# Local to the Global: A Broadened View of Civil Air Patrol

## Student Guide

The E&T program uses the flipped classroom format where students read the material before class and come prepared to discuss the topics. All students are required to come prepared to participate, which includes completing the reading and all assignments in advance.

Work submitted for this assignment should reflect your own knowledge, analysis, and effort. AI tools may be used to support research, brainstorming, and editing, but should not replace your original work. Any AI-generated content included in the submission should be appropriately acknowledged in accordance with course requirements and the Volunteer University Academic Integrity Standards.

**Lesson Objective:** While CAP is most visible at the local level, many do not understand its significant role at the state and national levels. Understanding this significance underscores why CAP members must wear the uniform correctly, observe USAF customs and courtesies, train to meet various requirements, and know the incident command system.

**Desired Learning Objectives (DLO):**

1. Explain the importance of building and maintaining relationships with local, state, and federal entities.
2. Explain the Air Force Total Force concept, how CAP fits within this construct, and the importance of representing CAP as a senior leader.
3. Understand the importance of adhering to training requirements for the Incident Command System (ICS), specialty tracks, operation qualifications, etc.
4. Discuss the importance of participating in region or national activities.
5. Explain the importance of serving on staff at the region or national level for at least a year.

**Suggested Time to Complete Module (reading, discussions, and assignments):**

Synchronous onsite/ViR classes: 90-105 minutes
Asynchronous online: 105-120 minutes

**Required Reading:**

- Student Guide
- CAPR 1-1 Ethics Policy

- CAPR 111-2 Memorandum of Understanding (skim)
- CAP's Strategic Plan
- CAP "CAPabilities" Mission Briefing

**Introduction**

CAP is a diversified organization that most people, including many of its members, do not understand. Local communities often associate CAP's cadet program with Junior Reserve Officer Training (JROTC) but may not know about our work with local, state, and federal government counterparts. Too often, members underestimate the importance of presenting membership appropriately, and they downplay training standards, modify them to fit a commander's perspective, or ignore them completely. Seeing what lies beyond the local community helps broaden members' perspective on CAP's capabilities and scope.

CAP fulfills five Congressional purposes as specified in U.S. Code Title 36. These five purposes are:

> (1) To provide an organization to-
>
> (A) encourage and aid citizens of the US in contributing their efforts, service, and resources in developing aviation and in maintaining air supremacy; and
>
> (B) encourage and develop by example the voluntary contributions of private citizens to the public welfare.
>
> (2) To provide aviation education and training, especially to its senior and cadet members.
>
> (3) To encourage and foster civil aviation in local communities.
>
> (4) To provide an organization of private citizens with adequate facilities to assist in meeting local and national emergencies.
>
> (5) To assist the Department of the Air Force in fulfilling its noncombat programs and missions.

**1. Explain the importance of building and maintaining relationships with local, state, and federal entities.**

CAP needs support to flourish across its three core program areas: Aerospace Education, Cadet Programs, and Emergency Services. When working with external

partners, the organization must outline roles, responsibilities, and liabilities. To do this well, the organization creates Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with these entities. An MOU is a cooperative agreement between two parties that can include general terms and goals. Unlike a contract or a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which hold both parties to their commitments, an MOU is not intended to be legally binding. It tends to be less formal in nature than a contract. It often serves as an agreement outlining intentions rather than creating firm legal obligations. It creates no enforceable rights until it is invoked, such as when a state agency requests a mission and CAP accepts it through the Wing Commander or his/her representative, such as a Wing Alerting Officer or the Wing Director of Operations. The CAP Emergency Services Training and Operational Missions Regulation, CAPR 60-3(I), section 1-3 (e), states that an MOU is “an approved agreement with another organization that may define CAP activities in support of that agency’s mission. MOUs may contain provisions and restrictions that supersede those found in this regulation.”

CAPR 111-2, Memorandum of Understanding, provides policies, procedures, and formats regarding MOUs, agreements, and letters of agreement. Note the requirement that “every CAP wing is required to maintain a current MOU with the state in which it operates.” Wing commanders are inspected on this compliance item during the wing’s compliance inspection, reflecting the importance of establishing and maintaining a formal agreement with our state partners.

Given CAP's limitations in manpower and/or equipment, the MOU allows us to provide a service but does not mandate it. This limitation matters because various organizations may request CAP services, and we may have enough manpower and/or equipment to satisfy only one agency's demands. Similarly, if an Air Force Assigned Mission (AFAM) “stands up” while an agency request is made, the AFAM will always take priority and precedence. (CAPR 111-2, 5(e)2(a)3.) It is imperative that wings and units DO NOT enter into agreements they cannot fulfill due to a lack of manpower, equipment, or resources.

