



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVAL SEA SYSTEMS COMMAND  
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IN REPLY TO

NAVSEAINST 4855.34A

Ser 07Q2/0455

6 Nov 06

NAVSEA INSTRUCTION 4855.34A

From: Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command

Subj: QUALIFICATION AND AUTHORIZATION OF ACTIVITIES TO PERFORM  
SUBSAFE WORK, PROCEDURES FOR

Ref: (a) NAVSEA 0924-062-0010 Rev C, Submarine Safety  
(SUBSAFE) Requirements Manual  
(b) NAVSEANOTE 5000, Identification of Activities  
Authorized to Perform SUBSAFE Work

1. Purpose. To establish policy, methodology, and processes for evaluation, qualification, and authorization of activities to perform SUBSAFE work in compliance with SUBSAFE Program requirements.

2. Cancellation. This revision supercedes NAVSEAINST 4855.34 of 14 July 1999. This is a complete revision of this instruction, and it should be read in its entirety.

3. Background. The submarine maintenance environment has changed significantly over the last several years with the regional consolidation of maintenance activities. In addition, private vendors are utilized for certain categories of submarine maintenance. Activities that have not previously performed SUBSAFE work or plan to expand their current qualification require evaluation of their capabilities to ensure that they can successfully meet reference (a) requirements.

a. Reference (a) requires activities performing SUBSAFE work to formally control and certify that work. This process is required to ensure that the submarine can operate safely and retain its authorization for Unrestricted Operations (URO). Activities authorized to perform and certify SUBSAFE work have the responsibility to develop and implement necessary policies, procedures, and practices to meet the SUBSAFE requirements of reference (a).

b. Reference (b) identifies activities authorized to perform SUBSAFE work. For activities planning to expand their current scope of qualification in reference (b), or to be added

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to reference (b), there is a need to ensure that a consistent documented policy and standard are applied to these activities.

4. Qualification. The process of achieving or expanding SUBSAFE qualification must be formal, disciplined, and tailored to the nature of the work to be performed by the activity. The decision to qualify an activity to perform and certify SUBSAFE work must be based on a detailed analysis of SUBSAFE workload requirements, and how the candidate activity can fulfill the needs of the SUBSAFE program.

5. Candidate Activity Requirements. The candidate activity has ultimate responsibility for the qualification process. The candidate activity shall:

a. Locate a SUBSAFE activity that is willing to act as a sponsor and ensure commitment of resources from the sponsor to support all aspects of new activity qualification, maintenance of qualification, and expansion of qualifications as required.

b. Develop a written plan of action (POA&M) to achieve qualification. This plan shall include real work and/or projects that can successfully demonstrate the desired core capabilities and the associated skill elements.

c. Provide all funding for the qualification process including expenses for mock-ups as well as costs incurred by the sponsoring activity including the long-term oversight costs.

6. Sponsor Requirements. The sponsor shall provide clear guidance and coordinate actions for implementing the qualification phases. As a minimum, the sponsor will review and approve the activities qualification plan. The plan should be equivalent to that outlined in paragraph 7 below. In conjunction with the activity seeking qualification, the sponsor shall:

a. Identify and validate a submarine work load to workforce imbalance within a region or,

b. Identify areas of excellence in quality or performance efficiencies to justify the time and expense associated with qualifying a new activity to perform SUBSAFE work.

c. Define in a Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding the activity and sponsor functions and responsibilities during and after the qualification process;

d. Identify and document the activity's personnel skills, capability, and training programs;

e. Conduct periodic assist visits to monitor progress and evaluate capabilities and capacities using standard written audit guides. Written guides should ensure that both the activity and the sponsor can objectively and consistently assess the capability and capacity to perform SUBSAFE work;

f. Develop a plan to establish proficiency by exposing the activity to SUBSAFE work with a closely monitored surveillance program. The plan can also include demonstration of the required skill elements by performance of similar work that is not SUBSAFE or by project mock-ups;

g. Provide trade skill and level-of-knowledge expectations to the activity;

h. Issue a Letter of Qualification (or Letter of Expansion of Qualification) with concurrence of NAVSEA 07Q, Submarine Safety and Quality Assurance Division.

i. Maintain Objective Quality Evidence (OQE) of the initial or expansion qualification process, including the documented Plan of Action and Milestones (POA&M) and the results from the individual qualification projects. OQE shall be maintained in an auditable fashion and retained for as long as the activity is considered qualified.

