



16634
29 February 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: [REDACTED]
CG-7413

Reply to CG-7413
Attn of: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED] CG 741

Subj: OPERATIONAL EVALUATION (OPEVAL) OF VTS SAN FRANCISCO

Ref: (a) CG-7413 ltr 16634 dtd 10 JAN 08

1. Per reference (a), the Office of Shore Forces Vessel Traffic Services Division conducted an Operation Evaluation (OPEVAL) from 15-17 January 2008 at VTS San Francisco. Overall, the VTS was found to be a well run, professional operation with no mission-limiting discrepancies. In conjunction with the OPEVAL the team collected recommendations for the overall OPEVAL process and these recommendations are highlighted in paragraph 4.

2. The OPEVAL was conducted using the current checklist and contains the evaluators' observations, opinions, and recommendations. During conduct of the OPEVAL, documents including the Watch Section Training Folder, Watch Schedule and Training Board minutes were examined. Special attention was paid to the layout and content of the Operations Manual and Internal Operating Procedures (IOP). The OPEVAL findings are contained in enclosure (1). On completion of the OPEVAL the Sector Commander was provided an outbrief. The VTS was well prepared for our visit and the staff was at our disposal for the duration of the OPEVAL.

3. The following are specific recommendations for VTS San Francisco as a result of the OPEVAL conducted 15-17 January 2008:

a. EQUIPMENT:

- (1) Recommend VTSSF remain engaged with the efforts underway through the engineering change process and MLCpac and C2Cen projects to address issues identified with radar coverage, communications at the Bay Point high site, CCTV coverage and CGVTS 4.6.
- (2) Recommend VTSSF capture additional AIS requirements and submit them through the Engineering Change Request (ECR) process or include them in system enhancement list development, as appropriate.
- (3) Recommend VTSSF follow the progress of the CG-7413 sponsored Expanded Use of AIS in VTS project with the R&D Center to assist in development of using AIS capabilities to enhance VTS operations.

b. MAINTENANCE

- (1) No recommendations.

c. PROCEDURES:

- (1) Recommend VTSSF expedite the update of the IOP and ensure alignment with the VTS National SOP (NSOP). Local training plans should reflect any changes to procedures. CG-7413 will provide all VTSSs a copy of the latest draft of the NSOP.
- (2) Recommend any VTS procedures associated with standards of care developed through the Harbor Safety Committee be included in the IOP and local training as appropriate.

d. PERSONNEL:

- (1) The administrative burden on VTSSs will be addressed by the Headquarters VTS program manager in conjunction with the Sector and Command Center program managers.
- (2) Recommend VTSSF begin to send new VTS operators to the National Certification course. In order for the U.S. VTS program to be in compliance with international standards, VTSSF is required to follow the national VTS certification and training requirements. This is effective once the NSOP is approved and will include completion of the National Certification course.
- (3) Recommend VTSSF prepare a proposal for their training program to be certified as meeting the National Certification Course requirements. This proposal should include a comparison of the VTSSF curriculum with the National Certification Course curriculum. It should also discuss how the VTSSF Certification Course curriculum would support VTS program goals of the National Certification Course, including interaction with commercial mariners, simulation, alignment with International recommendations on VTS watchstander training and interaction with students from other VTSSs. The VTS Training Advisory Group (TAG) will be updating the National Certification course curriculum during the TAG meeting 25-28 February 2008; it is appropriate to address concerns with the National Certification Course at the TAG meeting.
- (4) Recommend VTSSF expedite development and implementation of a recertification and requalification program for VTS watchstanders.
- (5) Recommend VTSSF expedite the development of a local procedure for inclusion in the IOP to ensure random and post-incident drug testing is completed in accordance with DOT policy. The NSOP will provide guidance to assist in drafting local policy.

e. MISCELLANEOUS

- (1) Recommend VTSSF continue to leverage Sector staff for assistance in outreach and maximize such outreach opportunities as Harbor Safety Committee meetings. CG-7413 will be conducting a VTS Customer Satisfaction survey in the near future. The results of this survey should help identify areas to more efficiently target outreach.
 - (2) Recommend VTSSF closely monitor the effectiveness of the new watch schedule, paying particular attention to watchstander fatigue associated with shifting from 8 hour to 12 hour watches.
 - (3) Recommend VTSSF ensure bridge tower locations and any other features of navigational significance are appropriately highlighted on displays used by VTS operators. Recommend VTSSF provide input to the ECR and system enhancements process for any improvements that require engineering changes.
4. The following are recommended changes for the OPEVAL process:
- a. OPEVALs should be conducted on a routine schedule every two or three years.
 - b. Special or unscheduled OPEVALs should be conducted at a Sector or District's request or after any substantial incident where the VTS was involved.
 - c. Specific criteria that would trigger a special OPEVAL should be developed. These should include major changes to VTS equipment, regulations, or procedures, substantial turnover of VTS personnel and major changes in the maritime activity in the VTS Area.
 - d. When an OPEVAL is conducted, the findings and recommendations from the previous OPEVAL should be reviewed for status of action on any recommendations that were made..
 - e. The OPEVAL checklist should be periodically reviewed to make certain it reflects current NSOP and other guidance.
 - f. The VTS OPEVAL process should be coordinated with the Command Center Standardization Team process. The OPEVAL process and procedures should be included in the NSOP.
 - g. OPEVAL out briefs should be conducted with senior sector personnel.
5. My staff will continue to work closely with each VTS to improve the OPEVAL process and to enhance operational effectiveness.

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Encl: (1) OPEVAL Findings

Copy: CGD Eleven (dpw)
Sector San Francisco (VTS)