It is important to remember that only a Corporate Officer at National Headquarters (NHQ) can approve an MOU. CAP members are not authorized to sign the MOU (or any agreement) at any level. A wing or local unit desiring to offer CAP’s services to a state, local, or other agency or NGO should develop the MOU in concert with the Wing Legal Officer. The Wing Commander and Government Relations Advocate should be notified of which agency is being contacted and which CAP services are being offered. If the Wing Commander says “no,” then do not pursue any further. If the Wing Commander says “yes,” then the CAP project officer and Wing Legal Officer work with the agency to develop an MOU. This MOU is then routed through the Wing Commander to the CAP General Counsel (GC) for review. GC routes the MOU to CAP’s Chief Operating Officer

(COO) for approval. MOU templates are available on the National Website at gocivilairpatrol.com/members/cap-national-hq/general-counsel/sample-mou.

National MOUs are managed by CAP/GC. Current national-level MOUs/agreements/ letters of agreement are found on the National MOUs webpage (Figure 1). Skim through a few of the MOUs that interest you. To find the current MOUs, go to gocivilairpatrol.com/members/cap-national-hq/general-counsel/national-mous-1665.




Figure 1. National MOU Webpage

CAP members should make all levels of government aware of CAP's capabilities or "CAPabilities." This applies not only to commanders/directors at the region and wing levels, but also to the group and unit levels. Letting local organizations know CAP exists and the extent of its capabilities is key to growing CAP's support base for future ventures. CAP members presenting this information should be well-versed in CAP's abilities and resources. This presenter should know wing/group/unit assets and what CAP's assets are as a whole organization that can be leveraged. Materials exist on the gocivilairpatrol.com website to assist with just such a presentation. To find them, go to gocivilairpatrol.com/programs/emergency-services/capabilities-handbooks-briefing (see Figure 2). Review the slides to understand the breadth of CAP's missions and capabilities. When using this briefing, ensure you understand the acronyms and programs included in the slides.

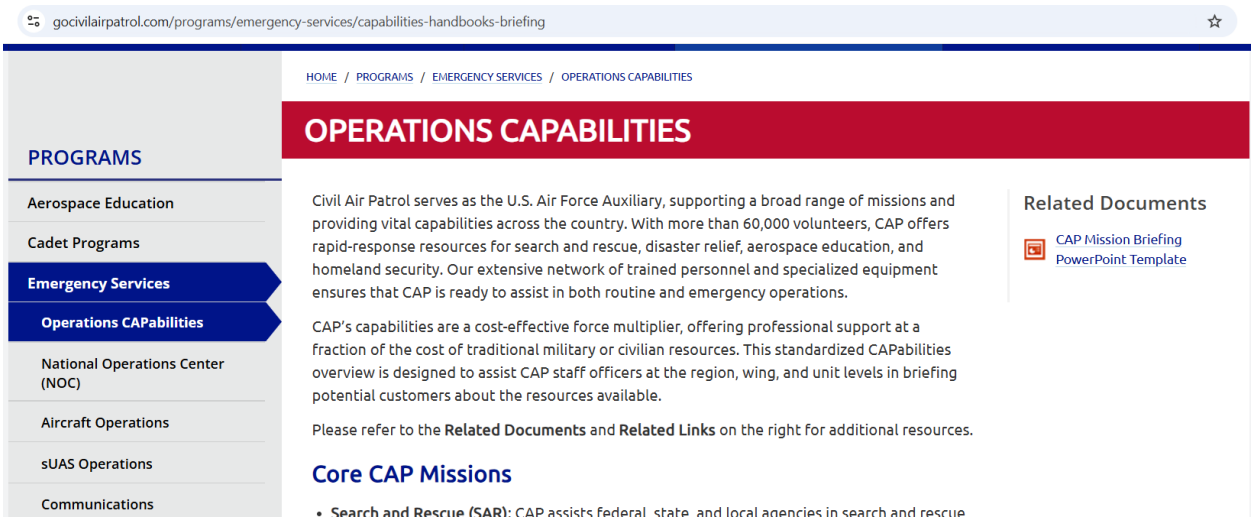



Figure 2. CAP Operations Capabilities Briefing

All this information is meaningless if outside agencies do not know CAP exists. It is the responsibility of each commander (or their designee) at all levels to first educate themselves on current national and local MOUs, then promote CAP's capabilities to the appropriate government agency. This could mean visiting the local control tower to explain how CAP is activated to search for emergency locator transmitters (ELTs), or stopping by the local fire station to explain how CAP trains its members to support search and rescue/disaster-relief (SAR/DR) operations. CAP trains its members to standards set forth by the National Incident Management System (NIMS) – the system used by all emergency response agencies – thus making CAP a ready partner in time of need. Getting the word out is critical to CAP's current and future success across local, state, and federal agencies.

If an MOU exists, or is entered into, with an outside agency, CAP must be familiar with it and abide by it when invoked. CAP must be ready to respond when help is needed so the outside agency recognizes the importance and value of maintaining the MOU. If the outside agency begins to feel that CAP is unreliable in times of need, it may withdraw the MOU and seek assistance from other agencies or organizations.

