event and keep her running through the QE Check Rides.

Analysis of Two Saturday Event Structure: The purpose of the two successive Saturday event structure was to:

- Eliminating the need for our members to take time off from work and family demands for a Friday training day.
- Reduce transit time by avoiding peak rush hour traffic.



- Give our members an opportunity to recharge between on the water evolutions.
- Digest the lessons learned during the training day as they prepare to take their check rides.
- Give our OPFACs & crews a longer turn-around time.

Following the event, we sent an email to all participants, requesting their opinion on the benefits of the two successive Saturday schedule. All agreed that the new schedule was beneficial and made participation much easier for the reasons cited above. Many confirmed that they would not have been able to attend a training day on Friday due to work and family commitments.

The OPTREX was reviewed at the July Division 1 Board meeting, and all agreed that the new Two-Saturday OPTREX format should be our program standard for the future.

2. Surface Operations-July 2022

Flotilla 01-04: COX Peter Shamray with OPFAC SEA HORSE participated in the Division 1 OPTREX training evolutions on July 9th at Station San Francisco. While SEA HORSE had committed to the QE Evolutions on July 16th, due to engine issues he was unable to participate.

Flotilla 01-09: COX Terry Blanchard on SILVER CHARM had a busy month participating in the Division 1 OPTREX on July 9th & 16th (Photos attached), and the Division 12 OPTREX on July 22nd-23rd. SILVER CHARM also participated in Helo Operations in support of Air Station San Francisco on July 27th including a special guest crew member, Sector SF Command Master Chief Travis Cutler. (Photos Attached). SILVER CHARM ended the month with a PATON Patrol on July 30th.

Division 3

From John Hardin, SO-OP

No report submitted.

Division 4

From Paul Verveniotis, SO-OP

- Completed sign offs for one crew candidate that intends to attend the OPTREX in Richmond.
- Two crew requal candidates are preparing for checkrides at either the YBI or Richmond OPTREXs
- Jimmin Chang is working facility on completing outfitting and inspection of Willy Sham ray to become active again as an OPFAC.
- Several members who are interested in starting training for their crew qualification.

Division 5



From Lew Derfuss, SO-OP

Busy Month with SAR DOG joining Station Vallejo 29 foot vessel on the water at Port Chicago Memorial where name of CG member who died at Port Chicago Disaster where read. Division 5 participated with two AUXFACS SAR DOG and KOKUA II along with Division 3 AUXFACS Intrepid, Malo and a PWC. Additionally, a Civil Air Patrol Aircraft with a mixed crew of Civil Air Patrol and Cost Guard Auxiliary Air Crew, and two CG Station Rio Vista 29 Footers acted as target boats. This SAREX also included man overboard drills with a live CG member in the water. A very worthwhile event with plans to try and make it an annual event.

We conducted a successful OPTREX on 29-30 July where we initially qualified 4 new Initial Boat Crew, 3 Year Requalified 1 Coxswain and 1 Crew. Congratulations to new crew Dinia Paananen, Eric Paananen, Deborah Rocchild, and Michael Smith. Also successful 3 year Requalification of Coxswain Frank Capurro, and crew Douglas Twitchell

We plan on starting training of new members interested in Boat Crew Program with hopes of getting some of them ready for QE check rides along with addition Requals after the OPTREX. We are losing several Boat Crew Program Members and are seeking to train replacements. Job Security in OPS Training!!

Anyone interested in Boat Crew Operations or getting patrol time please advise Lew Derfuss SO-OP 5 with your contact information and I will try to find slots on upcoming patrols as space allows. Additionally, Tom Hurley FL 52 has been conducting patrols on Audrey L -so more opportunities. With our Operational Fleet of AUXFAC's Coxswains and Crews we need to work together to maximize opportunities and fill our AUXFAC on as many patrols as possible. Flotilla 53 sometimes have some open opportunities for crew and trainees. Take advantage of these opportunities. The OPTREX will be here before you know it so it is important for trainees to participate in as many patrols as possible when they are offered so you will be successful during QE check rides.

Division 6

From Mark McLaughlin, SO-OP
No report submitted

Division 7

From Mike Thompson, SO-OP

Highlights:

1. Get out on a patrol and practice
2. OPTREX is Aug 5-6 at Jordanelle State Park
3. The District Operations report

Details:



1. Practice and prepare for yourself while on patrol now for requalification with a QE in August (one month and a day away). The standard is that you must be proficient and able to do all tasks without prompting or hesitation. Here are suggestions to practice while on patrol.
 - a. Man (person) overboard
 - b. Side tow
 - c. Stern tow
 - d. Using your electronics
 - e. Search patterns
 - f. Anchoring
 - g. Navigation
 - h. Knots
2. Our OPTREX is Aug 5-6 at Jordanelle State Park. We have 8 coxswains and 7 crew the need requalification check ride. **Flotilla commanders, please find out who is if any in your flotilla members are currently planning on going for a New qualification.** You will need to make sure they have done all the prerequisites and get their name sent into Diraux for vetting, pre-reqs found [HERE](#). Please encourage them to get out on the water as much as possible.
3. The District Operations report is an important way to get information on all things operations that are coming up in our District. [Here](#) is the link to the current and the past reports.

