



NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS CIVIL AIR PATROL

CAP REGULATION 190-1

17 MAY 2013

Public Affairs

CIVIL AIR PATROL PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM

This regulation defines the purposes of the Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs program and identifies policies that govern its administration. This regulation applies to all CAP units.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES.

Region PAOs as well as wing PAOs must create and maintain a website in accordance with CAPR 110-1; content may not be older than six months. Specifies rules of engagement for posting CAP experiences and accomplishments on personal social media accounts. Requires PAOs to promote and publicize community service projects. Clarifies that crisis communications plans are to be submitted annually. Limits Balsem Award entries to five per PAO/PIO. Streamlines entry process by requiring electronic entries and ability to enter a project only once; subcategories eliminated. Judging limited to NHQ/PA and National PA. Note: Shaded areas identify new or revised material. **Note: Shaded areas identify new or revised material.**

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1. Mission. The mission of the Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs (PA) program is to inform internal and external audiences of Civil Air Patrol's national importance, safeguard the image and assets of the corporation, and strengthen relations with key audiences and customers, which enables the organization to grow.

2. Public Affairs Officer Objectives.

a. Increase public awareness of CAP, its local, state and national missions, and its contributions to the nation.

b. Develop and conduct a comprehensive internal and external public relations plan.

c. Promote cooperation between CAP and other aviation organizations, the military, business, industry and civic groups.

3. Assignment of the Public Affairs Officer (PAO).

a. Each unit commander will appoint a qualified individual to be the PAO. Appointed PAOs that are not fully qualified will complete appropriate training within the first 12 months of their assignment (see paragraph 6, below).

b. The PAO will be appointed in accordance with current personnel procedures in CAPR 35-1, *Assignment and Duty Status*. The next higher headquarters will also be notified of all PAO appointments.

c. In the absence of an assigned PAO, the unit commander is responsible for the duties of the PAO. If the unit commander acts as the unit's PAO for 6 months, he/she will be assigned as the PAO according to current personnel procedures in CAPR 35-1 and is encouraged to enroll in the Public Affairs Officer specialty track.

4. Duties and Responsibilities. The PAO is supervised by the commander. The commander and the PAO, as the commander's delegate, are the official spokespersons for their unit. The higher-headquarters PAOs serve as advisors, mentors and resources for the development and implementation of an effective public affairs program.

a. Squadron and flight PAOs are the backbone of the national public affairs program and are primarily responsible for implementation of the program at that level.

b. Group PAOs will advise, mentor and support subordinate PAOs in their group on public affairs matters and will conduct an active PA program in support of the unit.

c. The wing PAO is the primary resource in conducting a wing-wide public affairs program. Together with the wing commander, the wing PAO will develop goals and objectives for the wing Public Affairs program as part of a PA plan and will advise, mentor and ensure that national, region, and wing objectives are implemented.

d. The region PAO serves as a field representative for NHQ/PA and as a liaison among the wing/group/squadron/flight PAOs. He/she will demonstrate leadership in guiding the work of the wing PAOs by developing an annual region PA plan that the wing PAOs can follow in implementing their goals and objectives. Region PAOs serve as advisors and supervisors and consult frequently with subordinate wing PAOs and group/squadron/flight PAOs, when needed or requested.

e. The National PAO reports to the Marketing and Public Affairs Officer. He/she assists the national leadership with media relations, internal information dissemination and community relations for the CAP Public Affairs program. He/she serves as a liaison between the National Headquarters, Public Affairs (NHQ/PA) staff and membership in regards to CAP Public Affairs matters. He/she works in coordination with the NHQ staff to implement, develop and upgrade CAP's Public Affairs program.

f. PAOs at all levels will advise and assist their unit commander. PAOs are authorized to advise other commanders, if requested, on issues that have the potential to affect CAP's professional image, or other such matters relating to CAP and the public.

g. CAP PAOs and commanders are authorized to work directly with military installation PAOs in support of CAP activities.

5. Public Affairs Support.

a. PAOs are authorized and encouraged to contact higher echelons to request assistance.

b. PAOs are authorized and encouraged to contact and develop a working relationship with the NHQ/PA office.

