



**USCG Auxiliary District 11 North - Surface Operations Report
May 2024**

To: COMO Curtis Han, District Commodore
 Jim Losi, 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 April 2024.

HIGHLIGHTS

1. OPTREX Calendar
2. Qualification Check Ride Status
3. REYR Status
4. DEEP DIVE into Added Tasks
5. BONUS MATERIAL

DETAILS

1. OPTREX Calendar
 Scheduled dates are listed below:

OPTREX CALENDAR - 2024

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Dates</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 3 | Sacramento Yacht Club | 01-02 June |
| 5 | Vallejo Public Marina | 14-15 June |
| Flt 55 | Oakland Yacht Club | 20 July |
| 11 | Lake Tahoe | 26-27 July |
| 10 | Lake Millerton | 03-04 August |
| 7 | Jordanelle Reservoir | 22-25 August |
| 6 | Santa Cruz | 06-07 September |
| 12 | Oakland Estuary | 08 September |

2. The most recent CHECK RIDE TRACKER Report dated 16 April is posted on the District webpage ... go to “Response”, then “Surface Operations” and enter your Member Zone for access. Currently due for requalifying are 27 members in 2024, 43 members due in 2025, 20 members due in 2026, and 11 due in 2027 (requalified this year) for a total of 101 members. Members with due dates beyond this year may request a check ride provided this does not impede those due this year. Please keep in mind that certification expires at the end of the year and not on the anniversary date of the last qualification/requalification check ride.



The number of recertification candidates does not include initial qualification candidates. Please let us know the number of total candidates ... including initial candidates and recertification candidates ... who will be vying for certification at your OPTREX. This will allow for the assignment of a proper number of Qualification Examiners (QEs).

3. As of 15 April, there are 83 members in “Required Yearly Not Met” (REYR), “Rework” (REWK), or “Not Certified – Trainee” status. This list is part of the Check Ride Tracker Report referred to in Item 2 above and includes members whose recertification check rides were due between 2019 and 2023; they are in the five-year window of not requiring a full re-do of the qualification PQS. *Please review this list carefully and let DIRAUX know of anyone not intending to continue in the surface operations program so that their name can be deleted and we can maintain an accurate record.* Please note that if anyone has a question on status i.e. why a member is in REYR, check with your IS officer.

4. DEEP DIVE into the Why’s”

The entry below was in last month’s DSO-OP Report:

There have been a lot of comments lately about the addition of various tasks to maintain currency in surface operations. Next month’s OPS Report will include a deeper dive into the “Why’s”. For now ... know that it is important that we train to the same standards as the Active Duty.

The “Why’s”

The Auxiliary is a force multiplier for the Coast Guard. It is no secret that the CG is operating at less than full staff and dwindling fiscal resources. It is also no secret that there are serious conflicts in the Middle East and the potential for the same in the Indo-Pacific. Should hostilities escalate and involve our armed forces, there is a strong possibility that Coast Guard active duty and assets ... mainly larger vessels and deployable units ... will be operating in theater, away from our homeland waters further depleting available personnel and facilities to operate domestically. That caution/concern has been voiced at several levels of leadership of the CG up and down the chain. Should assets and active-duty members be deployed, there is serious talk about the Auxiliary taking on the rolls to fill gaps at USCG Small Boat Stations and operate the units. The USCG Auxiliary was originally created when our Nation needed us so now is the time to prepare and be ready, Semper Paratus!

The Coast Guard must have trust in our abilities! Since the Coast Guard trains to the specifics in the “Standardized Drill Sheets”, so shall we. By improving our proficiency and training to these levels, there is a very real possibility that our domestic roles may be expanded exponentially! Utilizing the Drill Sheets should not be onerous. They simply specify tasks in more detail. It is what we have been doing but with a better description.

As noted in the March DSO-OP Report, *BOSN Perez has spent a significant amount of time and effort updating his web page. It is easy to find on the District website. Go to "DIRAUX", then "Operations Training", then "Response Surface Division Resources", then "Boat Crew & QE Resources". The last click will bring you to several folders including*



"Standardized Drill Sheets" and "QE Resources". Particular attention should be paid to the Standardized Drill Sheets since they contain the tasks that will be performed on a check ride. All of the revised/updated forms can be found here ... it is very important that all in the surface ops program become familiar with this information.

In addition to the Drill Sheets, we now have a requirement to complete ANNUAL CURRENCY MAINTENANCE TASK TRACKERs for Crewmembers, Coxswains, and PWC Operators. As noted above, the Coast Guard must have trust in our abilities. To maintain that trust, we must keep our skills sharp and the Task Trackers are a means to that end. The newest editions of the Task Trackers refer to the drill sheets for the various tasks to be performed annually. The new Task Trackers were published in February 2024 in the AUXILIARY TRAINING HANDBOOK (ATH 16794.51C). If one has a partially completed form that has tasks completed between 01 January and 01 March, those task completions may be transferred to the new forms. The Task Trackers can be found in the ATH as follows:

- Enclosure (4) Task Tracker, Crewmember ... Pages 91-92
- Enclosure (5) Task Tracker, Coxswain ... Pages 93-94
- Enclosure (6) Task Tracker, PWC Operator ... Page 95

Bottom line ... do we have new tasks and forms? YES, we do ... and they are important so that we may remain ready, relevant, responsive, and professional in our support of the Coast Guard. There is a need for the Auxiliary to step up our *Force Multiplier* capabilities in many mission areas as the scope of Coast Guard demands rapidly evolves in light of fiscal and geopolitical realities. Let's be ready to go out and multiply some forces!

