

CAP Squadrons and Missions

Lesson Objective: Comprehend how the various types of squadrons support CAP's three missions.

Desired Learning Outcomes (DLO):

1. Describe the three types of CAP squadrons and the process for chartering a new unit.
2. Describe how squadrons support the three missions of CAP and the role that the squadron commander plays in this process.
3. Explain the importance of conducting engaging squadron meetings and activities.

Scheduled Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Introduction

The squadron is the “heart” of CAP. It is at this level where new members get their introduction to CAP and receive training to effectively support the organization. It is the squadron commander who creates an environment to attract potential members and motivate existing members to support the mission. Both the internal and external programs promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

1. CAP's three types of squadrons and the process for chartering a new unit.

The squadron is the local-level unit in CAP and the main functioning body. It is at this level where much of the mission is accomplished and where wings pull resources to execute Emergency Services missions. Squadrons are designated based on the type of members assigned to the unit.

- Senior Squadron: Senior squadrons are comprised entirely of senior members. Cadets are not assigned to senior squadrons.
- Cadet Squadron: Cadet squadrons are comprised primarily of cadets with at least three senior members to meet supervisory, administrative, and training requirements to conduct the cadet program.
- Composite Squadron: Composite squadrons are comprised of both cadets and senior members, conducting both cadet and senior programs.

The flight is the smallest CAP membership unit authorized and must conform to minimum membership requirements set forth in CAPR 20-3(I). Flights will be organized only in sparsely populated areas where there are an insufficient number of individuals to constitute a squadron (CAPR 20-3(I), D.22). Flights are not attached to squadrons. Flights have their own charter and must meet all the same requirements as a squadron other than number of members.

Chartering new units

Individuals interested in organizing a CAP unit must contact the appropriate wing commander and request that a charter be issued. The request must include:

- A statement listing a sufficient number of individuals interested to justify organization of a squadron.

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- A description of the proposed commander's qualifications.
- A proposed name for the unit.
- The mailing address of the unit.
- The name of the organization sponsoring the squadron, if any.
- The date, time, and location of unit meetings and description of available facilities (if known).
- Check or money order in the amount \$20, payable to NHQ CAP, for payment of the charter fee.

2. How squadrons support CAP's missions and the role of the unit commander in the process.

Each CAP squadron brings a unique skill-set to serve the organization. Some have pilots and aircrew members and others have radio operators and ground team members. Others have squadrons of like-minded aviation enthusiasts and future aerospace leaders. That said, what will you as the squadron commander do to foster among your members an appreciation for all 3 missions?

Aerospace Education

CAP units have a requirement to conduct both internal and external aerospace education programs. The internal program provides aerospace education training opportunities to members while the external program provides aerospace education to the general public, teachers, and schools.

The Internal AE Program provides aerospace training and knowledge to both senior and cadet members. Activities include:

- Aerospace Education Excellence (AEX). The AEX program is free for all members and involves hands-on aviation and space-related activities. Units who complete the program receive certificates and a plaque.
- CAP STEM Kit Program. This program supplies STEM resources for hands-on, inquiry-based learning. Squadrons can choose from Astronomy, Flight Simulator, Hydraulic Engineering, Model & Remote-Control Aircraft, Robotics, Rocketry, Ready-to-Fly Quadcopter, Advanced Quadcopter, Raspberry Pi, and Weather Station.
- Yeager Test. The Yeager Test is a self-paced program for all active adult members involving the CAP text, *Aerospace: The Journey of Flight*.

The External AE program is accomplished through academic programs within the educational systems and through contacts between CAP members and their communities. Activities include:

- Aerospace Education Member (AEM). AEM is a special membership category open to educators or any reputable individual or organization that has a desire to promote the aerospace objectives and purpose of CAP.

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- Aerospace Education Workshops. CAP provides assistance by providing aerospace education workshops in school systems and colleges.
- Aerospace Education Materials. CAP has numerous educational materials available to educators and community organizations to enhance and supplement their existing academic curricula. These include AEX and STEM Kits.
- Aerospace Connections in Education (ACE). AE's K-6 elementary aerospace program that provides grade-specific lesson plans for character development, physical fitness and academics all revolving around an aerospace theme.

Cadet Programs

“Mission. *The Cadet Program transforms youth into dynamic Americans and aerospace leaders. CAP accomplishes its Cadet Program through a curriculum of leadership, aerospace, fitness and character. The program follows a military model and emphasizes Air Force traditions and values. Today’s cadets are tomorrow’s aerospace leaders.*” (CAPR 60-1)

The Cadet Program is structured to emphasize its four main program elements: leadership, aerospace, fitness, and character. The program’s fifth element, activities, provides cadets a setting to practice the four main elements.

CADET MEETINGS

How do I know what to schedule in our meetings? Is it required that we conduct leadership, aerospace, fitness, and character training? Commanders will ensure their unit’s meetings provide the training content listed in CAPR 60-1 Figure 4-2.