**2. Explain the Air Force Total Force concept, how CAP fits within this construct, and the importance of representing CAP as a senior leader.**

Because CAP supports non-combat missions for the Air Force, it is included as a member of the Air Force Total Force when conducting such missions as the official Air Force Auxiliary. According to Air Force Doctrine Publication 1 - The Air Force, "All Airmen support and defend the Constitution of the United States and live by Air Force core values. Historically, the term Airman has been associated with uniformed members

of the US Air Force (officer or enlisted; regular, Reserve, or Guard), regardless of rank, component, or specialty. Today, Air Force civilians and members of the Civil Air Patrol, when conducting missions as the official Air Force Auxiliary, are incorporated within the broader meaning of the term, Airman." This broader meaning does not, however, mean or imply that anyone other than uniformed (active service) members of the US Air Force are members of the Armed Services in other contexts. This distinction matters when representing ourselves to the Air Force and other partners.

As part of the Total Force, the CAP National Commander participates in Air Force strategic planning meetings representing CAP members and missions. But the National Commander is not the only member who represents CAP. Each member – especially those in senior leadership positions or higher grades – represents CAP in their conduct, professionalism, uniforms, and more.

CAP is given guidance on how to strategically comply with the five purposes in AFI 10-2701, section 1.3. This states that CAP is responsible to the USAF for developing regulations, policies, plans, and programs to govern the safety, training, qualification, conduct, and performance of CAP members in accomplishing Air Force-assigned missions and other activities, and for upholding obligations required by the Cooperative Agreement. This is done so that CAP can conduct missions and activities as the Air Force Auxiliary in support of federal departments and agencies (or non-federal government entities when sufficient federal interest exists) when approved and assigned by the Secretary of the Air Force, or his/her designee (see Figure 3).

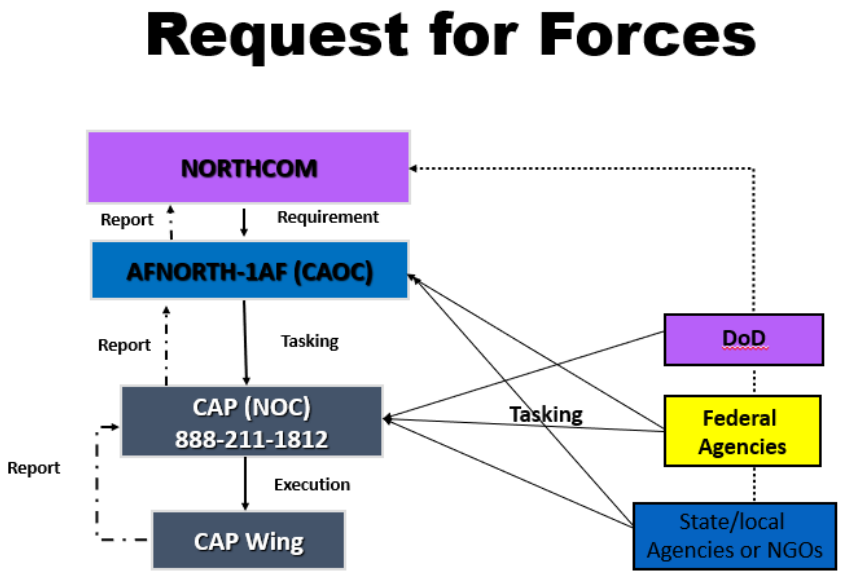



Figure 3: Request for CAP Support by Government Entities and Others

**Conduct**

Conduct is how a person behaves, especially on a particular occasion or in a particular context, and is a key part of being a CAP professional and Total Force partner. CAP takes conduct seriously in everything it does and reinforces this mindset in regulations. For example, CAP adopted the Aircrew Professionalism Model, which provides guidance for safe, responsible, and professional conduct aligned with CAP's mission and values (Figure 4). The code applies to all CAP pilots, aircrew members, and passengers, and supports a culture of risk management, safety, and respect for others, both in flight and on the ground. While pilots and aircrew members must be familiar with and adhere to this code of conduct during aircraft operations, commanders and other leaders should also be familiar with the expectations outlined in CAP's Aviation Code of Conduct (CAPP 70-10).

