



**USCG Auxiliary District 11 North - Surface Operations Report
May 2021**

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

HIGHLIGHTS

1. The “Bulge” anticipated for QE Checkrides this year has been mitigated!
2. The annual 1-hour Surface Operations Workshop and the TCT Risk Management Refresher presentations are underway.
3. The number of boat crew members & coxswains due for requalification in 2021 totals 60, and in 2022 the number is 93.
4. OPTREX Calendar
5. The “QE Request Requirements” form is available on the Surface Operations web page under Response.

DETAILS

1. Per the ALAUX dated yesterday (11 May), *Effective immediately, all QE check rides that were last completed in 2018, 2019, and 2020 will have their task expiration dates extended by one year in AUXDATA II (e.g. if a check ride was last completed in 2018 and is due by the end of 2021, then the expiration date is extended by one year to 2022). QE check ride expiration dates will be updated in AUXDATA in the near future. **Bottom line, all check rides for requalification are pushed one year.*** This is a huge improvement in policy that eliminates the previous requirement of anyone who was due in 2020 was due in 2021 in addition to those already due in 2021; that number as of 10 May stood at 146! This “bulge” would have then reoccurred in 2024 and every third year thereafter.
2. Both the Ops Workshop and TCT Risk Management Refresher are required annually to maintain currency. Check the District Training Calendar for upcoming dates. Keep in mind that there are no pre-registrations necessary for the Ops Workshop; the number of attendees is unlimited. Advance signups are required for the TCT RM Refresher and class sizes are limited to eight; sign up with Ann Zocchi, DSO-MT.
3. Per the ALAUX, AUXDATA will be updated in the near future so a breakdown of number of candidates per Division is not yet “officially” available. Below is a spreadsheet indicating the number of coxswains and crew due this year for check rides, broken down by Division, from a report produced by our OTO, BOSN Dustin Finkleson:



Requalification Candidates – as of 11 May

<u>Division</u>	<u>Coxswain</u>	<u>Crew</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	0	2	2
3	4	2	6
4	2	4	6
5	2	3	5
6	2	6	8
7	6	5	11
8	5	7	12
10	2	2	4
11	0	3	3
12	2	1	3
	25	35	60

Note: These totals do not include candidates for initial qualification.

4. OPTREXs currently listed on the District Calendar are below:

OPTREX CALENDAR - 2021

<u>Division(s)</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
4	Port of Redwood City	31 July
7	Jordanelle Reservoir	6 – 7 August
3	Sacramento Yacht Club	14 August
11	CGSTA Lake Tahoe	28 August
6	Santa Cruz Harbor	11 – 12 September
Flt 55	CGSTA Bodega Bay	24 – 26 September
10	Millerton Lake	24 – 26 September
1	Loch Lomond YC, San Rafael	1 – 2 October
12	Marina Bay YC, Richmond	15 - 16 October

5. The “QE Request Requirements” document posted on the Surface Operation web page has been updated to exclude the requirement for being in an operational “bubble”. Please review it in its entirety prior to requesting a Qualification Examiner. Now that the “Bubbles” have burst and we are looking forward to OPTREX season, it is very important that all candidates are pre-vetted per the requirements and process as delineated.



Cutterman's Corner

Helpful Tips from Gary Kaplan
Coast Guard Auxiliary Cutterman
Boat Crew Academy Instructor
District 11 NR Assistant Staff Officer - Operations (Training)



Coming Aboard

Very soon after coming aboard Coast Guard Cutter ASPEN for my first day of training to qualify as a Coast Guard Auxiliary Cutterman, I realized that this was not going to be a pleasure cruise. It wasn't as if I was expecting that it would be, after all, completing 104 days aboard a cutter, 48 of which had to be underway days, and earning two qualifications, all within two years, was going to take a significant amount of effort.

I don't know what I was expecting, but I was not expecting that I would have to know the entire ship, and that I would begin by hand drawing schematic representations of each of the cutter's damage control systems. This, I soon learned, was a rite of passage for every new hand that came aboard. However, learning the ship was not a hazing. It was essential. Knowing the ship could save lives, and it could save the ship.

I downloaded and printed out copies of *The WLM Indoctrination Manual* and the *Inport Watchstander WQS*, which both became my constant companions.