5. BONUS MATERIAL – at the end of the Report

Division Reports

(Includes some editing for accuracy & brevity)

Division 1

From Nancy Marion, SO-OP

Highlights

1. Surface Operations-APRIL 2024

Details

1. **Surface Operations-APRIL 2024:** COX Terry Blanchard on OPFAC SILVER CHARM conducted several patrols in April including:



- a. April 6th: Qualifying check ride with all candidates recertifying. Thank you to QE Mark McLaughlin for supervising the patrol and to OPFAC SERVANT for participating as our target tow boat.
- b. April 11 & 25: Helo Hoist training in support of USCG Air Station SF.
- c. April 28: Regatta perimeter patrol in support of the “Boats without Barriers” rowing event in the Oakland Estuary.

COX Peter Shamray on OPFAC SEAHORSE was scheduled to participate in the qualifying patrol on April 6th, but engine issues prevented attendance. Repairs are ongoing.

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.

Division 3

From John Hardin, SO-OP

Here's my Div. 3 SO-OP Report - April 2024.

I am having challenges managing boat crew qualifications for Div. 3 crew. By managing, I mean helping crew stay current and by making sure all crew on patrol are qualified. I've found the chart below to be of great help. I'd be very interested in your thoughts.

Also, I've included a link to the NTSB report regarding a USCGAUX facility involved in a fatal mishap. There is so much to be learned here. One take-away is that everything we say and do on patrol can be can become very public when the honey hits the prop.

<https://www.nts.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Reports/MAR9601S.pdf>

Note from DSO-OP: The investigation report is from an incident that occurred 30 years ago in Alaska. It makes for interesting reading and there are lessons to be learned.

Division 4

From Kristan Verveniotis, SO-OP

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Two safety patrols were conducted on Facility Scout in support of Sequoia Yacht Club Wednesday night races in April.
2. Two members are making progress on crew and coxswain drill sheets and night requirements.
3. The OPS Workshop was presented at the Division 4 meeting in April by instructor Paul Verveniotis; 12 members attended – a few just for fun!



4. PPE Administrator completed inspections and updated records for members in three members from Flotilla 46 and Flotilla 43.

Division 5

From Lew Derfuss, SO-OP 5
No report submitted.

Division 6

From Mark McLaughlin, SO-OP
April 8 - Facility 321322
Helo Ops - Moss Landing/Monterey Bay
Worked with two helicopters from Air Station San Francisco



April 22 - Facility 321322
Helo Ops - Moss Landing/ Monterey Bay
Scheduled one helicopter from Air Station Monterey but helicopter recalled to base due to comms failure

April 28 - Facility 301219 & 231815 Two boat training
Santa Cruz/Monterey Bay

Division 7

From Paul Brown, SO-OP
To my knowledge, we have not yet commenced operations for the year.

Division 8

SO-OP - Vacant
No report submitted.

Division 10

From Doc Pierce, SO-OP
No report submitted.



Division 11

From Bill Stolz, SO-OP

No report submitted.

Division 12

From Jeff Grave, SO-OP

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Division 12 Operational Facilities (OPFACs)
 - a. SERVANT (241647) 24' Weldcraft Cuddy Cabin patrol boat
 - b. ODYSSEY (201386) 20' Fourwinds Open Bow power boat
2. April 2024 Surface Operations: Three (3) Surface Patrol Orders were requested and approved by OIA. One was cancelled. SERVANT completed two (2) patrol missions in support of Marine Observation, 3-year crew recertification exercises, Regatta safety zone support, and assigned two SAR cases by Sector SF.
3. On 06 APR, SERVANT participated in a mini-OPTREX conducting 3-year recertification check rides for several boat crewmembers, working two-boat operations with Div 1 SILVER CHARM. OTO BOSN Perez was observing onboard SERVANT.
4. On 28 APR, SERVANT was conducting a Regatta Safety Zone Support mission in the Oakland Estuary. Sector SF assigned SERVANT to a SAR (MISLE 1389782) to search for a shoreside fisherman reported missing, possibly in the water, along the Port of San Francisco piers shoreline. After two hours, no PIW was located (track line image below). Soon after, Sector assigned SERVANT to another SAR (MISLE 1389800) reporting a capsized vessel with two POBs in the San Leandro channel. While enroute, SERVANT was cancelled as vessel and persons were being assisted by local authorities.
5. A Div 12 mini-OPTREX is in the early planning stages for trainee check rides for July.
6. Div 12 OPTREX is calendared and in the early planning stages for 08 SEP 24.
7. As of 08 MAY, Division 12 members conducted 73.5 hours of surface operation missions under orders.
8. As of 08 MAY, Division 12 has three (3) certified Coxswains, seven (7) certified BCMs, one (1) Coxswain-in-training, and 3 (three) BCMs-in-training.



Figure 1: Purple track line on SERVANT's chart plotter while conducting SAR for missing fisherman. Photo Jim Losi 12-91

**** END OF REPORT ****

Respectfully submitted,
COMO Wally Smith
DSO-OP

SEMPER GUMBY!



BONUS MATERIAL (see below)



11 May 2024 - While on patrol in the vicinity of the Santa Cruz Wharf, OpFac 301219 (C.R.A.F.T. MOMENT) came upon a rather unusual "PATON"! ... we don't know either!!!!