6. Training. PAOs will provide training for subordinate unit PAOs at least annually. In addition, to ensure the success of the Public Affairs program, all PAOs will enroll and participate in available training and resources, including:

a. Public Affairs Officer specialty track training CAPP 201, *Specialty Track Study Guide-Public Affairs Officer*, an in-depth public affairs training program leading to the Technician, Senior and Master levels of proficiency.

b. How-To Guide for Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs (CAPP 190).

c. Group/wing/region/national public affairs training courses, workshops, seminars and field training.

d. Seminars and workshops offered by the military and local, state or national organizations as deemed appropriate by the PAO and commander.

e. Public Information Officer training as part of the emergency services missions of CAP.

7. Functions of Public Affairs Officers.

a. **Planning.** PAOs at the flight/squadron, group, wing and region levels will develop an annual Public Relations plan to promote CAP, its goals and missions for internal and external audiences, and a crisis communications plan to deal rapidly and effectively with emergencies. Step-by-step instructions on how to write each plan are provided on the National Public Affairs website. The Public Relations plan will follow the four-step planning process for public affairs: Step 1 -- Determine PA needs and opportunities; Step 2 -- Establish objectives designed to fulfill needs and opportunities identified in Step 1; Step 3 -- Establish goals and action strategies for each objective; and Step 4 -- State the desired impact envisioned for each goal provided in Step 3. The unit PAO will submit a PA plan annually, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of the previous year's goals, to the wing PAO for review and input. The wing PAO will submit a PA plan annually, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of the previous year's goals, to the

region PAO and to NHQ/PA for review and input. The region PAO will submit a PA plan annually, including an evaluation of the previous year's goals, to NHQ/PA and to the National PAO, including an evaluation of the previous year's goals, for review and input. All successive PA plans and corresponding evaluations will be retained in accordance with CAPR 10-2, *Files Maintenance and Records Disposition*.

(1) **External.** PAOs will develop goals and initiatives that help build relationships with external constituencies of Civil Air Patrol and emphasize its importance in the performance of its three congressionally chartered missions of Emergency Services, Aerospace Education and Cadet Programs.

(2) **Internal.** PAOs will develop strategies that emphasize CAP's importance, member recognition, retention and encouragement of member participation in unit/wing/region/national activities and training.

(3) **PA Crisis Communications Plan.** In consultation with their commanders, PAOs at all levels will develop a crisis communications plan to ensure a rapid and effective response during an emergency that may damage the organization's reputation if mishandled. Unit crisis public affairs plans will reflect guidance outlined in the CAP National Headquarters, *Writing a Crisis Communication Plan*, listed at http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/cap_national_hq/public_affairs/. All crisis communication plans will be approved by the wing commander or designated representative. Subordinate unit crisis plans will be submitted annually to wing PAOs for review and input. Wing and region crisis plans will be submitted annually to NHQ/PA and to the National PAO for review and input.

b. External Information.

(1) Target audiences include local military installations, government agencies, schools, businesses, industry, civic organizations and the media. Community and governmental relations shall not be the exclusive responsibility of the PAO, unless accepted as an additional duty. PAOs should use community service projects as a source for promotional opportunities and publicity.

(2) PAOs below the region level will assemble current media contact information to foster working relationships. PAOs will meet periodically with representatives of key media to improve media awareness of CAP and to establish an understanding on the part of the PAO of the information needs and preferences of each media outlet.

(3) PAOs will develop standard plans and procedures for external promotion of key events in the unit, such as participation in training and actual missions, awards and promotions, and special unit activities.

(4) PAOs will assemble standard materials presenting the background of CAP suitable for distribution to the media, prospective members, partner agency officials and others as needed, including materials developed locally and/or at higher headquarters. The PAO is encouraged to check the National Headquarters website and PAO Toolkit contents regularly for updated materials.

(5) PAOs will use available unit, wing and region websites to inform the public about Civil Air Patrol.

(6) As National Headquarters adopts or updates positioning statements, slogans, logos and other components of a brand communications program, PAOs will incorporate these elements into their communications with external constituencies, whenever practical.

(7) All PA communications (news releases, public websites, articles, newsletters, photos and the like) will be approved by the commander and written in AP Style (as detailed in *The Associated Press Stylebook*). Official CAP correspondence will be written in accordance with the guidelines in CAPR 10-1.

c. Internal Public Relations.

(1) PAOs will advise the commander on internal public relations strategies and methods in order to conduct an effective program.

(2) PAOs will regularly submit news advisories and releases, with photographs whenever possible, to the next higher headquarters. This directive includes PAOs at all levels. While primarily intended for internal “newsletter” purposes, PAOs shall be aware that selected submissions may become part of higher headquarters’ external public relations activities.

