



## CAP HOT AIR BALLOON FLIGHT OPERATIONS

(8 June 2015)

### 1. General:

This prescribes the responsibilities of all Civil Air Patrol (CAP) personnel as applicable to the control and management of hot air balloon flying programs, procedures, and authorizations. At all times, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations and requirements will provide for the minimum standards in operations of hot air balloons, unless otherwise noted.

### 2. Hot Air Balloon Operations:

- a. All balloon operations will be conducted IAW current FAA Regulations.
- b. Only the following balloon models/sizes are authorized for CAP use: AX6, AX7, and AX8.
- c. Smoking is prohibited on and within 100 feet of hot air balloons at all times.
- d. Balloon crews will obtain prior permission from landowners before engaging in hot air balloon setup and departure activities. Hot air balloon aircrews will do everything possible to foster and maintain good relations with landowners, especially when landing and during breakdown.
- e. Chase crews will always be used and a method of maintaining two-way communications between chase crews and balloon crews will be established prior to launch.
- f. Flight release will be obtained by a qualified FRO prior to launch.
- g. Normal hot air balloon activities will be conducted under "C" mission symbols; however, other mission symbols may be used with appropriate authorization.
- h. Wear of CAP uniforms while operating CAP balloons is not required unless otherwise directed by a wing commander or higher. Ballooning activity demands that comfortable nonrestrictive clothing be worn. Though a uniform is not required, personnel should wear clothing that is appropriate for the conditions in which they are operating, identifies them as CAP members and reflects CAP in a positive manner. No outer clothing made of nylon shall be worn by either the flight or ground crew.
- i. Hot air balloon pilots will exercise good judgment with respect to wind conditions. No orientation or training flights will occur when actual or forecast winds exceed 10 knots during the proposed flight period.
- j. FAA considers tethered flight time as a flight. Tethered flights will be treated the same as untethered flights in all aspects of CAP's Hot Air Balloon Operations.

### 3. Hot Air Balloon Qualifications:

- a. Wing/CCs will designate, in writing, commercial rated balloon pilots who are authorized to administer flight evaluations in CAP hot air balloons.
- b. Equivalent Make and Models. Balloon pilots must receive an initial CAPF 5B flight evaluation in each "bottom end" make (manufacturer e.g. Cameron, Firefly, Head, Lindstrand, Aerostar, etc.) to be piloted. Certain models/sizes of balloons are considered equivalent to one another; an initial CAPF 5B in any of the following balloon models/sizes counts as a CAPF 5B for all of the following equivalent balloon models/sizes: AX6, AX7, and AX8. Recurrent CAPF 5B flight evaluations will renew all previously completed CAPF 5B qualifications.
- c. Balloon flight evaluations will be recorded on a CAPF 5B with associated data submitted in WMIRS.
- d. A CAPF 5Q-Balloon Questionnaire will be completed prior to a flight evaluation in a balloon.
- e. In the event that a Wing does not have a CAP qualified balloon check pilot; an annual flight evaluation may, with prior written approval of the wing commander, be administered by a commercial balloon pilot.
- f. Balloon pilots must have a minimum of 35 hours PIC before flying Cadets.
- g. Balloon pilots must have a minimum of 50 hours PIC before being designated as balloon check pilots and/or balloon check pilot examiners.