



Civil Air Patrol
U.S. Air Force Auxiliary

2022 BACKGROUNDER



Aircraft Intercept Training

Who We Are and What We Do

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is a unique public service organization chartered by Congress that functions both as a nonprofit and the auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. Under its charter and public laws, CAP performs a variety of emergency and operational missions on demand for the federal government. Additionally, CAP offers youth programs and provides support to schools and students in thousands of communities.

Every state, Puerto Rico, and Washington, D.C., has a CAP wing with multiple local units, known as squadrons. These squadrons respond to state and local emergencies throughout the year and are an integral part of their communities. About 56,000 volunteers

lend their expertise and time to help save lives, shape futures, and strengthen education using leadership development, aerospace, and STEM curricula developed by CAP.

Why CAP

In 1942, CAP began tracking enemy submarines along the coastline from Maine to Texas to support the war effort at home. For 18 months civilian volunteers flew their own aircraft reporting German submarine locations to the military, escorting convoys, and helping locate survivors of enemy attacks on shipping. CAP's efforts helped push the submarine threat well away from coastal shipping. At the same time CAP started to fly search and rescue missions and train pilots, including

women and African Americans. After the war, CAP continued its national and state efforts in a non-combatant capacity.

Helping the Nation and States

CAP volunteers conduct a wide range of aviation missions with a fleet of 555 aircraft (the world's largest single-engine fleet), more than 1,000 vehicles, 2,250 small Unmanned Aerial Systems, and a nationwide network of more than 10,000 radios. CAP also developed unique lifesaving software technology to make search and rescue operations faster and more efficient for both air and ground searches. Last year, CAP flew more than 92,000 hours and was credited with saving 108 lives.



National Flight Academy

During 2021 CAP mobilized to provide 40 states and Puerto Rico with COVID-19 support that ranged from flying test kits, ventilators, vaccines, and critical personal protective equipment to remote hospitals to serving millions of packaged meals to those in need. CAP members also hosted blood drives while collecting thousands of units of blood. While maintaining strict safety protocols, CAP's mobilization in support of COVID-19 missions has been the largest effort since World War II, totaling more than 40,000 volunteer days of service during the pandemic. CAP's coronavirus efforts are continuing in 2022.

CAP's flight operations, particularly those assigned by First Air Force and FEMA, include search and rescue, air intercept training, disaster photo support, low-level route surveys, Navy vessel escorts, national communications and others. At the state level, CAP tracks wildlife, patrols rivers and bays for people in distress, identifies threatening ice conditions in winter, and more. These missions typically cost about \$165 an hour, while military aircraft can cost thousands of dollars per hour.

Shaping Young Lives

CAP's youth program impacts more than 23,000 cadets nationwide weekly in local communities.

CAP provides young members an opportunity to become good citizens, confident leaders, and physically fit and to explore aerospace and other careers through weekly meetings, summer encampments, special activities such as worldwide youth exchanges, flight training, and internships across the nation. In more rural communities and states CAP youth programs are particularly valued activities due to the absence of other quality opportunities.

Strengthening Education

CAP's aerospace education programs support community schools, teachers, students, and CAP youth through a variety of programs, including curriculum for K-12 classes and study guides, books, and special project kits that address aviation, space, cyber, and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math). Special programs range from recognizing outstanding educators to providing teachers an opportunity to see how scientific principles work while flying in a CAP aircraft.

What We Need

CAP is an organization of national interest to Congress that serves nearly all districts in every state as well as Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. It is important for members of Congress to be knowledgeable about its operations and programs and connection with the Air Force as a Total Force partner. Our volunteer professionals and exceptional youth reflect a cross-section of communities and states.

CAP annually reports to Congress as required by law. It is our opportunity to inform and educate through in-person meetings and delivery of our Report to Congress, generally in late February. This year, due to the coronavirus, we will conduct mostly virtual meetings with congressional offices from Feb. 14-March 18.

CAP is funded in the annual Defense Appropriations bill, and every dollar spent on CAP saves the government more than \$3. Last year, CAP programs saved the nation \$197 million.

CAP depends on members of Congress who want to help by informing the defense committees of their support for CAP's budget. Typically, this is done through either an appropriations request or a letter of support to the defense appropriations and authorization committees.

Contact John Swain at DCOffice@capnhq.gov for more information.