8. Newsletters, Magazines and other News Publications.

a. PAOs should publish information that tells success stories, encourages participation in meetings and activities, and presents other information about the unit of interest to internal and external audiences. This information may be published as a hard copy or electronic newsletter/magazine, or by whatever method/format works best for the unit (i.e.: website, social media, etc.).

b. A newsletter and/or magazine are not required. If a unit PAO produces a newsletter and/or magazine, at least one copy will be filed in printed form or as a PDF document for later reference, and kept as a permanent historical unit record.

9. National Headquarters Publications.

a. How-To Guide for Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs, the CAP PAO’s detailed manual for accomplishing CAP’s PA mission.

b. Civil Air Patrol Volunteer magazine, CAP’s internal and external publication.

c. VolunteerNow, a CAP-wide collection of news online.

10. Multimedia and Emerging Technologies.

a. Quality still photography, videography and audio materials are essential to telling the CAP story to internal and external constituencies. The PAO shall ensure that all distributed multimedia materials, including those distributed by emerging technologies, shall be in good taste, with members shown in proper uniform, depicting the diverse and multifaceted missions and opportunities of CAP membership. Whenever possible, multimedia materials will also depict the diversity of CAP’s membership with regard to race, sex (gender), age, religion, national origin, and/or disability.

b. Photographs meeting stipulations in paragraph 10a, above, will be submitted to internal and external publications, along with information to be used in preparing captions. These submissions will include photo credits.

c. The Public Affairs Officer will have access, on a non-conflicting basis, to CAP-owned equipment, including camera and computer technology. The PAO will coordinate with other unit staff to ensure this equipment is available to other members as appropriate.

d. Photo Releases. Photos and video taken in public circumstances may be published or distributed (including images posted on the World Wide Web) without specific written or verbal permission, unless local law requires more specific permission.

(1) CAP will not publish identifying information other than name, grade and general locale of the individual's unit of assignment, limited to city, state and flight/squadron/group/wing/region name.

(2) CAP will obtain written permission from identifiable individuals appearing on photographs that are used for commercial purposes, including paid advertising purchased by CAP, but not including official publications and websites produced by CAP staff.

(3) When individual circumstances cause members to request that they not appear in photographs distributed by CAP, Public Affairs staff and any member serving as a CAP photographer shall make a good-faith effort to comply with the request.

(4) None of the provisions in this section will be interpreted as applying to legitimate news organizations or to members conducting photography for personal rather than corporate purposes, unless such photos and video are later adopted for corporate use.

11. Electronic Communications.

a. Website. PAOs at the wing and region levels, in conjunction with the information technology officer and/or commander designee, will create and maintain their unit website in accordance with CAPR 110-1. The PAO will have authority over the content of all web pages visible to the public and will keep the website accurate and current with assistance from other officers as is necessary. Information posted, unless timeless in content, will not be older than 6 months.

b. Social Media. All levels of CAP, from flights and squadrons to National Headquarters, are encouraged to create and use social media to help reach out to their membership, potential members, friends of CAP and the general public by telling CAP stories on unit social networking sites. Units are not required to use social media, but are encouraged to do so as resources allow. The responsibility for use of social media by CAP units rests with the unit commander and will be overseen by the unit PAO or a member designated by the commander under the direction of the unit PAO. The unit PAO will ensure that CAP social media operations will:

(1) Be conducted in accordance with existing CAP regulations and will not violate Operational Security (OPSEC) requirements.

(2) Respect copyrights and trademarks in content.

(3) Be maintained and kept fresh, interesting and relevant.

(4) Use links to nationally produced multimedia, CAP news releases, articles and images, as deemed appropriate.

c. Social Engagement. PAOs at every level will encourage members of their unit to talk about their positive CAP experiences and accomplishments on their personal social media accounts, as well as address questions, acknowledge comments and contribute to conversations about CAP. CAP members are not required to advocate for CAP on their personal social media accounts, but are encouraged to do so. The unit PAO will counsel their unit members that when representing CAP online they should:

(1) Identify themselves as a CAP member.

- (2) Be polite and respectful.
- (3) Respond with a thank you when receiving praise.
- (4) Provide accurate information.
- (5) Refer a question that can't be answered by them to someone in the chain of command who can.