Division 8

From Dave Johnson, SO-OP

No report submitted

Division 10

From Rod Rollins, SO-OP

No report submitted

Division 11

From Tom Henderson, SO-OP

No report submitted

Division 12

From Jim Losi, SO-OP

HIGHLIGHTS

- **DIV12 Surface Operational OPFACS & STATUS – No Change From February**
 - (1) There were two patrols conducted during the month of July.
- OPFAC SERVANT participated in the Div 1 and Div 12 OPTREXs on:



- a) Saturday, 9 July 2022, and;
- b) Saturday, 16 July 2022
- c) Friday, 22 July 2022 and;
- d) Saturday, 23 July 2022
- Progress is being made in repairing OPFAC SERVANT. The two new Honda 150hp engines should be available for installation during the month of September or October.
- New Boat Crew Trainees
 - a) Jean-Pierre Carjuzaa
 - b) Robert Boboc
 - c) Sangkhom Sayphrarath
 - d) Mark Evans (on his own boat)
 - e) Jeff Grave
 - f) Bob Torio
 - g) Stephen Bradon
 - h) Ben Harrison
- Virginia Luchetti of Flotilla 12-91 is working towards her coxswain renewal and getting out of REYR. She has made very steady progress and will be ready during Fleet Week.
- **Patrol Order Requests**
 - a) All orders are delayed until OPFAC SERVANT is back in operation.

2) **2022 Goals and Objectives**

- a) We have started the process of planning check rides utilizing the miniOPTREX model for members in Div 12 and Div 1. As of today, we have three members, two in each Division who wish to become coxswains and seven members who wish to have boat crew check rides.
- b) We are hoping to have guest rides for prospective new members to the Auxiliary and for existing members who wish to join boat crew operations.
- c) Operational Activities:
 1. PATON Patrols
 2. Fleet Week – West TARP Boat
 3. Kite Surfer Safety Patrol with Station Golden Gate
 4. Training – Div 12 members with a focus on new boat crew members
 5. Joint Training with Station Golden Gate and Station San Francisco
 6. Joint training with Active Duty Reserve (May)
 7. Engage in general MOM/Training patrols on a regular basis
- **2022 OPFAC Maintenance**
 - a) SERVANT
 - a. New Honda 150hp engines ordered on 19 APR 2022.
 - b. New bottom paint with date 23 May 2022.

• **AQUAMARINE – AIR STATION SAN FRANCISCO (Black Out Period)**

OPFAC AQUAMARINE has been working with the rescue swimmers from Air Station San Francisco @ YBI providing them with essential training on sailboat platforms in rescue



situations. Virginia Luchetti even taught the rescue swimmers how to sail the boat in the event the rescue swimmers had to operate a sailboat in certain rescue situations. Active Duty crews have expressed their appreciation to Virginia and her crew for this essential and important training.

Projects

- Check Ride Program for coxswains and boat crew members and trainees
- Recruiting members with prospective OPFACs

Future Activities

- Running maintenance on OPFAC SERVANT

Challenges

- Allocation of time with only one OPFAC and many requests
- Demands from members requesting check rides earlier in the year rather than the 4Q21.

Goals and Objectives

- Get as many members as possible ready for their check rides.
- Training excellence and mission excellence.

**** END OF REPORT ****

Respectfully submitted,
COMO Wally Smith, DSO-OP



SEMPER GUMBY!

BONUS MATERIAL BELOW

ANOTHER DAY IN PARADISE!



25 June 2022 – Santa Cruz, CA – OpFac 301219 (C.R.A.F.T. Moment) moored at the Fuel Dock with the all-women crew on deck consisting of (l. to r.) Gwen Hammer, Ingelise Rowe, Jane Smith, Mary Kirkwood, and Cassandra Mani, and coxswain Wally Smith (4th from left).

HELO OPERATIONS IN SUPPORT OF AIR STATION SF 27JUL2022



Helo Ops, from Left: Sector SF CMC Travis Cutler, COMO Wally Smith, COX Terry Blanchard, Pete Gorenberg & Jim Losi.



Helo Operations 27JUL2022 from SILVER CHARM

DIVISION 1 - OPTREX PHOTOS July 2022



OPFAC "76": From Lf to Rt: David Bell and Mary Kirkwood (01-04), Lilli Ferguson (01-02), Coxswain Bruce Martin



OPFAC SEA HORSE conducting stern tow with OPFAC '76"



DIV 1 OPTREX July 2022: OPFAC SERVANT in tow by SILVER CHARM



DIV 1 OPTREX July 2022: Auxiliary Communication Vehicle (ACV) at Station San Francisco