



**USCG Auxiliary District 11 North - Surface Operations Report  
July 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 annual 1-hour Surface Operations Workshop and the Risk Management Refresher were to have been taken by 30 June. Presentations are still underway for those who have not completed the annual trainings.
2. The number of boat crew members & coxswains due for requalification in 2021 totals 26, and in 2022 the number is 69.
3. OPTREX Calendar
4. The “QE Request Requirements” form is available on the Surface Operations web page under Response.
5. There was a much-improved number of Division Ops Reports submitted.
6. Addendum to Report: “Exploding Sound Producing Devices”

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**DETAILS**

1. Both the Ops Workshop and TCT Risk Management Refresher are required annually to maintain currency. Check the District Training Calendar for upcoming dates. No pre-registrations are necessary for the Ops Workshop; the number of attendees is unlimited. Advance signups are required for the RM Refresher and class sizes are limited to eight; sign up with Ann Zocchi, DSO-MT.
2. Below is a spreadsheet indicating the number of coxswains and crew due this year for check rides, broken down by Division. The number of candidates has been reduced as a result of several “mini-OPTREX’s that have been held this month and last:

**Requalification Candidates – as of 14 July**

<u>Division</u>	<u>Coxswain</u>	<u>Crew</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	0	0	0
3	2	1	3
4	1	3	4
5	0	2	2
6	1	3	4
7	4	2	6
8	1	3	4



10	1	0	1
11	0	2	2
12	0	0	0
	10	16	26

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

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

<b><u>OPTREX CALENDAR - 2021</u></b>		
<u>Division(s)</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
4	Port of Redwood City (Tentative)	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

- The “QE Request Requirements” document is posted on the Surface Operation web page. Please review it in its entirety prior to requesting a Qualification Examiner. It is very important that all candidates are pre-vetted per the requirements and process as delineated.
- Of the ten Divisions, eight submitted an Operations Report for the month of June! This is up from four for the month of May.

**Cutterman’s Corner**

Cutterman’s Corner - July, 2021

Helpful Tips from Gary Kaplan  
 Coast Guard Auxiliary Cutterman  
 Boat Crew Academy Instructor

District 11 NR Assistant Staff Officer - Operations (Training)

1. News from Sector

There has not been a Call Hands for a while, but Sector has been busy, nonetheless. This is transfer season and there have been a number of Changes of Command and Watch.



The first Change of Command that I attended was perhaps the most unusual in Coast Guard History. On May 7, command was transferred from Command Master Chief Shane Hooker, CMC of D11, to his wife, Command Master Chief Phadra Hooker, formerly CMC of Sector San Francisco, in a combined COC and retirement ceremony on Base Alameda. CMC Shane Hooker retired after 33 years of service.

CMC Phadra Hooker was formerly the highest-ranking enlisted person in Sector San Francisco, and will now be the highest-ranking enlisted person in D11. She will work directly with Admiral Penoyer, advising and consulting with him on matters concerning enlisted personnel.

During her tenure, CMC Hooker has forged a good relationship with the Auxiliary that began with her riding along on one of SILVER CHARM's patrols, during which she even took a turn at the helm. We have every reason to believe that her enthusiasm for the Auxiliary will continue as she assumes her new leadership role as the senior most enlisted person in D11, and we wish her the very best of luck in her new position.

In another unique Change of Command ceremony, the former operations officer of CGC PIKE, then a Boatswains Mate First Class, now a Lieutenant Junior Grade, assumed command of Cutter PIKE.

When I first came aboard PIKE to continue training for the Cutterman badge, BM1 Jak Loewenstein, PIKE's Operations Officer, put me right to work. He had me manning a mooring station for departures and arrivals, and when he found out that I was a qualified boat crew member, he assigned me as crew on PIKE's cutter boat, a 23-foot OTH (Over The Horizon).

BM1 Loewenstein subsequently left PIKE to attend OCS, and is now returning as LTJG Loewenstein to be the commanding officer. PIKE, too, has enjoyed a good relationship with the Auxiliary, and I'm sure it will continue during the next year, while PIKE remains here at YBI until their transfer to Alaska sometime next year.