The *WLM Indoctrination Manual*, over two hundred pages long, contained detailed information and photographs of every nook and cranny aboard. One had to know the entire ship in order to qualify as an Inport Watchstander.

Part of standing watch in port is making regular engineering rounds, checking and logging various temperatures, pressures and other important variables.

The *WLB Performance Guide for In Port Watch Stander*, is 159 pages long and contains mostly page after page of tasks that must be signed off. WQS is Watchstander's Qualifications Standards, as opposed to a PQS, Personal Qualification Standards.

WLB is the designation for 225' buoy tenders. The W designates a Coast Guard Ship, the L indicates a tender, and the B stands for buoy. The WLB does much more than tend buoys, it has been called the Swiss Army Knife of cutters.

There are three departments responsible for running and maintaining the ship, the deck department, the engineering department and the operations department, which included everything that was not deck or engineering. I was assigned to the Operations department, and my place, when standing in formation was between the chiefs and the warrants.



I had to learn the names of everyone in the crew, about 50 people, officers and enlisted personnel. This was easy as long as everyone wore their ODU blouse, but most did not, and wore either sweatshirts or coveralls while working. Just when I thought that I'd learned who everyone was, I was handed another challenge. People referred to each other by their rates. I would hear things like, "Go ask BM2 about that," or "CS3 is off today, can you help out in the galley?"

That was just the beginning.

Division Reports

(in their entirety)

Division 1

From Nancy Marion, SO-OP

Highlights

1. Virtual Crew Training Complete
2. Updated Requirements to Request QE Check Ride
3. Surface Operations update
4. Crew Operations Certification & REYR Policy
5. OPTREX Date & Venue Set

Details

1. **Virtual Boat Crew Training Complete:** Flotilla 01-04's Virtual Boat Crew Training Program is complete. We had a dozen members attend the various workshops, pulling from all four Flotillas in Division 1. I want to thank our Instructors for donating their time and talents to cover the following modules:
 - a. Steve Bustin-Navigation
 - b. Carol Paz & Alex Bennett: Physical Fitness, First Aid and Survival.
 - c. Kevin Luke-Communications
 - d. Alex Bennett & Nancy Marion-Fire Prevention & Marlinspike

And a big thank you to COMO Dale Fajardo, DCDR, for sponsoring the classes on the Division's zoom account and providing Division wide announcements of the classes.

2. **Updated Requirements to Request QE Check Ride:** The DSO-OP Wally Smith just circulated an updated list of requirements for anyone requesting a QE check ride for initial Crew or Coxswain certification or a re-certification. The additional items have



been developed with input from our OTO Dustin Finkelson and reflect policy overlays resulting from COVID-19. The additional items include:

- a. Filing a High-Risk Assessment Form with DIRAUX
- b. Coxswains must file an Assignment to Duty Request Form a minimum of one week before the event.

The full "QE CHECK OFF SHEET" has been circulated to all our FSO-OPs.

3. **Surface Operations update:** On April 17th, a two boat QE Check Ride was completed with Coxswain Terry Blanchard (01-09) on OPFAC SILVER CHARM and Coxswain Jim Losi (12-91) on OPFAC SERVANT. The event was the culmination of weeks of practice within two Operational Boat Crew Bubbles. The event went off without a hitch and 6 members of Division 1 were either initial qualified or re-qualified as Basic Crew and one member re-qualified as Coxswain. Many thanks to our two sponsoring Coxswains Terry Blanchard and Jim Losi for their tireless efforts and dedication to the Boat Crew program and our Members.

With the Coxswain re-certification of Renee Thomas (01-07) who had recently relocated into the D11N's AOR, a new crew has formed around OPFAC SEAHORSE II, owned by Peter Shamray (01-04). Renee and Peter are in the process of forming a new training group primarily striking for Coxswain.

While we are still following all health and safety guidelines and operating under social distancing protocols, with the rollout of Phase III our Coxswains can now mix crew participants to match operational needs. This renewed flexibility offered by the demise of the "bubble" protocols has opened the doors to greater surface operational missions. Coxswain Terry Blanchard has already reformulated a new training crew with hopes of a second two boat qualification check ride in late June and is back up and running full speed with Helo Operations. Thank you, Terry, for your outstanding efforts.

