



# CAPSafety Beacon

**July 2022**

*The Safety Beacon is for informational purposes. Unit Safety Officers are encouraged to use the articles in the Beacon as topics for their monthly safety briefings and discussions. Members may go to [eservices Learning Management System](#), click on "Go to AXIS," search for this month's Safety Beacon, take the quiz, and receive safety education credit. Past Beacon newsletters can be found in the [CAPSafety Beacon Archive](#).*

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## **Activity Safety Officers**

By Col Robert Castle, *National Senior Safety Program Advisor*

### **The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly (with apologies to Hollywood)**

So, your wing is hosting a National Cadet Special Activity next year and the Wing Commander has selected YOU to be the Activity Director! Congratulations! (This is some of the good part.)

As you eagerly begin planning all the myriad details required to hold an event of this size and importance, you realize the key to a successful event is having a good staff to provide the necessary help you know you're going to need.

Let's see...

- Administration ... Check!
- Cadet Programs ... Check!
- Finance ... Check!
- Logistics ... Check!
- Operations ... Check!

Now we can get started on the planning! What's that, you say? Are we missing something? Safety?] Oh, yeah ... safety ... well, what about safety? No activity is without risk, but good planning and execution by the right people goes a long way toward keeping members as safe as possible during CAP activities.

[CAP Regulation 160-1](#) (paragraph 2.6.7 if you want to look it up) says that "All National Cadet Special Activities (NCSA), wing encampments, and any other organized CAP activity or event lasting more than 48 hours or spanning two nights will have a designated activity SE, working under the supervision of the activity director/commander."

Appointing an activity Safety Officer should be one of the first positions filled when creating an activity staff. Unfortunately, in some cases the Safety Officer position becomes an afterthought (that's the ugly part).

Activity Directors can get a head start on the Risk Management (RM) process during the early planning stages of an event by working with their Safety Officer to identify hazards and develop risk mitigations to lessen risk (more of the good part).

If the event involves flying activities (powered or nonpowered), the appointed Safety Officer should be a general aviation pilot or a CAP aircrew member.

Oh, and don't forget, the Safety Officer must have completed the Activity Safety Officer course in AXIS during the current or previous calendar year.

Involve the Activity Safety Officer in the early planning stages with the rest of the experts on the staff – the earlier the better.

### **Risk Management Planning**

Consider the following when developing your RM plan:

- Hydration and temperature awareness. (Hot or cold temperature, members need to be dressed appropriately, and people can still dehydrate during the winter)
- Proper nutrition and timing and preparation of meals. (Is food kept appropriately hot or cold as needed to prevent spoilage? Are there members attending the event who have special dietary needs? Food allergies?)
- Living facilities. (Bunks, bathrooms, showers in good condition, and hazards identified?)
- Corporate vehicle drivers properly licensed and proficient in driving assigned vehicles?
- Daily vehicle inspections. (Sometimes overlooked in the rush of getting members to events on time)

- Use spotters when backing. It's hard to explain why the van hit the parked vehicle and none of the eight members inside the van said a thing before the collision (the bad stuff).
- Drivers and spotters look around the vehicle before backing and coordinate signals. (the driver may not hear the spotter yelling "STOP!" if the windows are all rolled up or closed and the radio is playing Metallica).

A [Risk Management briefing](#) is a key part of the activity start (even more of the good stuff).

The briefing should include:

- Elements of CAP's risk management process.
- Hazards and risk controls that have been implemented.
- Letting each member know what their individual role is.

Without them knowing it, you've just taught them about risk management! [CAPP 60-70](#), Section 3, also has some excellent safety resources that support CAP activities.

### Safety Significant Occurrences

When you do have a Significant Safety Occurrence (SSO), be sure to follow the [region supplement](#) to ensure notification of activity leadership and wing and region command staff (they would rather hear about it than read it in an email). You also need to be familiar with requirements in [CAPR 160-2](#) for aircraft accident and incident reporting, as well as [CAPR 35-2](#) for death or serious injury/illness reporting to CAP's National Operations Center (NOC phone number: 888-211-1812).

The SSO must then be reported in the CAP Safety Information System (CAPSIS) in eServices within 48 hours of the occurrence. Don't wait until the activity is over to file all your SSOs. Please note that ***CAPSIS is not an appropriate method for reporting SSOs to wing and region command or to the NOC.***

Once the event is over, you're not quite done yet. Everybody is more than ready to head home, but a good staff will take time to review events of the activity and cover what went right, what went wrong, and how things can be made to work better. That "hot wash," or debrief, should be recorded and kept for those planning the next event so the wheel doesn't have to be reinvented (again).

### Key Takeaways

Whether you're the Activity Director or the Activity Safety Officer, here are some key takeaways:

- Understand that incidents will happen, regardless of how perfect you think the plan is.

- If the mitigation doesn't work as planned, what can be changed to prevent another incident?
- Gain more insight into the human factors in how an individual will react based on:
  - Age
  - Experience
  - Fatigue
  - Physical ability
  - Proficiency
  - Confidence
- Always be prepared to modify the plan depending on the actual conditions and events.
- Do not be afraid to call "knock it off" if conditions are different than originally projected or change during an event.
- Take notes and actively involve yourself in the various activities to further your own knowledge. Observing and listening is much more effective than reading about it.
- Learn something new every day.

Remember there are lots of resources available to assist you no matter what problem arises. Don't hesitate to contact your Wing, Region, or NHQ Safety Staff when you have questions or need assistance (still more of the good!).