



**USCG Auxiliary District 11 North - Surface Operations Report
October 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)

Note: Some of the information included is repetitive from last month’s report. It is IMPORTANT information. *All information has been updated through the end of September.*

HIGHLIGHTS

1. **ALERT #1:** Per ALAUX 029/21 – The reimbursement hiatus is in effect. Patrols conducted from 01 October until at least 15 November will not be reimbursed before 15 November.
2. **ALERT #2:** All patrol order requests are temporarily on hold. See below for details.
3. Subj: AUXILIARY COXSWAIN AND BOAT CREW INITIAL QUALIFICATION NIGHT TASKS NO LONGER WAIVABLE - CG-BSX POLICY LETTER 21-03
4. New “Project Opportunity – Artificial Intelligence and Search and Rescue”. See details below.
5. The annual 1-hour Surface Operations Workshop and the Risk Management Refresher were to have been taken by 30 June. Presentations may still be scheduled if there are sufficient requests.
6. The number of boat crew members & coxswains due for requalification in 2021 totals 22, and in 2022 the number is 69 ... totals include those in REWK status.
7. OPTREX Calendar
8. The “QE Request Requirements” forms are available on the Surface Operations web page under Response.
9. REWK status for many in boat crew program.
10. Clear the decks of those members who do not intend to requalify.

BONUS MATERIAL: Former OpFac “Maverick” is for sale. See below for details.

DETAILS

1. Per the ALAUX dated 16 August - Subj: FINANCIAL SYSTEM BLACKOUT/CUTOVER IMPACT ON AUXILIARY PATROL ORDERS - The Coast Guard is installing a new accounting software package. Be forewarned that this will delay reimbursements for patrols and other activities conducted under reimbursable orders. Please plan accordingly.



2. The following is an excerpt from an email (in italics) received from OTO Dustin Finkelson on 04 October: *All patrol orders and requests in ADII are to be denied regardless of status (requested or approved). There may be issues with accounting lines and future payment processing. Only "Critical Missions" will be approved and no requests should be entered into AD2 until further notice. For member who requesting orders the temporary work around is:*

- *Fill out and complete the CG-5132 attached.*
- *Forward to OTO for verification.*
- *OTO will forward to the OIA's for signature.*
- *The OIA's will forward back to the requesting member.*
- *After the blackout period, you will enter in ADII as normal.*

Any approved patrols after OCT 1st will need to follow the steps above as well. Please forward to your folks and as always, stay flexible as thing may change at a moment's notice.

Addendum: Email received 07 October from OTO: After a conference call with BSX, all air/surface ops will not take place until after the blackout period 15NOV21. Unless the SECTOR/AIRSTA Commanding Officer is requesting Aux support, no orders will be issued and ADII should not be used.

3. For "Initial" qualification for Boat Crew or Coxswain, the tasks included in Perform a Night Navigation and Piloting Exercise are no longer "Waiverable".
4. The Coast Guard in conjunction with the Department of Defense is developing a new technology using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist identifying people and vessels in distress and improve the SAR process. It is currently in the "machine learning" process of the project and the Auxiliary has been asked to participate. Volunteers will begin by viewing, identifying and classifying imagery - initially from an aerial view and later from a surface view. We are sending the attached documents to the DSO-AVs and DSO-OPs but any member is invited to participate. This is included in this report to keep you informed of what Response is working on. Volunteers will take a two-day course presented by the Coast Guard and Department of Defense (DOD) that will be given over a weekend. Basic computer skills, reasonably fast internet connectivity and attention to detail are required. Contact the DSO-OP if interested in participating or if interested in additional information.
5. Both the Ops Workshop and TCT Risk Management Refresher are required annually to maintain currency. Send any requests for 2021 presentations to Ann Zocchi, DSO-MT for possible scheduling. Check the District Training Calendar for upcoming dates that may be added. No pre-registrations are 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.
6. Below is a spreadsheet indicating the number of coxswains and crew still due this year for check rides, broken down by Division.



Requalification Candidates – as of 30 Sept.

