

CAC Continuity Between Terms Best Practices Guide

8/06/2021

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1. Purpose and Motivation

1.1 The Cadet Advisory Council (CAC) is a body within the Civil Air Patrol tasked with aiding their echelon commander in the implementation of the cadet program while also providing a valuable leadership experience for those involved. However it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to successfully fulfill this purpose without continuity between terms which take effect October 1st of each year with incoming representatives appointed by the 15th of September. This short start-up time, among many other factors discussed in this guide, make it difficult for the process of continuity to take place. Any experienced CAC member will tell you that regardless of the success of the previous term this results in there being a substantial period of time spent reorganizing and refocusing the council at the beginning of each term. There is rampant institutional knowledge decay and a large brain-sink, and experience is lost as previous council members leave and new ones spend time facing the same issues every year.

1.2 This guide compiled by the NCAC hopes to provide some insight into some best practices to ensure effective continuity between terms, wasting less time and becoming more efficient overall. It is oriented towards council Chairs on any echelon who wish to improve the continuity process of their council.

2. Council Organization

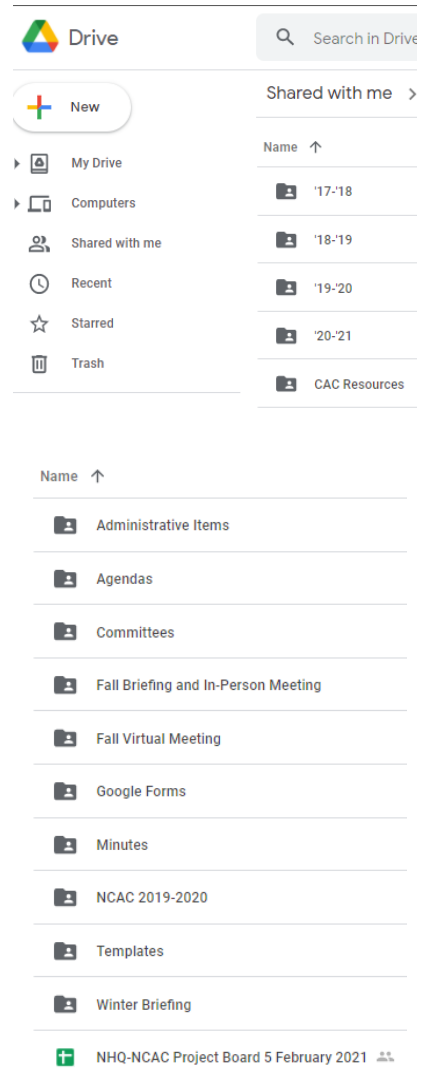
2.1 The organization of the records of a council are crucial in ensuring continuity between terms. Many councils often use software such as Microsoft Teams or Google Drive to communicate, store data, and save progress on programs. To maintain progress and assets within each council, data should be kept in a common CAC drive for the council with a sub folder for every term.

2.1.1 Over several years, a collection of progress from the council would build a powerful library of resources, research, and data and increase retained knowledge and experience. Furthermore, keeping access to both complete and incomplete projects allows easy access for future use and investigations.

2.1.2 At a minimum each term's folder should contain the following subfolders: Agendas, Minutes, Individual Committee Folders, and Contact Information.

2.1.2 Within each term's sub directory councils should consider including a spreadsheet of all active committees from that year and the contact information of the committee members so that future councils may contact them if necessary. See Attachment 1 as an Example.

2.1.3 We also recommend that councils maintain a project board viewable by all members. This helps council members gauge the status of the current and past projects that the council has initiated. Doing so makes it easy to see where follow up action is needed or where there are unfinished projects and avoid repeat projects. See Attachment 2 or the image below as an Example.