On June 24, Captain Marie Byrd, now Captain Marie Byrd, USCG Retired, transferred command of Sector San Francisco to Captain Taylor Lam. When I met Captain Lam, he told me of his experiences with and enthusiasm for working with the Auxiliary, and that he is eager to get working with us.

On June 28, Master Chief Phadra Hooker transferred her watch to Command Master Chief Travis Cutler, who reports from the U.S. Army's Sergeant Major Academy. CMC Cutler is from the aviation branch of the Coast Guard. He has heard of the work that SILVER CHARM does with the Air station San Francisco helos and crews, and responded enthusiastically when I asked him if he would like to come along on a SILVER CHARM helo ops patrol.

The Question of the Week, from the former weekly Operations Update, will continue as the Question of the Month.

2. **The last Question of the Week**, from April, was:

Who was the first female Coast Guard aviator?



Colleen Cain was the first female Coast Guard helicopter pilot. She also, tragically, became the first female Coast Guard pilot to die in the line of duty. She became Coast Guard Aviator #1988, the third female Coast Guard aviator and first Coast Guard Pilot.

Sadly, her career in Coast Guard aviation was a brief one. On January 7, 1982, only three years after earning her wings, in heavy winds and rain, Colleen Cain and her crew were ordered to respond to a call from a commercial fishing vessel in distress. A little over an hour after they took off, the Coast Guard lost contact with them. The wreckage of their helicopter was found nine hours later, where it had crashed into a mountain. There were no survivors.

More information about Colleen Cain can be found at:

<https://www.identifymedals.com/article/story-of-colleen-cain-the-coast-guards-first-female-helicopter-pilot/>

- 3. The first Question of the Month: A hawser is a stout line or cable used for mooring or towing. What is the origin, or etymology, of the word hawser?

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**Division Reports**  
(In their entirety)

**Division 1**

From: Nancy Marion, SO-OP

**Highlights**

- 1. Surface Operations update
- 2. OPTREX Planning Update

**Details**

- 1. Surface Operations update:
  - Coxswain Terry Blanchard (01-09) on OPFAC SILVER CHARM and Coxswain Jim Losi (12-91) on OPFAC SERVANT will be holding a 2 boat QE Check ride on July 10<sup>th</sup> for initial qualification and requalification of five Members.
  - OPFAC Silver Charm is now fully reengaged with Air Station SF and is conducting regular Helicopter Operations including night ops.
  - OPFAC Ranger (01-02) and Seahorse (01-04) continue to plan training patrols.



2. OPTREX Planning Update: Thanks to the work of our four FSO-OP's we have identified nine Members within Division 1 interested in initial qualification or requalification at our October 1-2 OPTREX.

### **Goals:**

Rotating members into training patrols for OPTREX preparation and building underway hours.

### **Challenges:**

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 and the elimination of the Crew Bubbles.