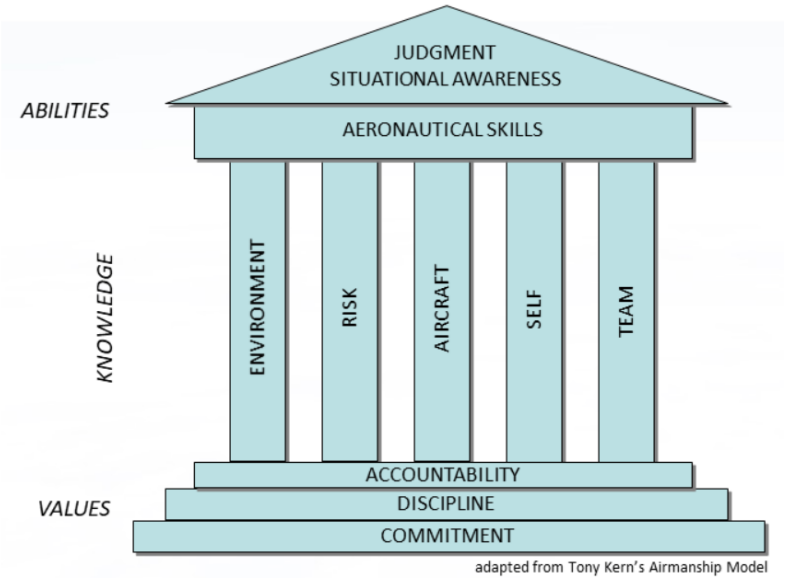



Figure 4. CAP's Aircrew Professionalism Model

CAPR 1-1 reinforces proper conduct through CAP's Ethics Policy, "implementing CAP's commitment to ethical standards of behavior for the organization as a whole and for its members" (CAPR 1-1). Our nation expects and deserves a high standard of professional conduct from CAP in all we do. Our behavior, especially that of senior leaders, directly impacts CAP's credibility.

Since CAP's early years, we have been entrusted with the safety and welfare of the American public, as well as the character development of its youth. Furthermore, CAP has amassed an admirable record of fulfilling the expectations of the citizens it serves and must continue to do so. CAPR 1-1 serves to introduce, confirm, and strengthen

CAP's policy of maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct among its members, regardless of position or duty assignment.

CAP defines four core values: integrity, volunteerism, excellence, and respect for all its members. "These values represent a cultural commitment within CAP to practice basic honesty, to give of oneself for the betterment of humanity, to deliver top-quality services and to treat others fairly" (CAPR 1-1, section 2). The importance of the core values in the success of CAP is woven throughout the Year of Ownership Kickoff Webinar, available in Absorb.

Ethical standards are required for all of CAP's missions. Conducting ourselves responsibly and professionally helps us steward our resources and assets, avoid conflicts of interest, foster working relationships based on respect/fairness/openness, deal fairly in all external business relations, and ensure the confidentiality of all information entrusted to us. Building strong stakeholder confidence and trust is critical to being a disciplined and effective non-profit organization (Figure 5). Failure to uphold any of these standards can cause undue harm to the organization, its members, or the outside agency to which CAP is serving. CAP reinforces ethics at the start with new members and revisits it at each training level. Promoting, maintaining, and enforcing high standards of ethical conduct in CAP is a command responsibility, but as leaders, each of us is responsible for our own conduct and for ensuring adherence to standards among those we lead.

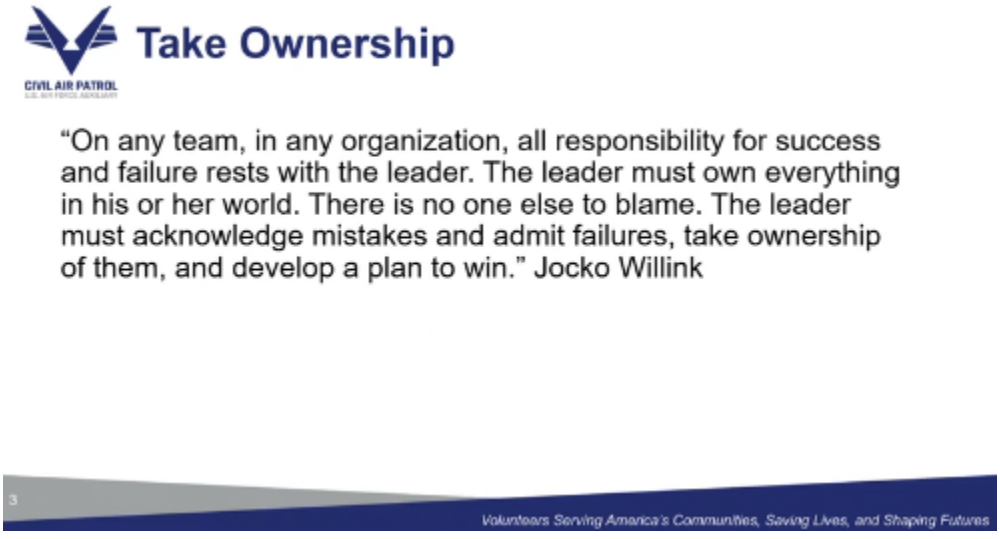



Figure 5: Importance of Ownership from the Year of Ownership Kickoff Webinar

One area where CAP is in the public eye is on social media. CAP has an official presence through NHQ and wing social media pages, and individual members' social media posts can also impact CAP. Sharing their CAP experience can help to spread the

word about the benefits of CAP membership and our mission. But NHQ also gets complaints about individual members who associate themselves with CAP on social media and post partisan political messages or inappropriate content. The member might say, “I wasn’t posting that in my CAP capacity,” but if their profile or other posts associate them with CAP, the public will often see their posts as representing CAP’s official position. We need to avoid this because of our role as the Air Force Auxiliary and because we receive millions of dollars in federal funds.