4. **Crew Operations Certification & REYR Policy:** Please pass the following requirements along to your Operational Members:
 - o Any Boat Crew Member or Coxswain who went into REYR for a QE Check ride in 2020, will remain operational until the end of 2021. However, they must continue to maintain any required classes such as the annual RM Refresher, Annual Operations Workshop and Core Training.
 - o 12 Hours of on the water time will be required in 2021 to maintain crew qualification.
 - o **Phase III Crew Members wishing to participate in Boat Crew operations must:**
 - Complete the Blood Bourn Pathogen Class, which is now available on the AUXLMS website. Upon completion, print out the Class Completion Certificate and send to DIRAUX.



- File a High-Risk Assessment form with DIRAUX. The form has been revised to reflect a Vaccination date for those who wish to confirm that a COVID-19 Vaccine has been received. No evidence of the Vaccine is required and do not send your Vaccine card with your updated form.
 - On a related note, our OPFAC Coxswains and Crews have put a great deal of time and effort into developing on-board operations protocols to conform to COVID-19 protection standards to maximize member safety.
5. **OPTREX Planning:** During the April Division 1 meeting the Board voted to approve Loch Lomond Yacht Club and Marina as the event venue, to take place on October 1st and 2nd (Friday-Saturday). The event dates have been forwarded up the COL and set on the District Calendar. Over the next few months event planning will continue.

Challenges

1. Maintaining support for Boat Crew training and QE check rides as we come out of Phase II and enter a more flexible work environment provided by Phase III.

Division 3

From: John Hardin, Div. 3 SO-OP

Highlights

1. **Kill Switches-Use With Caution**
2. **Sea Lions Ahead**

Details

1. **Kill Switches-Use With Caution**

In 2009, a 25' CG response boat along with other LE vessels were escorting barge containing a decommissioned nuclear reactor from a U. S. Navy submarine. The barge was being pushed ahead on the stern by two tugs.

While CG boat was transiting ahead of the barge, the coxswain turned to look aft to check the position of the advancing barge. The act of turning caused the inadvertent activation of the kill switch. Unable to re-start its engines in time, the CG boat was violently overrun by the barge.

Two CG crew members were rescued from the water. Four of the five crew members sustained minor injuries and the response boat suffered major damage.

Lesson Learned - Safety equipment, including kill switches, must be used with caution.

2. Sea Lions Ahead

While sea lions are common in the ocean and Bay, they're a relative new phenomenon in the Delta and upper rivers. Fortunately, they generally avoid human contact. However, sea lions occasionally "thermal regulate" exposing their flippers above the water surface to cool down or heat up as needed and as shown in the picture below. While doing so, they can become unaware of nearby water craft.

No doubt the local fisherman would appreciate a little less competition. However, sea lions can weigh several hundred pounds and colliding with one could result in serious damage and injury to you as well as to the sea lion. You could also be exposed to criminal liability via the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The Marine Mammal Center at 415-289-7325 is always happy to answer any marine mammal questions.



Sea Lion Thermal Regulating On The Sacramento River

John Hardin
Div. 3 SO-OP

Division 4

No report submitted.



Division 5

From: Lewis Derfuss SO-OP 5

FL 51 No Operations this month

Steven Johnson, FSO-OP.

FL 52

No Operations activity this month

Tom Hurley

FL 53

SAR DOG has conducted one PATON/Training patrols one on 18 April in Vallejo AOR

Randy McCormick AUXFAC Kokua II has completed repairs at Delta Marina and reinspected and offered for use completed—Awaiting final approval. We are planning an on-water shank down check this week. Once approval we will be back up to two AUXFACs SAR DOG and Kokua II. With two AUXFACs and the bursting of the Covid Bubble we now will have more flexibility and be able to reach out to other trainees and crew in other flotillas and plan to do just that.

Lew Derfuss FSO-OP 53

MOM CG Station Bodega Bay. Margarita crew, Jimmy Matthies, Therese Van Wiele, John Teague, Steve Kilgariff and Wil Sumner.