ECHELON CADET ADVISORY COUNCIL

PROJECT BOARD - CURRENT TERM & HISTORICAL

LAST UPDATED	COORDINATION BY								On Standby
DD Month YYYY	Council Chair Name	Echelon Chair YR-YR							Tabled
	Council Senior Advisor Name	Echelon Senior Advisor							Closed
	Director of Cadet Programs Name	Echelon/CP							In Process (Carry Over)
									CP
									CC
									Ready to be Implemented
									Implemented
CHAIR	ITEM NO.	TITLE	Description	STATUS FOR COUNCIL	NEXT ACTION	Documents	DISPOSITION PER COUNCIL	FEEDBACK FROM CP	RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP FOR CC
Chair Name	YR-01	Title	Description	Status - Color Coded Appropriately	Next Action	Document Link	Next Action Voted on by Council	Feedback	Requested Action
	YR-02	Title	Description	Status - Color Coded Appropriately	Next Action	Document Link	Next Action Voted on by Council	Feedback	Requested Action
	YR-03	Title	Description	Status - Color Coded Appropriately	Next Action	Document Link	Next Action Voted on by Council	Feedback	Requested Action
HISTORICAL									
Chair Name	YR-01	Title	Description	Status - Color Coded Appropriately	Next Action	Document Link	Next Action Voted on by Council	Feedback	Requested Action
	YR-02	Title	Description	Status - Color Coded Appropriately	Next Action	Document Link	Next Action Voted on by Council	Feedback	Requested Action
	YR-03	Title	Description	Status - Color Coded Appropriately	Next Action	Document Link	Next Action Voted on by Council	Feedback	Requested Action
Chair Name	YR-01	Title	Description	Status - Color Coded Appropriately	Next Action	Document Link	Next Action Voted on by Council	Feedback	Requested Action

2.2 At least biyearly a written report should be compiled by the council chair reviewing the current status of the council. See Attachment 3 for a sample layout. When the incoming chair and council members review this report it will manifest itself as a systematic transfer of experience from one administration to the other. This should not only include the current initiatives and goals but should answer the following questions:

- 1) How did we improve representation during our term?
- 2) What hurdles did we face, and how could we solve them?
- 3) What can be done to increase efficiency in the next half year?
- 4) What did we accomplish?

3. Incoming and Outgoing Staff Transition

3.1 The incoming CAC Chair, Vice Chair, and any other applicable executive council positions should be selected at a minimum of 2 months prior. This allows sufficient time for the incoming executive staff to meet with the outgoing staff at least several times. These meetings should serve as a direct exchange of experience with the outgoing staff advising the incoming staff on their goals and vision for the council along with the council reports referenced in section 2.2.

3.1.1 The incoming staff should also make an effort to attend the meetings preceding them taking command to understand the dynamic of the council and gain experience before their term begins.

3.1.2 Although the regulations say the incoming council members do not need to be appointed until September 15th it is highly recommended that they be appointed at least one month prior giving the incoming staff sufficient time to contact them. The staff should make sure to have established two-way communication as soon as possible after they are appointed and if unable to contact the appropriate commander for assistance.

3.2 Two of the purposes of the CAC as defined in CAPR 60-1 reference the echelon commander. Hence, the incoming staff should work to schedule a meeting with their commander early on to receive their strategic vision and goals for their echelon and how the CAC can be of assistance.

3.2.1 The incoming staff should also make sure to have a similar meeting with the senior advisor of the council and receive their input aiding them in defining their goals for the term.

3.2.2 Special efforts should also be made to secure two-way communication with the commanders on the echelon below that of the council to allow communication regarding assigning representatives if necessary.

4. Incoming and Outgoing Council Members Transition

4.1 As stated in the problem statement, with every new CAC term experience is lost. Retraining and settling leaders' new policies take a significant amount of time that could be used effectively serving the Civil Air Patrol. Those familiar with CAC will understand the experience of the first few months of each new administration. The solution is simple- retain those who are knowledgeable long enough to have a continuous and smooth flow of experience and information with no abrupt loss of council effectiveness. These CAC mentors would sit in on meetings and give input whenever needed or requested by the sitting council by vote. Previous CAC personnel should be welcome to attend meetings and provide input, as their experience is invaluable to an effective advisory council.

4.2 Selecting and involving incoming terms earlier than normal is another way to increase institutional knowledge retention and decrease brain-sink. For example, conducting interviews and applications for CAC positions in June or July as opposed to August-September would allow selected incoming chairs, recorders, and representatives to engage and participate constructively in the routine council meetings whilst being mentored by the outgoing term.

4.3 While keeping experienced members onboard assists in alleviating the annual loss of experience, involving future CAC leaders from the onset of their advisory council career allows them to gain more experience in the first place. For example, if squadron and group level representatives were invited to and able to attend Wing-level calls as observers, they would have less work to do adjusting to each CAC environment as they grow in the program.

It is important to note these reforms will take time and effort that could be spent on assigned projects and new initiatives. Although this is true, the months spent annually reorganizing the advisory council in the Fall in future terms being opened up to productive work would make up for this.