Leadership: 1.5 hrs	Aerospace: 1.5 hrs	Fitness: 1 hour	Character: 1 hour
Includes classroom instruction, drill and ceremonies, team leadership problems and similar activities.	Includes classroom instruction, “AEX” activities, tours, rocketry, Satellite Tool Kit, STEM Kit, cyber defense and similar activities.	Includes fitness games, drills, orienteering, classroom instruction, fitness testing and similar activities.	Includes character forums, DDR programs, mentoring, guest speakers and similar activities.

Derived from CAPR 60-1 Figure 4-2. Monthly Training Requirements

These guidelines provide a baseline for cadet training, expressing CAP’s desire for units to offer activities relating to each of the four main program elements over the course of each month. Units may exceed these guidelines and fill any remaining contact hours with electives (e.g. special projects, emergency services training, community service, etc.). Units are also required to conduct safety training (see CAPR 62-1, *CAP Safety Responsibilities and Procedures*).

Cadet Advancement – Feedback and Feedback Meetings. Commanders must ensure that all cadets receive constructive feedback using the CAPF 60-90 series, *Cadet Leadership Feedback*, at least once per phase. Adult leaders and cadet officers may conduct CAPF 60-90 series evaluations (cadet officers may evaluate cadets who are junior to them in grade). CAPR

60-1, paragraph 5.7.2 directs how these feedback meetings are to be conducted. Commanders may approve or disapprove the evaluation; ultimately the commander must ensure the Cadet's progress is evaluated properly.

Cadet Advancement - Testing. It is imperative that squadron commanders become well-versed on cadet advancement testing. **By approving a promotion, the commander is attesting to the cadet's ability to accept the increased responsibilities that accompany the promotion.** The following list highlights rules and guidelines for cadet achievement testing.

- Cadets complete achievements and milestone awards sequentially.
- Achievement 1 may be completed any time after joining CAP.
- All achievements require a minimum separation of 8 weeks (56 days).
- There are no temporary promotions or discretionary grades.
- Online achievement tests are open-book and timed.
- Cadets who fail an online achievement test must wait at least 7 days before reattempting the test.
- Cadets may not test beyond their next achievement. Example: A C/TSgt may take Achievement 5 tests, but not Achievement 6 tests.
- Milestone award exams are always closed book.
- Commanders will provide cadets an opportunity to test at least once every 30 days.
- Unit commanders may authorize testing accommodations at their discretion. Examples include testing orally, extending time limits, dividing the test into segments and reducing the choices on a multiple-choice test (see CAPR 60-1).
- Cadets may help proctor drill tests under adult leader supervision.
- Cadets unable to drill due to a disability or injury will complete drill tests to the extent possible.
- Commanders may waive all or part of a drill test for Physical Fitness Category II, III or IV cadets (see CAPR 60-1, 2.11).
- The "new" CPFT requirements as listed in CAPP 60-50 have been required since 1 February 2018.
- Squadrons will provide opportunities for cadets to attempt the CPFT at least **quarterly**.
- A successful CPFT is good for 180 days toward promotion requirements.
- If inclement weather prevents cadets from attempting the CPFT before their 180 period is up, the unit commander may authorize a 30-day extension.
- Cadets in Phase I are required to **attempt** the CPFT at least once every 180 days to remain promotable. They **are not** required to pass. Cadets **must pass** the CPFT in order to earn the Wright Brothers Award and all subsequent achievements and awards.
- Cadets assigned to Physical Fitness Categories I, II, and III must pass the Cadet Physical Fitness Test (CPFT).

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- CAP-USAF members, CAP adult leaders and physical education teachers are authorized to administer the CPFT. Cadets may assist in proctoring the CPFT under the supervision of the test administrator.
- Cadets must pass the “run plus two out of three” events.
- Waived events are scored a “pass.”
- Cadets who retest must reattempt all CPFT events and the “run plus 2 out of 3” rule remains in effect.

NOTE: For complete guidelines regarding cadet achievement testing, refer to CAPR 60-1 Chapter 5.

Emergency Services

All commanders must strictly enforce and comply with the provisions of CAPR 60-3. The specific duties and responsibilities of unit commanders are as follows (from CAPR 60-3):

c. Units. Each unit must:

(1) Ensure individuals satisfy all applicable requirements before approving a member's SQTR, and maintain all documentation required for issuance either on paper or electronically. Documentation should be kept in a CAPF 114, if not stored electronically.

(2) Ensure individuals satisfy all applicable requirements before recommending issuance or renewal of a CAPF 101, Specialty Qualification Card, and maintain all documentation for issuance either on paper or electronically. Documentation should be kept in a CAPF 114, if not stored electronically.

(3) In coordination with the Wing emergency services staff, ensure adequate coordination with local agencies for training, joint exercises, etc.

(4) Coordinate with local agencies for training, equipment, joint exercises, plans, etc. Ensure all commitments can be met. Do not over-obligate your unit.

(5) Track the status of all SQTR cardholders within the unit.

(6) Maintain a unit alert roster and resource lists, and designate Unit Alert Officers (UAO) to coordinate mission support for the unit. This will be updated at least annually or as directed by the chain of command, and should be reissued as major changes occur. All personnel assigned as UAOs must be General Emergency Services (GES) qualified senior members. UAOs will be tracked in Ops Quals as a specialty qualification.