### **Division 3**

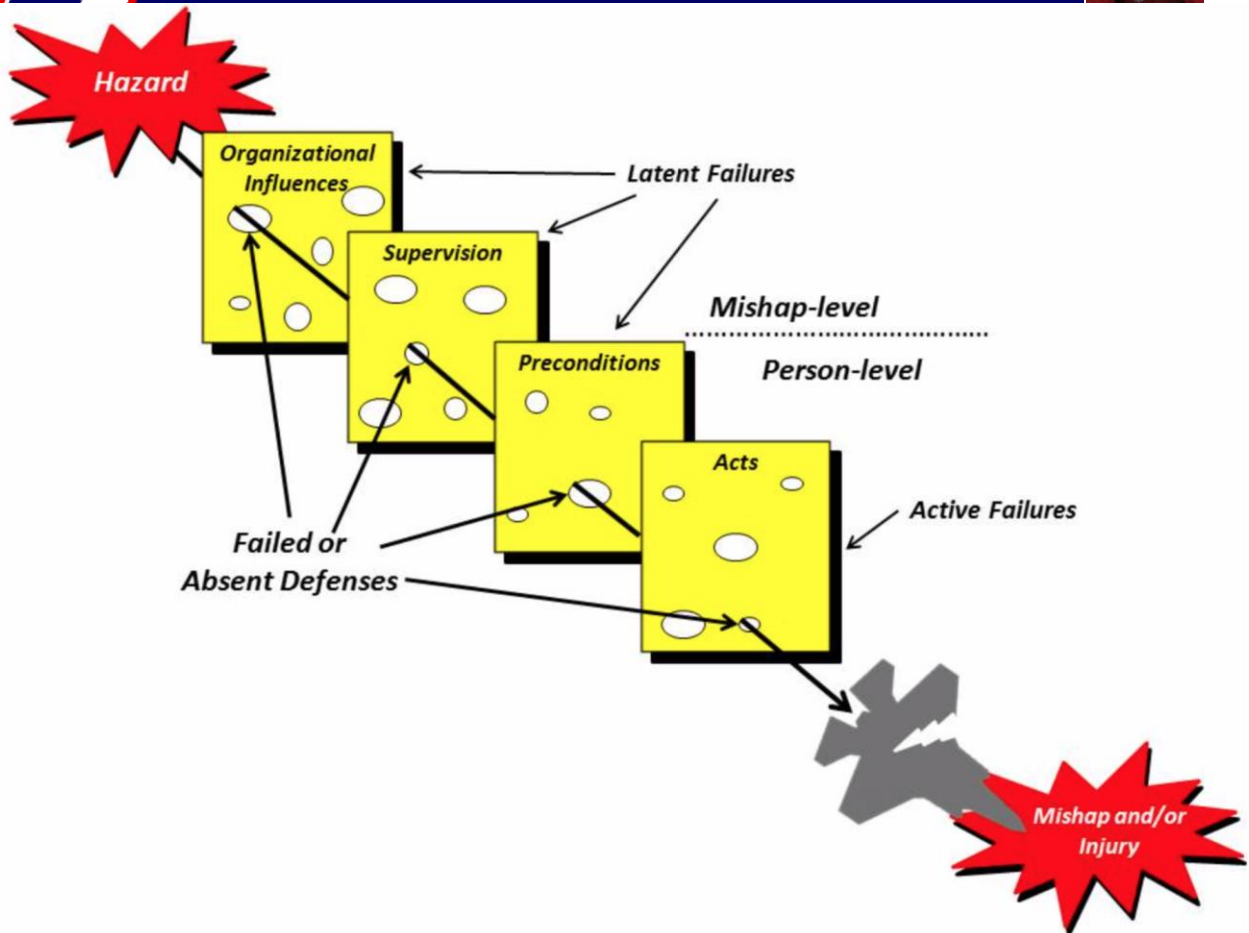
From John Hardin, SO-OP

**Division 3 OPTREX** - The Division 3 OPTREX will be held on Saturday August 14. Flotilla Commanders must notify John Hardin by July 13, 2021 of prequalified candidates intending to be tested at this OPTREX.

**Mishaps and Swiss Cheese** - When studying mishaps, factors occurring just before or during the mishap can often dominate our attention. In fact, I suspect the typical analysis we do of mishaps such as the "Hillsboro Incident" brings this point home.

The "Swiss Cheese" model gives a much broader view of mishap causation. It looks at factors existing or happening well before the mishap and in some cases years before.

This model is used very successfully by many medical research entities as well as the U.S. Air Force. For more information on it, just google "swiss cheese" to get a mouth full.



#### Division 4

From Paul Verveniotis, SO-OP

Since Onno Hommes is relocating to D11S, the facility MAVERICK in FL49 has lost its primary sponsor. Working on getting Bob Brown familiar with it. There is an engine issue that needs to be resolved.

Regarding the RWC OPTREX, we have three folks who are due for 2021:

- Jimmin Chang
- Frank Steena
- Alan Stanton

I've heard from Jimmin that his facility will not be available by the 31 Jul date.

