



**USCG Auxiliary District 11 North - Surface Operations Report  
September 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 August.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

1. Increase in surface SAMA (Standard Auxiliary Maintenance Allowance)
2. Check Ride Due Dates – Updated
3. OPTREX Calendar
4. “MiniOPTEXs” will be approved on a case-by-case basis only.
5. ‘QE Corner’ 2 Items:
  - Get requests in for September orders in NOW.
  - Standardization of Line Handling Commands

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**DETAILS**

1. Starting in Fiscal Year 2023 (01 October 2022), SAMA for surface facilities will increase by 30%. This is the first increase in SAMA in many years!
2. ***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 August 2022, the number of members still due for check rides this year stands at 95 not including initial qualifiers. Of the 191 total of crew & coxswains, 46 (or 24%) are in REYR / REWK status and may not be seeking requalification. Please see the “QE Checkride Due Dates Report” as of 31 August 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.
3. Upcoming OPTREXs currently listed on the District Calendar are below:

**OPTREX CALENDAR - 2022**

<u>Division</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
6	Santa Cruz (Completed)	09-10 September
10	Millerton Lake	24-25 September

With the developments described in Item 2, 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.

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 October or November 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.

- **Item 1: IMPORTANT:** September is here and so comes the end of the Coast Guard fiscal year 2022 (30 September); 01 October marks the start of Fiscal Year (FY) 2023. Requests for patrols in the second half of September must be submitted no later than 15 September. For patrols happening in FY 2023, please hold off on submitting any orders for approval until further notice. Notice will be sent as soon as patrol requests are again authorized.
- **Item 2:** For several years, we have been working towards standardization of “Line Handling Commands” to assure that all on board a facility understand exactly the meaning of a command. The list of commands is posted on the District’s web site on the Response page. This information will be distributed to all Division Staff Officers – Operations with instruction to cascade to all members involved in Surface Operations.

(Report continued on next page)

## Division Reports

### **Division 1**

From Nancy Marion, SO-OP

### **Highlights**

#### **1. Surface Operations-August 2022**

#### **Details**

1. **Surface Operations-August 2022:** Terry Blanchard and crew on OPFAC SILVER CHARM participated in seven patrols in August:

- Five Wednesday Helicopter Patrols in support of Air Station San Francisco
  - Attached photos courtesy of Lou Sarto, 01-04
- A security zone patrol for the “2022 Alcatraz XL Escape from the Rock” swim on August 20<sup>th</sup>.
- A PATON patrol to check the 25 SFO Airport Security Zone buoys on August 22nd.

#### **Goals:**

- Rotating members into training patrols for OPTREX preparation and building underway hours.
- Providing training opportunities for our current crew members and initial qualification candidates.

#### **AUGUST OPERATIONS PHOTOS**



COX Terry Blanchard at the helm with Gwen Hammer on forward watch.



Cassandra Mani signals the Helo flight mech that the Water Pump is onboard.

### **Division 3**

From John Hardin, SO-OP

**Subject: Even When Nothing Happens, Something Is Happening**

The Auxiliary tries to patrol the upper Sacramento River every Saturday and Sunday during the busy boating season. Most of the time nothing seems to happen which can bring into question the value of the patrols.

But even when nothing happens, something is happening. Recently, the P/V CAPITOL HORNBLOWER, a commercial passenger vessel, observed a PIW in an uncommon location. Due to her draft, high freeboard, size, and limited maneuverability, the Hornblower vessel was not able to offer assistance. However, being accustomed to seeing auxiliary vessels patrolling regularly in the area, they notified the Auxiliary directly of a “swimmer” in the river.

While it’s not particularly noteworthy for people to enjoy a dip in the river on a hot summer day, the Auxiliary never the less responded to the call. Upon locating the PIW, it quickly became evident that he wasn’t just a “swimmer”. Due to his weakened condition, he was having great difficulty staying afloat.

The Auxiliary crew was able to bring him on board and provide first aid and comfort. During our conversations with him, he stated he was depressed and had entered the water attempting suicide. We promptly called “911” and arranged for him to be handed off to the Sacramento Fire Department at the public docks in Old Sacramento.



We hope our “swimmer” has a successful recovery in every sense of the word. We’re also reminded that our routine patrols are important and that a “swimmer” can easily be transformed into something much more serious.

#### **Division 4**

From Paul Verveniotis, SO-OP

Division 04’s newest (and nicest) facility SENSE THE MOMENT has relocated from Redwood City to Brisbane Marina to be closer to the Central Bay and its greater need for patrols.

SENSE THE MOMENT is participating in an Alcatraz swim patrol on Monday 05SEP.

Plans are also being made for upcoming Fleet Week activity.