<u>Division</u>	<u>Coxswain</u>	<u>Crew</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	0	2	2
3	0	2	2
4	0	2	2
5	0	1	1
6	0	1	1
7	1	2	3
8	1	5	6
10	0	2	2
11	0	3	3
12	0	0	0
	2	20	22

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

7. Upcoming OPEX / OPTREXs currently listed on the District Calendar are below:

OPTREX CALENDAR - 2021

<u>Division(s)</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1 (OPEX)	Loch Lomond YC, San Rafael	3 October
12	Marina Bay YC, Richmond	15 - 16 October

8. The “QE Request Requirements” documents include “Requirements before Requesting a QE” and “Vetting Form 2021”. Both are posted on the Surface Operation web page. Please review the requirements and complete the Vetting Form 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.
9. Anyone who did not complete required online training, i.e., Ops Workshop, TCT Refresher, Nav 95 exam, etc., by the required date (30 June) was put into “Required Workshop Not Met” (REWK) status. When one is in REWK, their qualifications are suspended. In order to be reinstated, an MT-3 Form must be completed and submitted to DIRAUX. The Form is available on the District website.
10. Of the 213 qualified coxswains and crew due for check rides between 2021 and 2024, 42 (20%) are in REWK status. Of that number, nine are both in REWK and due for requalification this year. It is reasonable to assume that some will not be pursuing requalification when due, particularly those due this year, which skews the numbers for planning. **If a coxswain or crew member will not be continuing in the surface operations program, please let the DSO-OP know** so that their name can be removed from the list of upcoming requalification candidates. Also, if they have been issued PPE, the gear should be retrieved and returned to DIRAUX.



Cutterman's Corner

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



Learning the Ropes in the 21st Century

Learning the ropes is a time-honored tradition that has its origin in the days of sail. It refers to the first task facing every new hand to come aboard a ship, the learning the myriad of ropes, sheets and lines that controlled the sails and the vessel. This rite of passage was much more than a hazing. It was knowledge that was essential for the safety of the ship and its crew.

The term *learning the ropes* is still in use today to signify the process that any new hand, in any new field of endeavor must undergo soon after arrival. This is especially so in today's Coast Guard, where each unit has its own version of learning the ropes.

I have previously written about the first challenge facing new hands on Coast Guard cutters. Instead of ropes, all new hands coming aboard a cutter must learn their new ship. This is accomplished by walking the ship, tracing each damage control system and producing hand drawn schematics of each system.

Shore based units also have their ropes which must be learned. All new arrivals at Coast Guard Station San Francisco, usually non-rates fresh out of boot camp, are first required to learn the station's AOR.

While this may not seem like much to those of us who have patrolled our local waters for many years, and know them well, it is a significant accomplishment for a young non-rate who hails from a landlocked state somewhere in the middle of the country, and it is an essential body of knowledge that must be learned in order to perform the job properly. Imagine a new hand standing communications watch, who is confronted with a distress call from a mariner who gives a position as "just south of Blossom Rock", instead of a latitude-longitude position.

Station San Francisco's Area of Responsibility is covered on three NOAA charts, numbers 18650, 18651 and 18653, which cover the North Bay, the Central Bay and the South Bay. Station has placed numbers on 30 features on each of these three charts, and 90% of these 90 features must be correctly identified as the first step on the way to being qualified as a communications watchstander.



The Auxiliary also has ropes that must be learned. Each qualification requires the completion of a PQS. Each position has a variety of tasks that must be learned, demonstrated and signed off before one becomes qualified to do a job.

Learning the phonetic alphabet, proper radio procedure, classes of fires, heat related diseases, the rules of the road and a large number of other things are necessary in order to safely and effectively perform the duties of boat crew member or coxswain.

We are indeed very fortunate to have the opportunity to be trained to the same high standards as the U.S. Coast Guard, who many consider to be the world's premier professional mariners, and we, too, have to learn the ropes.