- **Communications:** Unit Communications Plans are not required, but are optional. The Wing DC may provide additional guidance to units to assist with developing unit plans. All unit plans, formal and informal, should support the annual wing, region, and national plans.
- **Flight Operations:** Unit commanders must become familiar with CAPR 70-1 *CAP Flight Management* in order to effectively manage flying operations. Refer to CAPR 70-1 for rules of operation, pilot qualifications, and requirements.

Unit commanders have the responsibility to protect sensitive information regarding CAP missions and resources. Therefore, all members have the requirement to complete *OPSEC Awareness Training* and sign the non-disclosure agreement (NDA).

Commanders or their designees are not authorized and will not be allowed to enter new emergency services specialty qualifications, renew expiring qualifications, or print new qualification documents until the member completes OPSEC training. Furthermore, commanders will not allow members to participate in operational missions if the member has not completed OPSEC training or agreed to the NDA.

3. Conducting engaging squadron meetings and activities.

CAP members spend a significant amount of time at meetings and activities. While these meetings are essential and the activities build on existing skills, a common complaint emerges. Meetings can be boring and the activities do not include all members. What can the squadron commander do to make this time engaging and inclusive to all members?

- Schedule meeting times and activities when the majority of your members can participate.
- Develop a schedule at least 3 months in advance. Our members have lives outside of CAP and commanders must give our members the tools to plan accordingly.
- Conduct activities that include all members. Senior meetings cannot always be about flying. Include cadets and seniors together when completing training.

What are the benefits?

- Professional Development: Meetings are an excellent time to complete required training. You have the majority of members present and you have a captive audience!
- Communication: Sharing information is crucial as commanders are receiving constant updates and new changes in our program. Use this time to keep members up-to-date.
- Encourages Teamwork: Squadron meetings are the perfect environment for encouraging teamwork. Staff members can work with their subordinates and members can use their time to complete group projects.
- Socialization: Yes, socializing is a tremendous benefit before and after scheduled meetings. Commanders must ensure that this does not extend over and interrupt other planned activities.

Potential Challenges

- What's the agenda? Ensure that your meetings are well planned and a clear direction is evident. Tell the members what will be accomplished. This will help keep others on track.
- May I say a few words? There are times when a few members take up the majority of the time. Be cognizant that others may want to add to the discussion and keep an eye on the clock.
- Can someone help me log in? Successful meetings often require the use of technology. Conduct a system check before the meeting begins and ensure you members will have access to what they need.

Lesson Summary and Closure

You will have a tremendous amount of influence over the direction of your squadron when you accept the role of squadron commander. Where will you take your squadron? Regardless of the squadron type, you must instill a culture that embraces and supports each of CAP's three missions.

Reading List:

- CAPR 20-1(I), *Organization of Civil Air Patrol*
- CAPR 20-3(I), *Charters and Other Organization Actions*
- CAPR 35-4, *Overseas Cadet Squadrons*
- CAPR 39-2, *Civil Air Patrol Membership*
- CAPR 40-2, *Test Administration and Security*
- CAPP 40-2, *Just In Time Workbook for New Unit Commanders*
- CAPR 50-1, *Aerospace Education Mission*
- CAPR 52-22, *Drug Demand Reduction Program*
- CAPR 60-1, *Cadet Program Management*
- CAPR 60-3, *CAP Emergency Services Training and Operational Missions*
- CAPP 60-50, *Active Cadet Fitness Guide*
- CAPR 70-1, *CAP Flight Management*

Exercise

Student Instructions

You are to work toward a thorough, complete, and comprehensive conclusion to this assignment. Your mentor will review and grade your work on this assignment based on the following scale: Excellent, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory assignments are re-accomplished after you and your mentor agree that you are ready to re-attempt the assignment.

Contained in the assignment are the task, method of Mentor, and any additional guidance. The assignment may or may not contain everything you need to complete it; as a potential Squadron Commander, you must be able to research the assignment, reach thoughtful, correct, and complete conclusions, and clearly and concisely communicate your findings or results to your mentor.

Be prepared to present any supporting documentation or research materials to your mentor if requested. Retain supporting documentation as the committee evaluating your designation application may also ask for it during their deliberations. Your ideas, research, work product and conclusions must be your own unless specifically outlined in the assignment unless you have received prior permission from your mentor (mentor must document).

Assignment

1. Mission application. Demonstrate to your mentor a personal understanding of the three types of CAP's squadrons.
2. Mission application. Demonstrate to your mentor a personal understanding of cadet advancement testing.
3. Mission application. Demonstrate to your mentor a personal understanding of CAP's aerospace education mission by describing both the internal and external aerospace mission and how the different CAP squadrons accomplish this mission.
4. Mission application. Demonstrate to your mentor a personal understanding of CAP's Emergency Services mission by outlining the unit's emergency notification procedures and the ES missions that the unit has supported or trained for in the last 6 months.