#### **Division 5**

From Lew Derfuss, SO-OPSO-OP 5

No Patrols due to both SAR DOG and KOKUA II being out of service and other commitments.

SAR DOG sunk and capsized on 30 July during the Division 5 OPTREX at the Station Vallejo floating dock. On 13 Aug 2 divers I hired, righted, refloated, and dewatered SAR DOG with CG personnel and myself present. After the source of water was located, a scupper that broke off, and the hole was plugged, Tom Hurley with a volunteer Good Sam crew towed SAR DOG to 9<sup>th</sup> street launch where it was trailered. CG personnel then performed a thorough inspection and released the vessel back to me to tow home. BRAVO ZULU !!! for the help

During the Division 5 OPTREX 29-30 July Station Vallejo moved into the new Station Vallejo. I have sent out multiple emails to those on the list of Requals due this year. Some Requals were completed at Division 5 OPTREX. Others may have or plan on QE check rides at other OPTREX’s, if you have or plan on completing check rides please advise me so I can update my list. We will work to set up a mini OPTREX after Fleet Week to help as many as possible to requal.

We also 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 Fleet Week or next Spring. We are losing several Boat Crew Program Members and are seeking to train replacements. Job Security in OPS Training!!

#### **Division 6**

From Mark McLaughlin, SO-OP  
Operational Facilities

**Sun Diver** Steve McCann  
24 patrol hours



**CRAFT Moment** Wally Smith

1 patrol

**Dolphin Dreams** Tracy Schultz

August 5 helo ops patrol

August 15 joint operation with Coast Guard Station Monterey and Naval Post Graduate School. Drone operations

**Division 7**

From Mike Thompson, SO-OP

**Highlights:**

1. Successful OPTREX
2. Get your orders in by September 15<sup>th</sup>
3. Labor Day Weekend
4. Our boating season is almost over
5. The District Operations report

**Details:**

1. Our OPTREX that happened on Aug 5-6 at Jordanelle State Park was very successful. We had 5 coxswains, 4 crew, and 2 PWC operators requalify. Congratulations to them and for keeping their skills up. The training and comradery were fantastic.
  - a. Special thanks to OTO Jared Esselman from D11S and our new OTO Thomas Perez for the training they did and for coming out to Utah to be with us. We really enjoyed getting to know you both and look forward to working with OTO Perez.
  - b. Thank you to our QEs; Como Angelo Parada, Como Wally Smith, Como Mike Williams, and Bill Stolz for taking the time to come out to qualify us.
  - c. Thank you to the Aux CU staff who provided the food.
  - d. A big Thank You to Utah State Parks for their support of the Auxiliary and to Jordanelle State Park for providing the group campsite and hospitality.
2. Please put in all your orders for the rest of the Federal fiscal year, which ends September 30<sup>th</sup>, by September 15<sup>th</sup>, otherwise you risk not having them be approved.
3. Labor Day weekend is our last busy weekend we will have. Get out on the water! Coxswains, please extend invitations for those who need time on the water to come patrol with you and get the experience of doing real assists and tows.
4. Our boating season is disappearing as rapidly as our daylight and water is. Make the most of it now, by continuing to get out on the water and practice things like line handling commands and skills while on patrol.



5. Please go out to the District website and read the current District Operations report. It is always full of important information on all things operations in our District.

### **Division 8**

From Dave Johnson, SO-OP  
Redding F39:

For the month of July we conducted 2 regular patrols on Whiskeytown and 5 moonlight kayak patrols.

Mendocino F87: No report

Crescent City F11: No report

Clear Lake F88: No report

### **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 by SERVANT during the past 30 days.
- Mark Evans, member of 113-12-91 had his boat inspected and approved as a facility. Adam Kovalevsky of the same Flotilla was the VE. We are hoping to have the very first patrol on Monday, 12 SEPT, in the Oakland Estuary.
- Adam Kovalevsky and I are planning a Boat Crew Academy Training weekend in the Fall for 8 members who have begun their initial boat crew training.
- Progress is being made in repairing OPFAC SERVANT. The replacement engine repair should be completed during the month of June.
- OPFAC SERVANT is in nonoperational status until the new engines arrive and are installed.



- **Patrol Order Requests**
  - a) None in process.
  
- 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 were ordered on 19 APR 2022.
    - b. New bottom paint with date 23 May 2022.
  
- **AQUAMARINE**
  - a) OPFAC AQUAMARINE will be participating in San Francisco Fleet Week as a security box asset.

### **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**



D11N's Operations Training Officer, CWO2 Thomas Perez, reviews the PEAACE model during the pre-underway briefing at the Division 6 OPTREX on 10 September.

Welcome aboard Mr. Perez!