Another way CAP is in the public eye is through overseas squadrons located in the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, and South Korea. They are uniquely positioned to represent CAP globally, with specific rules governing uniform wear and operations. These units provide an organizational structure that makes the cadet program available to U.S.-dependent youth overseas. In addition to regular membership requirements in CAPR 39-2, members of overseas squadrons must be covered under the provisions of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). A SOFA is a multilateral or bilateral agreement that establishes the framework under which U.S. military personnel operate in a foreign country, addressing how the domestic laws of the foreign jurisdiction shall be applied to U.S. personnel while in that country. The SOFA typically includes military dependents and others in official status. Each country’s SOFA is unique and addresses activities that relate to CAP functions. For example, CAPR 35-4 prohibits Emergency Services (ES) missions, but allows ES training if within the confines of the SOFA for that country. As this illustrates, CAP members in overseas units are uniquely positioned to represent the United States and CAP.

**Professionalism**

As a CAP leader, maintain the highest level of professionalism in all matters associated with the wing, group, unit, and members. Maintaining good situational awareness, in and out of uniform, shows outside agencies and USAF leaders that CAP members are professional and positive representatives of the Total Force. Although CAP is not a military entity, its close ties to the USAF as its official auxiliary allow members to wear USAF-style uniforms. This gives the outward appearance as if CAP is the USAF. Additionally, in many communities, CAP is the only Air Force presence. For these reasons, all members should conduct themselves as professionals, especially when in uniform.

Maintaining strong relationships with local, state, and federal entities increases awareness of CAP and improves collaboration. Participating in national and state legislative days is a good way to build these relationships and increase awareness of CAP. Raising awareness can foster new partnerships and secure future funding for current operations. CAP has long been touted as the USAF's "best-kept secret," but often because members keep it secret by not engaging with potential partner agencies and the public. When government entities realize that CAP can accomplish missions at

much lower costs than other alternatives, new opportunities arise for CAP service. Currently, CAP wings across the nation conduct various operations for all types of governmental entities. A few of these missions include low-level route surveys, disaster-relief photography, fire spotting, air-defense intercept training, chaplain services, and airborne reconnaissance during emergency evacuations.

**Uniforms**

How our members present themselves in uniform directly reflects on CAP. Improper uniform wear by CAP members can reflect poorly on our Air Force and military partners. As professionals, wearing the uniform properly shows we comply with standards, even in the smallest details. The uniform often makes the first impression our members make on partner agencies and the public.

CAP leaders play a key role in proper CAP uniform wear, as described in chapter 2 of CAPR 39-1, Civil Air Patrol Uniform Regulation. Responsibility starts with the National Commander and ends with the individual member. It is the responsibility of all commanders to "ensure that all members, individually and collectively, present a professional, well-groomed appearance, which will reflect credit upon CAP as the auxiliary of the USAF. They will ensure all members are uniformed in accordance with the provisions of this regulation, that uniform violations are promptly corrected, and that members are continually informed as to the proper wear of the uniform" (CAPR 39-1, section 2.8.1 and 2.10.1). This responsibility can be delegated to activity directors for the duration of that activity.

Commanders and leaders at all levels must enforce dress and personal appearance standards, ensure consistent, standardized wear, and determine what constitutes acceptable civilian wear at CAP activities. Leaders must ensure members know, enforce, and wear every variation of the CAP uniform correctly, including the weight standards for Air Force-style uniforms. CAP leaders should have a very good understanding of CAPR 39-1. A commander's and a leader's attention to and prompt, respectful correction of errors helps build a culture of excellence.

Leaders must also be familiar with any region or wing supplements to CAPR 39-1. Regions and wings can publish supplements to further define wear within their area of responsibility. These can be found at gocivilairpatrol.com/members/publications/approved-supplements-and-ois-by-region.

### 3. Understand the importance of adhering to training requirements for the Incident Command System (ICS), specialty tracks, operation qualifications, etc.

In February 2003, the Federal government created the National Incident Management System (NIMS) under Homeland Security Presidential Directive #5. It established a

standardized, consistent nationwide approach to incident management for federal, state, territorial, tribal, and local responders. It also made compliance with NIMS a requirement for entities seeking federal funding. Compliance with NIMS "guides all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from incidents. NIMS provides stakeholders across the whole community with the shared vocabulary, systems, and processes to successfully deliver the capabilities described in the National Preparedness System. NIMS defines operational systems that guide how personnel work together during incidents." (National Incident Management webpage, accessed 12 Jun 2026).