12. Public Information Officer (PIO). One of the best opportunities for CAP to get its message out to the public is when the organization is supporting emergency services missions for state and local communities. Public affairs and media relations issues are handled by specially qualified personnel called PIOs or their supervisors or by incident commanders (IC) if a PIO has not been appointed. In accordance with CAPR 60-3, CAP Emergency Services Training and Operational Missions, information that is releasable to the public on CAP missions should be given promptly to news media representatives. In addition, public awareness and understanding of CAP resulting from the efforts of the PIO can play a vital role in recruitment and retention, as well as government and community relations. The PIO provides and receives critical information, advises the incident commander, protects the image of CAP and provides timely information to the public affairs staff of each higher headquarters.

a. Training. In order to serve as a PIO, the individual will complete the required training and certification in accordance with CAPR 60-3 and CAPP 201.

b. Appointment. A PIO, fully qualified in accordance with current PIO training requirements or a trainee under supervision as outlined in CAPR 60-3, may be appointed at the discretion of the incident commander (IC) for any training or actual mission. ICs will fulfill the responsibilities of the PIO if one is not appointed. Assignment of a PIO is mandatory for all actual emergency services missions (not training) lasting or expected to last more than 48 hours, including, but not limited to, missing aircraft, missing persons, disaster relief or other humanitarian aid operations. Some missions, like counterdrug or homeland security operations, may require additional discretion and/or little to no dissemination of public information; the CAP National Operations Center or National Headquarters Public Affairs may limit or edit what CAP ICs and/or PIOs release.

13. Reporting. Higher CAP echelons below NHQ may establish quarterly reporting requirements for their subordinate unit public affairs activities. In such cases, reporting requirements will avoid an unreasonable administrative burden. These reports may be issued electronically.

14. Awards. Each year, Civil Air Patrol recognizes the Public Affairs Officer at any level (unit, group, wing and region) who excels in conducting and managing an exceptional public affairs program.

a. The Colonel Robert (Bud) V. Payton Public Affairs Officer of the Year award recognizes the PAO who epitomizes the Public Affairs program of CAP. The award is presented to the PAO at any level of the organization who provides outstanding and exemplary support for the CAP Cadet Program, Aerospace Education Program and Emergency Services Program and has a Public Affairs plan that greatly enhances the perceived value of Civil Air Patrol to the community.

(1) By 15 January. Unit commanders should submit nominations to the wing commander for consideration.

(2) By 15 February. Wing commanders will review the nominations from unit commanders within their wings should and forward the best nominee to the region commander for consideration.

(3) By 15 March. Region commanders will select the best of the wing nominees and forward one nomination to NHQ/PA for consideration.

(4) By 15 April. The National PAO and the NHQ Deputy Director, Public Affairs, will co-chair a committee consisting of the Deputy National Chief of Staff – Support, National Marketing and Public Affairs Officer to rank order the region nominations received. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Personnel Officer to present to the National Commander, who will make the final decision.

(5) The award will be presented during the Annual Conference.

b. The Maj Howell Balsem Exceptional Achievement Awards recognize excellence in nine major categories of the CAP Public Affairs program, as listed below. All entries must be the work of a PAO or PIO or any member whose work product was generated while acting as a PAO/PIO. All entries must be the work of the person submitting the entry. Competition is limited to five entries per member. A project may only be entered once. All entries must have been generated during the previous calendar year and must be items that were approved by the PAO's commander. All entries must be submitted electronically. The online template for submissions will be open through midnight on 15 May; the system will automatically shut down 16 May and no other entries will be accepted. Awards are presented by the PAO's wing commander at an event deemed appropriate for the award.

Major Categories:

- Brochure/Poster/Flyer
- Magazine
- Slide/PowerPoint Presentations
- Website
- Photography
- External Media Coverage of CAP
- Event Promotion
- Crisis Management
- Social Media

The Balsem Awards program is administered by the National PAO and the NHQ Deputy Director, Public Affairs. Winners are selected based solely on the judges' view of each entry's creativity and overall effectiveness, with emphasis on following the four-step planning process.

The judges may award a first-place Balsem Award, second-place Award of Excellence, and third-place Certificate of Merit for each category, OR the judges may opt to not present an award in any category. More than one first-, second- or third-place award may be selected, as the judges deem appropriate. The Lt Col Al Pabon Best in Show will be awarded at judges' discretion.

CHARLES L. CARR, JR.
Major General, CAP
Commander