7. NAVSEA 07Q Support. NAVSEA 07Q will provide guidance and oversight during the qualification process. In conjunction with this oversight, NAVSEA 07Q will:

a. Assist the sponsor with the development of the written audit guides;

b. Participate in assist visits during the qualification process;

c. Participate in the sponsor qualification audit;

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d. After concurrence with the Letter of Qualification from the sponsor, include the new activity in the reference (b) list of activities authorized to perform SUBSAFE work;

e. During NAVSEA SUBSAFE Functional Audits, assess the sponsor's process for ensuring the authorized activity is in full compliance with SUBSAFE Program requirements. In addition, NAVSEA reserves the right to participate in sponsor sustaining audits of authorized activities and to perform independent SUBSAFE Functional audits of the activity.

8. Qualification Plan. A basic qualification plan that can be used as a foundation for a detailed POA&M should consist of the following attributes:

a. Project Definition and Scope

(1) Qualification projects (or real work) that support the desired core capabilities and skill elements will be selected. For each of the required qualification projects, the candidate activity will distill each project into its critical skill elements. During the program assessment phase, the candidate activity will present to the sponsor the critical skill elements for each project and define how the attributes of each skill element will be demonstrated.

(2) Potential Qualification Projects. The actual Qualification Projects required will vary depending on the nature of the SUBSAFE work to be performed by the activity.

- (a) HY-80 weld
- (b) P-1 pipe weld
- (c) Seawater ball valve repair
- (d) Periscope pull and reinstallation
- (e) Rebuild of periscope dashpots
- (f) Electrical hull fitting removal and reinstallation
- (g) Seawater pump repair
- (h) Rubber insert sound isolation coupling rebuild

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- (i) Hydraulic valve actuator repair
- (j) Stern planes ram packing replacement
- (k) R-114 head removal/reinstallation
- (l) Silver braze of SUBSAFE joint
- (m) Manufacture and certify Level I component
- (n) URO MRC inspections
- (o) Nondestructive testing inspections

b. Progress Assessment Phase (assist visit). The sponsor will review the standard Quality Assurance (QA) programs that will be required for qualification. These may vary depending on the current quality standards that apply and on the nature of the SUBSAFE work to be performed by the activity. The sponsor will review the qualification methods and skill element demonstration for each project to ensure that all required skill elements are adequately addressed when applicable, e.g.:

- (1) QA Training Program;
- (2) Brazer/Welder Training, Qualification and Proficiency Program;
- (3) Cleanliness Control Training and Qualification Program;
- (4) Quality Craftsman Qualification Program;
- (5) Material Control Program;
- (6) QA Audit and Surveillance Program;
- (7) QA Records and Record Retention Program;

c. Candidate Activity Provisional Qualification Phase (sponsor visit)

- (1) Assess the QA programs designated in the Assessment Phase. If programs are satisfactory, qualify them for use.

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(2) Assess the qualification project progress. Qualification projects and associated skill elements are required to be accomplished a minimum of two times prior to qualification. Additional accomplishment is encouraged.

d. Candidate Activity Qualification (sponsor audit)

- (1) Audit qualified QA programs.
- (2) Qualify QA programs not previously qualified.
- (3) Review completed qualification project OQE.

(4) Observe designated qualification project execution. A detailed plan to establish proficiency by exposing an activity to SUBSAFE work with a closely monitored surveillance program is required. The qualification plan will include this process whenever SUBSAFE work is used to demonstrate the required skill elements. These controls shall be used a minimum of two times for SUBSAFE work. These controls are not required for performance of similar work that is not SUBSAFE or for performance of projects/mockups.

(a) The Candidate Activity will:

1. Prepare appropriate technical work documents to accomplish the project;

2. Review the technical work documents. The activity will initial in signature blocks for review and approval processes;

3. Perform the project using their qualified craftsmen/inspectors, under the direct supervision of qualified Trade Skill and QA personnel from the sponsor or other reference (b) qualified activity;

4. Monitor and assess the project;

5. Perform closeout reviews of the technical work documents.

(b) The sponsor or other qualified reference (b) activity designated by the sponsor will:

1. Review and approve the technical work documents for use and will sign signature blocks for review and approval;

2. Assign the necessary Trade Skill and QA personnel to monitor the performance of the candidate activity project;

3. Monitor and assess the candidate activity's performance on the project;

4. Ensure that all OQE attributes are verified and documented as the candidate activity completes job/task steps;

5. Formally close the technical work documents and retain full certification responsibility for the work performed;

6. Assess the project and submit a written report to the sponsor regarding project performance.

9. Overview. After completion of the qualification process, continued oversight by the sponsor is required to ensure that SUBSAFE proficiency is maintained.

a. The sponsor will establish and maintain a QA oversight process that includes periodic review of SUBSAFE work performance, internal management, work control proficiency, and documentation.

b. NAVSEA Functional Audits will assess the adequacy of a sponsor's oversight process.



W. G. TIMME  
Rear Admiral, USN

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