The NIMS model for managing responses to all types of situations is the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS is defined as a "management system designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure" (FEMA, 2018). NIMS-compliant entities can arrive at disaster scenes and integrate seamlessly with ongoing operations or establish new operations if they are the first on scene. CAP is no different. CAP is committed to being NIMS-compliant by adhering to the training criteria and compliance requirements set forth by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

To standardize training of our CAP members and ensure a successful fit into NIMS and the ICS, full compliance with the training and evaluation guidance set forth by CAP NHQ is required. Training should follow the Specialty Qualification Training Record (SQTR) and the task guide. Treat every training opportunity as the real event to keep members ready for deployment when an emergency arises that requires CAP's assistance. Remember that trainees perform the way they were initially trained and practiced. If training is laid-back and disorganized, with no attention to excellence, that is how the trainee will conduct himself/herself in a real-world event. If training is modified for local procedures without adhering to the national standard, the trainee will not be prepared to integrate into the larger CAP team or an interagency response. Therefore, CAP leaders must keep the mantra "train like you fight and fight like you train" at the forefront of every training event.

The same amount of detail needs to apply to specialty track ratings for members. Each specialty track pamphlet contains checklists of required accomplishments for each rating level. Again, if a commander emphasizes properly training a member for a new specialty track rating, that member will have the tools to succeed in their role and advance in that specialty within CAP and the community, as applicable. Using the same training process used with SQTRs and employing the "train like you fight and fight like you train" concept will go far when the member is placed in a position to work with others or to mentor other members in specialty track rating advancement.

**4. Discuss the importance of participating in region or national activities.**

Participation outside of the local unit is essential for the growth of all CAP leaders. Interacting with members of other units, within and beyond the wing and region, allows members to self-assess their accomplishments and strengthen their ability to support CAP's future. It provides different perspectives and opportunities to see how others accomplish tasks. It also gives members the "big picture" perspective of why CAP does things a certain way. While some of these are requirements for advancement in the education and training program, some are elective choices that can be taken by all CAP members.

A requirement to earn Level V is to serve as a director or staff for a course listed in CAPR 40-1, Attachment 7; serve as a director or staff for a wing/region/national conference as a senior member; or serve as a Volunteer University instructor (Figure 6). This is in addition to the activity staff requirement in Level IV. This is designed to give you exposure to higher-level perspectives and new ideas outside of your local unit.

**Attachment 7**

**APPROVED DIRECTOR/STAFF OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEVEL IV AND LEVEL V**

| | |
|---|---|
| Advanced First Aid/First Responder Training | National Legal Officer College |
| Advanced Incident Command System Training: ICS-400 | National Operations Center Augmentee Training |
| Airborne Real-time Cueing Hyperspectral Enhanced Recon (ARCHER) Operator Training (no longer offered) | National Staff College (phased out in Aug 2020) |
| CAP Inspector General College | Pilot Continuation Training |
| CAP National Safety Officer College | Region Staff College (phased out in Aug 2020) |
| Chaplain Corps Region Staff College | Satellite-transmitted Digital Imaging System (SDIS) Operator Training (no longer offered) |
| Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training | Squadron Leadership School (phased out in Aug 2020) |
| Corporate Learning Course (phased out in Aug 2020) | Training Leaders of Cadets |
| ICISF CISM Training (Individual Crisis Intervention & Peer Support, Group Crisis Intervention, Pastoral Crisis I & II, Advanced Crisis Intervention, Psychological First Aid, ICISF's Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention; QPR Institute Gatekeeper Suicide Prevention Training) | WaldoAir Training |
| Intermediate Incident Command System Training: ICS-300 | Wing, Region and National Cadet Courses (includes encampments, NFAs, NCSAs) |
| Mountain Flying Clinics/Mountain Fury Course | Wing, Region and National Education and Training Activities |
| National Check Pilot Standardization Course | Wing, Region, and National Aerospace Education Activities |
| National Emergency Services Academy (NESA) including its subordinate schools (National Ground Search and Rescue School, Incident Command System School, Mission Base Staff School (no longer offered), Mission Aircrew School | |

**Note:** Courses are subject to change. Contact CAP/ET (capvolu@capnhq.gov) for the most current listing and with questions.

Figure 6. Approved Director/Staff Opportunities for Level IV and V (CAPR 40-1)

Participation in region and national activities reinforces the importance of adhering to testing and training standards and provides perspective on how commanders and units compare in their development thus far. It also helps identify qualities and deficiencies of programs at the applicable level that need to be addressed. For example, the Region

Cadet Competition, encampment, and the National Emergency Services Academy (NESA) help assess program health at different levels.