I've discussed with Terry B the possibility of bringing SILVER CHARM down to RWC but it's a bit of a trek.

At this point it looks likely that the RWC OPTREX will be canceled – not really worth the cost for three checkrides.

Will confirm definitively by end of week.



## Division 5

SO-OP 5 Report from Lew Derfuss

July 2021

FL 51 No Operations this month

Steven Johnson, FSO-OP.

FL 52

June 1 and May 26 initiated AUDREY L and flotilla 5-2's first patrols of 2021.

Leaving our homeport at Glen Cove in the late evening, PATONs, and bridge lights of the Carquinez Straits and Mare Island straits were our focus, with some chart plotting thrown in as well. Another very important part of this patrol was reviewing basic seamanship and procedures. COVID 19 restrictions shut down most of 2020 for patrols and we are all out of practice. Training and practice are fundamental to successful and safe patrols. Mike Hay, Earl Berg and Bob Bain were the hero's that did all the hard work of charting, counting, writing, taking photos, timing and listing the lights. Tom Hurley turned the wheel, pushed a lever, and looked out the window. 4 persons out, 4 persons back, no dings, no damage, no drama.

AUDREY L would like to patrol in July, and anyone interested please contact me, Tom Hurley. Weekdays and evenings best right now. We need two qualified crew and one coxswain and can then have up to three other aboard. A look at local "DO NOT ANCHOR" signs would be appreciated by area boaters. I have been approached by several who have lost/cut their anchors and "Didn't see any sign" or couldn't read the one on site.

Has anyone seen a navigation chart of San Francisco Bay that includes the position of Sales Force tower, the TALLEST BUILDING WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER? I have not. Let me know please.

Big thanks to Mike Hay and Lew Derfuss for helping me through AUXDrama/AUXDATA to submit and finish my patrol orders. Odd. more time on the keyboard than on the helm. Hummmmm.

I have been told that Erik and Dinia Paananen have begun the process to make their new C Dory an AUXFAC. Wonderful news and congratulations. Let me know if I, or the flotilla can help in any way.

Most Respectfully,

Tom Hurley, FSO OPS 52

FL 53

All our currently assigned bridges are complete and only Montezuma Locks and Suisun City Light 19 and 20 remain to be done after they remove flashboards in June.



We now have two AUXFACs SAR DOG and Kokua II. With two AUXFACs with crew support 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 on future schedule patrols

We had our first two boat patrol with SAR DOG and KOKUA II on Sunday 27 June out of Brannon Island in Rio Vista AOR on SAR DOG Coxswain Lew Derfuss, Crew Jim Minkel, Ron Nathan on KOKUA II Coxswain Randy McCormick, Crew Bob Bain, Kit Galvin and Trainee Morgan Curtis. Our main focus was on multiple towing evolutions, man overboard along with Marlin spike and Risk Management evaluations with the main goal of preparing all aboard for QE session in early Aug. We plan another repeat session in July with both AUXFAC in Rio Vista AOR with focus on Search Patterns, anchoring and other tasks. Also went down to new temporary rock dam at False River by Jersey Island to provide some photos. See Photos Below taken 27 June 2021 by Lew Derfuss



A picture showing barrier Buoys and warning sign on False River Temporary Rock Dam





A picture showing barrier Buoys and warning sign on False River Temporary Rock Dam



A picture showing outer lighted barrier Buoys and Do Not Enter markings on False River Temporary Rock Dam

Lew Derfuss FSO-OP 53



**FI 55**

**Conducted 2 patrols in June.**

June 12, Margarita conducted a MOMS Patrol on Lake Sonoma

Margarita. Crew, Thomas Herbst, Wil Sumner and Marquis

Margarita had two SAR cases on Lk Sonoma, assisted the Sonoma Co Sheriff on one DUI, plus reported an oil spill to the US ACE and State OES. We also conducted 10 kayak exams and handed out 20 "I Got Caught" ice cream coupons. Mascot Marquis had a lot of fun with the kids.