Division Reports

(Most in their entirety)

Division 1

From: Nancy Marion, SO-OP

Highlights

1. OPEX October 3rd: Mission Summary

Details

1. **OPEX October 3rd, Mission Summary:** After clearing one hurdle after another, Division 1 was able to hold their OPEX at Station San Francisco on Sunday, October 3rd. While this report is for Operational activities in September, as the vast majority of time was spent in preparation for the October 3rd OPEX, I'm covering the event details here. September was spent assisting members in completing pre-OPEX qualifications, assuring ID cards were up to date or arranging alternative means of transportation when ID cards had expired.

While we faced many hurdles in the run up to this event, the three primary roadblocks were the late scheduling of the Fleet Week Skippers meeting on the same day, OPFAC mechanical challenges and the end of the fiscal year on September 30th, any of which would have required cancellation of the event. Due to the hard work of several members the Fleet Week Skippers meeting was moved to the day before. With one challenge averted, OPFAC SILVER CHARM went down with mechanical issues but fortunately was back up and running within a week of the event. This left the Federal Budget as our last major hurdle, but miraculously orders were received for our two OPFACs mid-



afternoon the day before. A special thank you goes to our OIA LT Natasha Kenney for getting the job done for us in the nick of time.

The event included members from all four Division 1 Flotillas in both training and Staff rolls, with additional support from Coxswain Jim Losi (12-91) on OPFAC SERVANT of Division 12. Alex Bennett (01-04) was the event co-coordinator and our Division 1 SO-CM Carol Paz (01-04), organized the Operational Communications and TCO Training component which included use of the Auxiliary Communications Vehicle (ACV).

The goal of the event was to provide both Boat Crew Underway training and TCO Operational time and training.

Boat Crew Training: Due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, many members have not had access to an OPFAC this year and face going into REYR due to limited annual underway hours. The OPEX provided a means of shaking off the dust, clearing the cobwebs, and gaining much needed underway time toward their 12-hour annual minimum. We also had several new crew trainees anxious to get on board an OPFAC for initial boat training.

Communications Activities and Training: Our SO-CM Carol Paz did a stellar job of organizing the Communications component of our OPEX. The ACV was on hand, thanks to John Brandenburg, David Sequeira, and Stephen Busch who brought the vehicle from CGI and provided setup and facility support for the duration of the event. The ACV was used as primary Communications support for our OPFAC boats during the entire exercise. Several of our TCO's were able to work the van for needed comms hours and provided training to a number of TCO Trainees during the event.

A big thank you to our ASC for Sector SF, Sue Fry (01-07) and AUC for Station SF, Jim Losi (12-91) for their assistance in coordinating this event with Sector SF and Station SF. To our OPFAC Coxswains, Terry Blanchard (01-09) SILVER CHARM and Jim Losi (12-91) SERVANT, without whom the event would not have been possible, a special thank you for their patience, and flexibility in the run up to, and day of the event. Finally, Gary Kaplan (01-09) was on hand to provide a tour of the Station Communications Center as we rotated crews between OPFACs.

This type of event always takes a good team, but in this case, it really was a whole Village of dedicated members pulling in the same direction to make this even a reality. And with all the additional outside challenges we faced, Semper Gumby is an understatement. Bravo Zulu to the whole team!



Goals:

- Provide as many Operational opportunities as possible to support ongoing Boat Crew Training, completion of annual underway hours, and trainee support.
- Assist with member qualification expirations.
- Assist Members with Initial Specialty Qualifications.

Division 3

From John Hardin, SO-OP

Subject: Applying The Nav. Rules

Passing the Nav. Rules exam is indeed an accomplishment to be proud of. However, it's best to think of this as merely "a license to learn". And fortunately, we have many opportunities to learn.

During patrols, discuss how the Rules apply to the various situations encountered. Are you following Rule 14 by passing oncoming vessels port to port or Rule 9 by being on the correct side of a narrow channel?