Conferences are also a valuable source of good information. Commanders need to emphasize the importance of attending wing, region, and national conferences. Attending workshops with members who share the same interest across different levels of the command structure fosters a free exchange of ideas on best practices for the topic. Participants gain valuable information they can apply at various levels and benefit from networking and mentorship at these events.

**5. Explain the importance of serving on staff at the region or national level for at least a year.**

Effective leadership requires a deep understanding of how an organization operates at every level. Leaders with only unit-level experience develop strong tactical thinking about how the unit operates within its group/wing, whereas national-level leaders think strategically and focus on making CAP viable for the future.

To ensure this exposure to higher-level functions and the “big picture,” to earn Level V, a member must serve in a staff position for a total of three years, with at least one year at the group level or higher. This gives them the opportunity to operate at an operational or strategic level, commensurate with Level V's executive focus and strategic view.

While CAP is a non-combat force, its leadership at different levels strategizes using the same methodologies as modern military theory. Modern military theory divides war into strategic, operational, and tactical levels, linking tactical actions to strategic objectives (The Levels of War, Nov-Dec 2021). Applying these three levels to the overall CAP structure (Figure 7), the strategic level is typically implemented at the NHQ level. The Board of Governors and NHQ do this by meeting the requirements of its official constitution and bylaws, U.S. Code Title 10, U.S. Code Title 36, and AFI 10-2701 and AFI 10-2702. A key responsibility is developing the CAP Strategic Plan to articulate CAP's vision and guide actions now and in the near term, preparing the organization for the future, typically 10-20 years out. Another key responsibility of NHQ is acquiring aircraft and vehicles to meet long-term strategic mission needs.

Operational-level strategy occurs at the region and wing levels. Region and wing headquarters set goals based on the CAP Strategic Plan and higher headquarters’ goals, then take action to implement the plan's objectives. It is the bridge between tactical and strategic operations. Regions and wings employ NHQ assets to attain the strategic goals set forth by NHQ. Assets such as communications equipment, corporate vehicles, and corporate aircraft are allocated to these entities to accomplish CAP’s three

main programs. NHQ's federal funding is distributed to regions and wings to support orientation flights, proficiency training, emergency services training, etc. This training is conducted in conjunction with the SQTRs and task guides developed by NHQ to help members become mission-ready for whatever operations may come their way. When a wing has groups, they primarily function at the operational level to help the wing manage span of control and support subordinate units.

Tactical actions primarily take place at the squadron/flight level. This is where local CAP units employ the tools provided by NHQ, with additional guidance from their wings and/or regions, to engage with local communities. They develop annual goals and activities that help meet the wing and region goals, which in turn support the national strategic goals. Commanders at this level ensure they follow guidance from above to correctly train their members to engage in events safely, operate within standards, and adhere to cadet protection requirements.  They focus primarily on day-to-day CAP activities, with planning on a one-year horizon. This takes the form of weekly meetings, weekend exercises, aerospace activities, radio operator training, etc. At this level, the "train like you fight, fight like you train" philosophy sets the foundation for effective operations and integration.

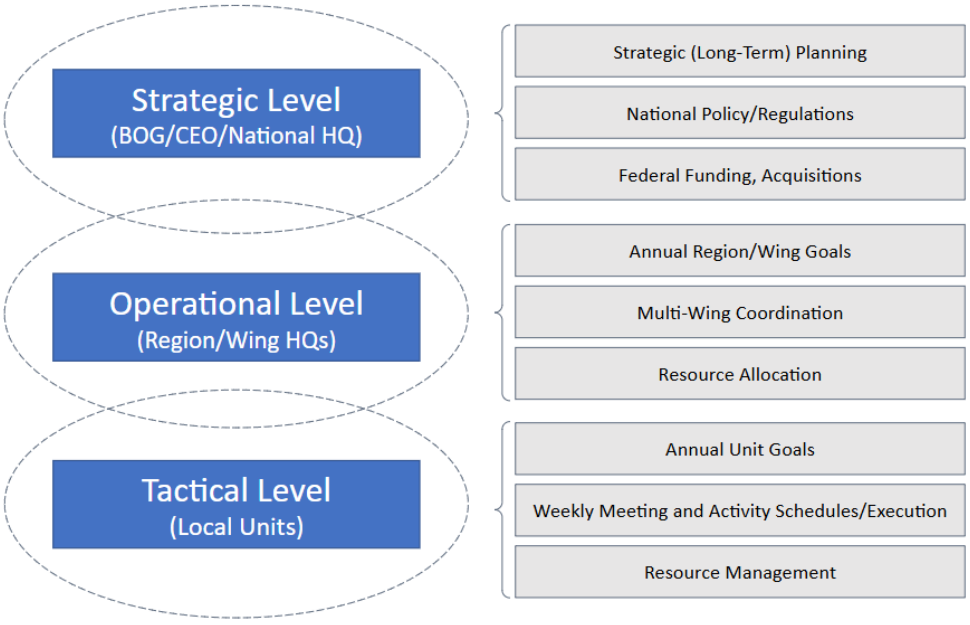



FIGURE 7: Levels of Warfare Applied to the CAP Structure

Each level of CAP does not exclusively operate at a specific level. As shown by the ovals in Figure 7, their areas of responsibility may include other levels. Units and groups must ensure their training and activities align with the National Strategic Plan. Regions and wings may need to think tactically depending on the event at hand and on the level at which the event project officer functions. For example, wings and regions host encampments, which provide basic cadet training to meet overall cadet program