June 26, Margarita conducted two boat training with CG MLB 245 at Bodega Bay and MOM patrol during the opening of Salmon Season. 55 also provided AUXCOM for this patrol as we expected the station to be very busy due the multiple recreational fisherman underway

Margarita Crew: Thomas Herbst, John Teague, Therese Van Weile.

Our focus was to conduct both long and side tow practice with the CG MLB 245, in order for two candidate coxswains to practice how to approach a larger vessel and determine locations for our Number 1, 2 and 4 lines. We also practiced holding station for passing the pump exercise, use of the radar during day conditions in preparation for our July night ops, search pattern management, and boat handling in seas with 4-foot wind waves and 6-foot swells. (no one got seasick). While there were over 200 recreational fishermen out that day (and many fish were caught, there were no SAR cases. Therese got a lot of line handling and heaving line practice.

We also set up an AUXCOM station to handle the anticipated extra radio traffic and provide COMMS training to John Guargalia. Comms: Ray Van Cleave, and trainee John Guargalia

### **Operational Training**

55 Conducted a Navigation for Crew class on June 15, and a Comms Training at CG Station Bodega Bay on June 26.

Respectfully

Wil Sumner FSO-OP 55

Bob Gallup, FSC-OP 57  
SO-OP 5

With the Covid Bubble gone it will allow us more flexibility in crew and trainee selections so contact me if interested in our help. You must have completed Blood Bourne 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: We still have 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.

2021 National OPS workshop is available. Many 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.

Finally, if you haven't been on the water yet this year-it's time to get going. We all need 12 hours minimum underway, to refresh our skills and in many cases prepare for QE check rides. This requires a minimum of 30-day lead time to request QEs so don't wait till Sept. as it may be too late to get scheduled.

End of Report

Respectfully Submitted

Lewis Derfuss SO-OP 5 [Blueskier@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Blueskier@sbcglobal.net), 707 592-9040

### **Division 6**

No report submitted

### **Division 7**

From Mike Thompson, SO-OP

### **Highlights:**

1. Surface Operations
2. Our OPTREX is Aug 6-7 at Jordanelle State Park.
3. Inspect your facility for needed equipment.
4. Get out and practice.



5. Attached is the District Operations report. Please read it and send it out to all your members.
6. Directions, corrections and information from Diraux and or the District supersedes this report.

### Details:

1. There have still been questions about what needs to be done in order to go out on patrols and other Surface Operation questions.
  - a. The District webpage has the answers and here is a link to the Surface Operations page. <http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=113&category=surface-operations>.
  - b. District Operations monthly report contains up to date info on what is going on in OPS. It too can be found on the Operations website under Como Smith's picture.
  - c. OTO sends out emails that will give info on changes, updates to current guidelines, corrections and clarification to policy and standards of operations. Strongly suggest you do not delete them before reading them.
  - d. Diraux and the District is the source of truth. If you have questions or hear of something new and it didn't come from Diraux or the District, please ask your chain of leadership to get clarification for you. Through the chain of leadership information flows to and from the source of truth (Diraux).
2. Our OPTREX is Aug 6-7 at Jordanelle State Park. We have 10 coxswains and 5 crew that will need to have check rides this year. That will make it a very busy OPTREX. 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.
  - a. The following coxswains will need to have a QE check rides this year; Doug Manifold, Mike Williams, Paul Brown, Roy Vandermolen, Ann Zocchi, Tony Zocchi, Keith Halls, Tony Diamond, and Bill Rouleau.
  - b. The following crew will need to have a QE check ride; Kathryn Brown, Kristine Bates, Sara Vandermolen, Bill Ross, and Mark Robertson.
  - c. New crew will also have their initial QE check ride during the OPTREX. Flotilla commanders, please send me a list of your members who are planning to qualify as crew or coxswain in August. I am required to send in a list to the DSO-OP 30 days prior to the event so they can be vetted. **That means by July 6<sup>th</sup> which is not too far away.**
3. Please check the facility that you will be using for all needed equipment. We have had a case were one of our shared facilities was missing a fire extinguisher and some dock lines. Apparently, they were needed elsewhere more then on the facility. If missing, get all the equipment on board before starting the patrol and let your OPS officer know of the situation. They can work the issue if needed.