Are you following the Rules regarding "Anchor Balls"? Nav. 30 states that all anchored vessels **shall** exhibit an anchor ball. The exceptions almost never apply to us. For instance, vessels less than 7 meters (23') are exempt only if not anchored "in or near a narrow channel, fairway, anchorage, or where other vessels normally navigate". There's probably no need for an anchor ball in your swimming pool or your bathtub. But otherwise if you're there, then others can be there also.

Another great way to increase your knowledge is studying FARWELL'S RULES OF THE NAUTICAL ROAD by Craig H. Allen. It documents many of the "great" collisions and how they were resolved in courts law.

If you're convinced you need an anchor ball, just let me now and I'll build you one. But you'll have to use it.

One another note, Morgan Curtis of Flotilla 5-3 recently passed her initial Crew Qualification in record time. When she qualified, she was an Auxiliarist for just few days over 6 months.

Division 4

From Paul Verveniotis, SO-OP

As it is, there is not much to report in Div 04.

- Facility MAVERICK continues to be for sale by FL49.
- Our two primary facilities (SENSE THE MOMENT and SEARCH ENGINE) continue to be out of commission with mechanical concerns.
- We have at least one member who may attempt to qualify at Richmond.
- We are standing down on activities per the OTO for budget reasons.



Division 5

From: Lew Derfuss, SO-OP

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 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.

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 QE's so don't wait till Sept. as it may be too late to get scheduled.

Division 6

No report submitted

Division 7

From: Mike Thompson, SO-OP

Highlights:

1. Boating Season Ending



2. Late Fall mini OPTREX
3. Directions, corrections and information from Diraux and or the District supersedes this report.

Details:

1. We have had a great season after not having one last year. Sadly, our surface operations season is basically over due to the issue of getting orders at the first of the Federal Budget year. As our boating season is coming to an end, there are some things you might want to do.
 - a. Complete or cancel all reports. Please go into ADII and make sure all of your orders are either in a cancelled or complete / submitted state. Keep in mind that no reimbursements can be made until the switch over to the new finance system (assuming that a Federal budget is in place) is completed.
 - b. Clean and winterize your facility
 - c. Get your facility inspected and accepted for use. That way you are not scrambling to get it done next spring.
 - d. Clean, inspect, stow away, and take out of service your PPE.
 - e. Even though our surface operations season is basically over, RBS (recreational boating safety) is a year-round objective and there are many missions for us to still participate and encourage you to do so.
2. Congratulations to Ashely Pope who successfully qualified as a crew member during our Fall mini OPTREX. Thank you to QE Mike Williams, and the crew of Challenger 76 and Z-Boat for helping with this OPTREX.

Division 8

From Dave Johnson, SO-OP

F88 Clearlake: Lake County Flotilla 88 has been conducting MOM and Ops Training patrols on Lake Berryessa under orders from SEC SF. We have been able to provide assists to disabled vessels; educate dozens of boaters exhibiting life threatening behaviors such as children under age 13, bow/gunwale/seatback/transom riders, no towing lookout, no skier down flag, and the like. With the current moratorium on orders, we will be seeking creative avenues to continue with crew training.

F87 Mendocino: No report received, assume normal fuel recirculation at fuel depot.

F11 Crescent City: No report received, assume no activity.

F39 Redding: Early September Whiskeytown Lake training for QE crew and coxswain sign offs. One helo ops. All activity suspended for budget problem.



Division 10

From Rod Rollins, SO-OP

HIGHLIGHTS:

1. Successful OPTREX was held at Lake Millerton
2. Patrols continue in the Delta and inland lakes

DETAILS:

Congratulations to all who participated in the Division 10 OPTREX. Thank you to the QE's for the drive and withstanding our summer heat. The OPTREX was fiscally prudent and was able to add to the Division's coffers. Details to follow.

10-02-One initial Crew M. Brady and two Coxswain Requals M. Rafatti and T. Witt.

10-03-One Coxswain Requal-C. Van De Boom. Weekly OTW and Land Mobile patrols are being conducted.

10-05- One initial Crew- M. Ouelette.

10-06-Patrolled for 8 days at Lake Millerton. Two Coxswain Requal-D. Pierce and H. Ratzlaff.