Covid Bubble Status

Margarita Bubble, Wil Sumner, Thomas Herbst, Brian Barton, Doug Twitchell, Jimmy Matthies, and Therese Van Weile

Minnow Bubble, Frank Capuro, Jeff Tuttle, John Teague, Steve Kilgariff, John Zowalki

As Phase 3 was approved on April 26, the Covid Bubble requirement was stopped.

Operational Training

April 5, Annual OPS Workshop was held with 13 participants



Two Boat Training



Margarita in Tow

Wil Sumner and Crew Member

Wil Sumner FSO-OP 55
US Coast Guard Auxiliary,
DSO_MS
707 776 7237 cell

FSO-OP 57 Nothing to Report

SO-OP 5



Hurray! The Covid Bubble has burst! This will allow us more flexibility in crew and trainee selections so contact me if interested in our help. You must have completed Blood Borne Pathogens class, completed Core Training, filed a High Risk Assessment form to DIRAUX, and be current on annual TCT/Risk Assessment and Operations workshops. Division 5 has the highest number of Coxswains and Crew requiring REQUAL. This along with new crew trainees and limited OPTREXs we need to focus on training and more training, so we are ready for QE Sessions.

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. 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. Both 55 and 53 sometimes have some open opportunities for crew and trainees. Take advantage of these opportunities

AUXFAC inspection requires updated AUXFAC photos 4 shots Port side, Starboard side, Forward Port, and Forward Starboard as well as screen shot of current registration loaded into AUXDATA II. You can send these photos to OTO Dustin Finkelson if you need assistance to load into AUXDATA II. We can also conduct Virtual Inspection of our PPE and document with your FSO-MA DO NOT TEST EPIRBs but if your battery is expired or near expiration send an email to me and I will forward to Michael Brown and he will add to list to order replacements. We can no longer use with expired batteries.

Please note: Many of our AUXFAC's inspections are now expired and we have received guidance on how we can get these inspections completed and AUXFACs inspections updated in AUXDATA II This process is new, somewhat confusing and convoluted so work on getting these inspections and offer for use updated now so we will be ready to go when water temps and air temps allow us to start operations. Follow the process sent out from OTO Dustin Finkelson in November and if you need help with the process John Hardin ADSO Operations has offered to help walk members through the process and understands it better than me at the present time. Additionally, you will need to complete Blood Borne Pathogen training 100293 (on AUXLMS), be current in Risk Management/TCT 100202 and Operations workshop and file High Risk Covid Assessment worksheet for all crew members and trainees. Once this is completed you can form a Patrol Covid Bubble and submit to DIRAUX for approval under Phase 2 Guidance.

2021 National OPS workshop is now available. Some flotillas have already been presenting to their membership. If you haven't done this yet, please make plans for presentations.

Risk Management/TCT refresher workshop are on Webinar calendar—Please tune in and update your qualifications.

Division 6

No report submitted



Division 7

From Mike Thompson, SO-OP

Highlights:

1. We are now in Phase 3 of D11's COVID-19 guidelines
2. TCT and OPS refresher courses due June 30th.
3. Our OPTREX is Aug 6-7 at Jordanelle State Park.
4. Loss of two State owned facilities
5. PPE needs to be inspected and brought into service
6. Auxdata II Patrol Ordering and Facility Inspection training
7. Attached is the District Operations report. Please read it and send it out to your members.

Details:

1. We are now in Phase 3 of D11's COVID-19 guidelines and these are the activities authorized: Private Aids to Navigation and Bridge Verifications, Life Jacket Wear Rate Observations, Marine Dealer/ RBS Program Visits, Public Education, Telecommunications, Vessel Safety Checks, OPFAC Inspections, RBS Public Outreach, In-person meetings, and Proctoring. The following activities may be completed under Phase 3 if requested and approved by the appropriate Order Issuing Authority (OIA): Operational missions, AUXCLERGY, Office work, and other activities as specifically requested by an Active Duty unit. In order to be assigned to duty for these activities, you shall follow all personnel protective equipment and training requirements. Please refer to email recently sent out by our Commodore Dean McFarren for all the details. Anything DIRAUX sends out supersedes this report. a. We no longer need to be part of a COVID bubble. b. We need to have an updated High-Risk Assessment Form with vaccine info on file. The High-Risk Assessment Form can be found at <http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=113&category=surfaceoperations> Once filled out, send to DIRAUX at D11-SMB-D11AUXNorthern@uscg.mil c. Pass the Blood Borne Pathogens course and send in the results to DIRAUX D11-SMB-D11AUX-Northern@uscg.mil. Blood Borne Pathogen training can be found at <https://auxlearning.uscg.mil/>. d. You are only required to submit an Assignment of Duty Request once for each Aux mission on the list including OPS patrols or underway training. Assignment for Duty request can be found on the District's website under Response, <http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=113&category=surfaceoperations>
2. TCT and OPS refresher courses are now available. The District is teaching these two required courses online. Sign up for a training slot by going to the Districts Member Training calendar at <http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=113&category=mt-calendar> and follow the instructions on the calendar. These courses need to be done by 30th of June. Now is the time to get them done.
3. Our OPTREX is Aug 6-7 at Jordanelle State Park. It will be a busy one since it will be two years of check rides for a total of 18 so far. That does not include any new candidates. When and where possible, we will be doing single or double boat QE sessions. These sessions will be by invitation and with District's approval. We need to be able to do the tasks proficiently and without prompting, this means we need to get out on the water and practice.



4. The State has had to call back into duty our 20' Boston Whaler Justice facility due to one of their LE boats being damaged beyond repair. Our 16' Rover facility needs many costly repairs and is being retired out of State service. Thank you State of Utah for allowing us to operate those vessels all these many years!

5. Your PPE needs to be inspected and brought into service. Let your FSO-MA or FC know when you have done the inspections. Use the PPE job aids to help you with your inspection. The PPE inspection job aids can be found at <http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=113&category=forms-downloads> (at the bottom of the page). If you need any new PPE, contact your FSO-MA or FC.

6. On May 5th, our SO-IS will be conducting an Auxdata II Patrol Ordering and Facility Inspection training. It will be from 6:00 – 9:00 pm MDT. Link to the training will be sent out to all the Division at a later date.

Division 8

From: Dave Johnson, SO-OP

Redding 08-39: No on the water activity. Memorial Day should have 2 boats on Whiskeytown Lake.

Crescent City 08-11: No report. Nothing is expected from that flotilla until the harbor district decides what to do with the abandoned CG Station. Here is the latest news from Doug Plack: *"The auxiliary has been reaching out to sector and the harbor but the information is very sparse. I spoke to the FC and he said the harbor has not responded back to him. Also we were to have zoom meeting and for unknown reasons they cancelled both at the last minute. So I guess we are in limbo and I am waiting to see if the 29 comes back or not in July. Sorry, wish I could give you more news, but I want to thank you for keeping in touch".*

I wonder if a little correspondence from the AUX leadership would help the harbor district decide to let the AUX occupy the station. Some actual physical contact might help to let them know we are very interested, like a visit to one of their harbor district meetings as a guest speaker or an official letter emphasizing the need for some AUX presence at the harbor. That would quite the asset for the AUX to have as a base like that. That would be quite the new member attraction.

Clear Lake 08-88: Covid-19 bubbles have been eliminated! Orders have been requested for May 8 & 9. Seeking crew and trainees who've met prerequisites.

Mendocino 08-87: Ops activity during April 2021 was limited to fuel farm routine weekly recirculation and fuel testing.

Division 10

From Rod Rollins, SO-OP

Patrols at Lake Kaweah. No reports from other flotillas.



Division 11

From: Tom Henderson, SO-OP

DETAILS

1. No activity this month.
2. I continue to stay in regular contact with Station Lake Tahoe to help in anyway I can from a distance.

AGENCY INTERACTIONS

None

UPCOMING EVENTS, DATES AND LOCATIONS

STAFF OFFICER OP GOALS

1. To work closely with the flotilla FSO-OP's and provide them with the tools they need to complete their missions.
2. Keep the Division up to date on all special events and their need for patrols.
3. To meet all Station Tahoe's needs for two boat training & special event patrols.

Division 12

No report submitted

*** END OF REPORT ***

Respectfully submitted,
COMO Wally Smith, DSO-OP



SEMPER GUMBY!