4. Please do not wait until the last minute to get out on the water. Get with another facility and practice.
  - a. Take your time to refamiliarize yourself with the facility whether is a boat or radio. Practice maneuvering the vessel in and around the docks.
  - b. Refresh your anchoring process, your man overboard, and SAR patterns while you patrol.
  - c. When possible, practice your close quarters boat handling. You can use the docks as a second vessel to simulate a tow.
  - d. Don't forget knots. Practice tying them.
  - e. Please have fun and be safe while training.
5. Our Division is very good at supporting on the water events. We just supported a big event up at Jordanelle from multiple flotillas and with trainees too. This is a great example of how we as a division work together. Please let me know if the State Park that you support has any upcoming events so we can get the needed assistance lined up.

### **Division 8**

No Report submitted

### **Division 10**

From Rod Rollins, SO-OP

### **Division 10 OPS REPORT**

Kaweah and Stockton continued patrols.

OPTREX at Lake Millerton is still on calendar. Actual planning has begun.

At the mini OPTREX held at Buckley Cove, 6 people requalified and 1 new crew member. Thanks to Keller and T. Holtzman for all of their work in making it a success.

### **Division 11**

From: Tom Henderson, SO-OP

### **DETAILS**

1. Have been having regular comms with BMC Colt Fairchild OIC regarding Station Lake Tahoe needs.
2. Have been cleared and resumed watch standing duties at Station Lake Tahoe per requested needs.
3. I have completed requalification on Station Lake Tahoe's 29'RBS-II and cleared back on the boat.
4. We will resume two boat training soon at station request.



5. Will assist station with safety patrol for the upcoming Trans Tahoe swim with facilities both boat & PWC and an AUXCOM.

### **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**

From: Jim Losi, SO-OP

RE: **AUC STA SF 2021 – JULY Report**

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

1. Have been having regular comms with XMC Matt Kinsman regarding STA SF needs
2. Have resumed the weekly tradition of providing treats in the breakout room at the station building on YBI. This is now permissible given Aux member access on YBI. I generally leave treats on Friday mornings. Treats were left at STASF on Friday, 9 July.
3. Received permission from STASF to use the station as a base of operation during the check rides of Saturday, 10 July with Silver Charm and Servant.
4. Offered OPFAC SERVANT as the training platform for STA SF ops training as necessary.
5. Will lead the annual asset audit for the station during the summer months.
6. There are currently no Aux members working at the station to fill any articulated needs

### **Projects**

1. Annual station asset audit

### **Future Activities**

- Planning for November Memorial Presentation
- Affixing of member names on the Memorial



### Challenges

- Rebounding post COVID to become a more effective partner with Station.

### Goals and Objectives

- Be an effective member of the station crew

\*\*\* END OF REPORT \*\*\*

Respectfully submitted,  
COMO Wally Smith, DSO-OP



**SEMPER GUMBY!**

### **BONUS ARTICLE – Exploding Air Horns in Hot Weather**

Here in Washington, we recently had a brief period in which temperatures in numerous parts of the state reached over 100 degrees. I was informed yesterday of an incident on a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) boat in which a handheld airhorn exploded in the heat, causing significant damage to the plastic safety tote it was stored in as well as the windshield of the vessel. The tote was reportedly stored outside in the direct sun. Below are two photos of the damage. Thankfully, no one was aboard at the time so no injuries were sustained and this incident goes down as a near-miss.

Based on this, the Safety Office at WDFW will be encouraging employees to store airhorns in a cool, secured area (either onboard or elsewhere if the boat is not being used) during hotter days. I don't know if anyone else has experienced this but, since many of you have folks operating in areas where 100-degree temperatures are common, I would encourage you to add overheating/exploding airhorns to the list of potential hazards that your boat operators/crew should be aware of.