6. Attachments

Attachment 1: Committee Roster template

YY'-YY' Echelon-CAC Term			
Committee Name 1	Email	Phone Number	Status
Chair			
Member 1			
Member 2			
Member 3			
Committee Name 2	Email	Phone Number	Status
Chair			
Member 1			
Member 2			
Member 3			
Committee Name 3	Email	Phone Number	Status
Chair			
Member 1			
Member 2			
Member 3			
Committee Name 4	Email	Phone Number	Status
Chair			
Member 1			
Member 2			
Member 3			

Attachment 2: Project Board Template

Echelon-CAC Project Board					
YY' Term			Chair:		Last Updated:
Item No.	Title	Description	Documents	Status	Feedback/Next Action
YY-01					
YY-02					
YY-03					
YY-04					
YY' Term			Chair:		Last Updated:
Item No.	Title	Description	Documents	Status	Feedback/Next Action
YY-01					
YY-02					
YY-03					
YY-04					
YY' Term			Chair:		Last Updated:
Item No.	Title	Description	Documents	Status	Feedback/Next Action
YY-01					
YY-02					
YY-03					
YY-04					

YYYY-YYYY Semi-Annual Report

DD Month YYYY

Echelon Cadet Advisory Council

Echelon Headquarters

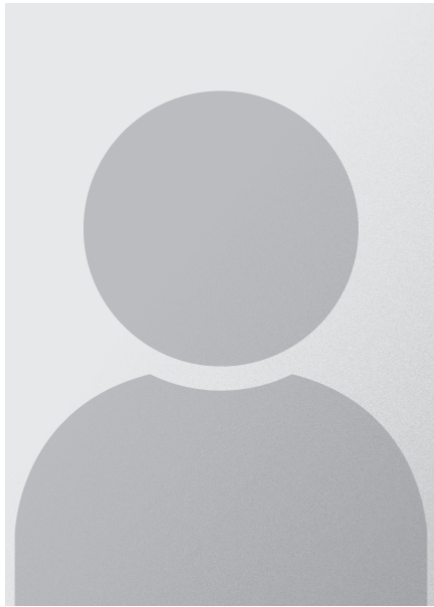
Civil Air Patrol

United States Air Force Auxiliary Maxwell AFB, AL

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Chair's Welcome - Chair Name	#
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Group/Wing/Region 3	#
Appendix	#
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Chair's Welcome - Chair Name



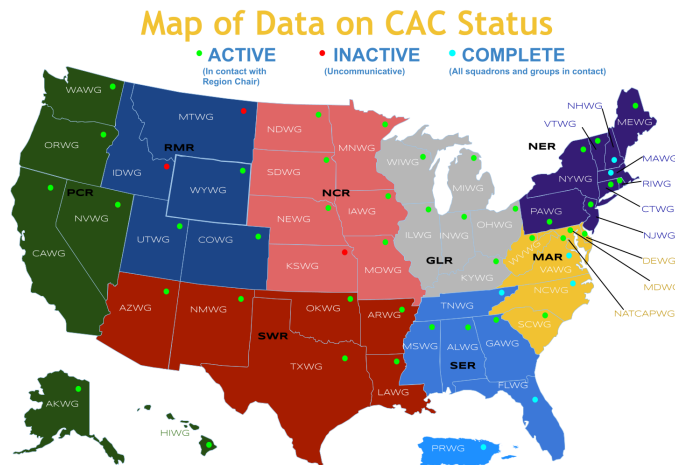
Council Update/Briefing

Overview

Overview of this report. Link to Social Media pages and give thanks for support.

Map of CAC Activity

This map shows the current status of CAC structures throughout your Echelon.



Updated DD Month YYYY

Term Projects

I. Committee 1

Description

II. Committee 2

Description

III. Committee 3

Description

From the Groups/Wings/Regions

The following section is from each representative explaining their Group/Wing/Region CAC's term goals, progress, and accomplishments.

Group/Wing/Region 1

Description

Group/Wing/Region 2

Description

Group/Wing/Region 3

Description

Appendix

The following pages are full attachments of all relevant materials distributed for CAC business in the following order. The documents are also hyperlinked in the sections below to access digitally.

Minutes

- DD MMM YYYY Minutes (hyperlinked)
- DD MMM YYYY Minutes (hyperlinked)
- DD MMM YYYY Minutes (hyperlinked)
- DD MMM YYYY Minutes (hyperlinked)

Proposals

- Committee 1 Proposal (hyperlinked)
- Committee 2 Proposal (hyperlinked)
- Committee 3 Proposal (hyperlinked)