PROJECTS:

1. Completed OPTREX September 24-26 at Lake Millerton.
2. Patrols in the Delta and on local lakes and reservoirs.

CHALLENGES/OBSTACLES/OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Challenge is to have everyone return to water activities.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. To exceed numeral number of patrols for 2020
2. To ensure all OTW events are conducted safely after being off the water for a year.

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. I am crewing on the RBS-II as needed.
3. I am standing watch at Station Lake Tahoe as needed.
4. We have had a very challenging operation environment the last few months. The forest fires & smoke from them had us shut down for most of the time. Once the



smoke cleared we did get one patrol in to assist Station Lake Tahoe with two boat training with more needed and planned until the budget Issues stopped patrols.

- 5. I am ready to stand full duty sections for Station Lake Tahoe per their needs.

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- DIV12 Surface Operational OPFACS & STATUS
 - a) AQUAMARINE – Non-Operational – Under Inspection
 - b) SERVANT – Operational
 - c) ODYSSEY – Non-Operational
 - d) SWEETWATER – Non-Operational
- Attached is a listing of the patrols OPFAC SERVANT has engaged in during the past 30 days in Exhibit 1.
- Continued training of Boat Crew Trainees:
 - oAdam Kovalevsky
 - oRobert Torio
 - oRob Firehock (Boat Crew Certified – needs on the water training)
- Engaged in a night patrol to verify PATONS near the Oakland Airport and finalized the bridge surveys for Div 12.
- Worked with Div 1 on 3 October for their OPEX
- SERVANT from Div 12 engaged in the 2021 SF Fleet Week annual event for all four days as the West TARP Boat

Patrol Days with Crew and Operational Hours

1. Thursday, 7 October 2021

Crew: Greg Olsen, Coxswain in Training
Steven Bustin, Coxswain
Quindy Sammler



Jim Losi, Coxswain

Patrol Hours: 9.50 Hours

2 Friday, 8 October 2021

Crew: Greg Olsen, Coxswain in Training
Steven Bustin, Coxswain
Tiffany Townsend, Coxswain in Training
Alex Bennett, Boat. Crew
Jim Losi, Coxswain

Patrol Hours: 9 Hours

3 Saturday, 9 October 2021

Crew: Greg Olsen, Coxswain in Training
Steven Bustin, Coxswain
LT Natasha Kenney
LTjg Sarah Connell
Jim Losi, Coxswain

Patrol Hours: 8.5 Hours

4 Sunday, 10 October 2021

Crew: Greg Olsen, Coxswain in Training
Steven Bustin, Coxswain
Peter Gorenberg, Coxswain in Training
Jim Losi, Coxswain

Patrol Hours: 8 Hours

Projects

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

Future Activities

- Participation in Division 1 – 3 OCT training at YBI
- PATON patrols assigned to Stephen Busch of Div 113-12-91 - Final 15 to be verified
- Div 12 OPTREX on 15 & 16 OCT at Richmond Marina

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!

OpFac for Sale

Former Operational Facility "Maverick" is for sale by Flotilla 49. For additional information, contact BK Barr, bkb.cgaux@gmail.com.

"Maverick "
Bayliner Trophy 2352 Asking \$22,000

Trophy: Cuddy Cabin /Walk Around
Full Custom Canvas Cover (\$2,800.00)

All USCG required equipment for use as a Facility:
2 fire extinguishers /Tow Line, Multiple fenders, tow hook and bridle,
Rotating Red/Amber Safety Light, Detachable Solid Patrol Placards, National
Ensign and Auxiliary Patrol Ensign. Throw Bag, and charts of San Francisco
Bay. Many extra Auxiliary PVD's.
Garmin GPS/Chart plotter

New Motor (Chevy V-8) has approx. 330-340 hours run time.
Last ~~service~~ Dec 2019
Oil and Filter
Outdrive
service.

Boat serviced in San Jose at:
Pleasure Boat Specialties (408) 432-0217
2456 Kruse Dr.
San Jose, CA



U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

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