objectives. NHQ organizes the National Legislative Day each year, a one-day event that strategically strengthens our relationship with Congress and helps fulfill the requirement in U.S. Code Title 36 for an annual report to Congress. The National Cell Phone Forensics Team and National Radar Analysis Team are tactical functions that operate at the national level since small, concentrated teams with highly specialized expertise are most efficient.

Serving on a group, wing, region, or national staff helps the CAP leader to gain a better perspective on how and why CAP operates. To read more about the guidance set by Congress and the USAF for CAP, visit https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/about/governance.

As we develop as senior leaders, we must recognize the impact each of us has daily on our external relationships, from the smallest details of how we represent CAP to how we train and execute our missions. Expanding our knowledge and experience through region and national activities and serving on staff at higher levels prepares us to think strategically and to understand how CAP works at all levels.

*"Every day, we have people make decisions that impact our organization and others. So we're doing this because we need to get better. In an increasingly competitive environment, we want to not only survive, but thrive, for another 80-plus years. So we need every leader to make good decisions and do the right thing, even when it's hard. Our work today becomes our legacy and impacts our reputation and our future. So an investment in leadership today is an investment in our future."*

- Maj Gen Regina Aye, CAP National Commander, Year of Ownership Kickoff video**.**

**Assignment**

Students will discuss case studies and provide feedback. Case studies are listed at the end of the Student Guide.

**Instructions for Synchronous Onsite/ViR Classes**

The instructor may discuss these as a class or assign students to breakout groups. Breakout groups will return to class to discuss their case studies with the class.

**Instructions for Asynchronous Online Students**

1. Students will write a response for each case study and upload it as a single document in Absorb for instructor grading.

Because asynchronous students do not have classroom interaction, a second assignment is required.

2. Choose one of the following two items to complete and upload in a separate document for your instructor to review.
    a. Since asynchronous students don't have classroom interaction, you need to submit a module review as an additional assignment upload. Some ideas for reviews are (1) Using the 3-2-1 method (e.g., three things learned, two interesting items, and one remaining question), summarize in your own words what you learned from this module; (2) Discuss (topic) with a subject-matter expert at a higher headquarters and summarize, in your own words, your conversation in a report. Include your thoughts on how you could apply this information to your current or future role(s).
    b. Answer the following review questions. These can be short answers, 2-3 sentences each. This should not be just reciting the materials from the module or AI-generated.
        - Why is it important to build relationships with local, state, and federal entities?
        - Is an MOU a contract? What does it accomplish? Who can sign this? What are some national-level MOUs? Are there any that you weren't aware of previously?
        - What does it mean to us as CAP members to be included in the USAF Total Force? How does member behavior, uniform wear, or presence on social media impact our relationship with the USAF and our image with our external partners?
        - Why is it important to "train like you fight and fight like you train" for CAP training? Why is it important to adhere to training requirements for ES and specialty track ratings?
        - Explain the difference between strategic, operational, and tactical levels. What are some examples at each level in CAP?
        - How does participation in activities and duty positions above the unit level contribute to a member's growth?

**Aim Higher! (optional activities)**

Review Air Force Doctrine Publication 1 - The Air Force, available at doctrine.af.mil/Operational-Level-Doctrine/AFDP-1-The-Air-Force/. Questions to think about: Where does CAP fit into the doctrine? What parts of the Air Force doctrine influence CAP?

Watch the Year of Ownership Kickoff video in Absorb, including the question and answer session at the end. How does the Year of Ownership extend to your tasks and actions, today and in the future? Watch other Year of Ownership videos that relate to your current duties or a position you wish to hold in the future.

If you haven't already done so, complete FEMA's ICS-700 course (NIMS, An Introduction) and ICS-100 course (Introduction to the Incident Command System) at training.fema.gov/ndemu/schools/emergency-management-institute/.

Review the current MOUs. Pick one that aligns with your duty position, or a position you would like to hold in the future, and read through it. How does this MOU impact CAP nationally, in your region, or in your wing? Are there aspects of this MOU that could be applied in your area of responsibility to enhance the program? Repeat for other MOUs. gocivilairpatrol.com/members/cap-national-hq/general-counsel/national-mous.

**Lesson Summary and Closure**

It is important for all members to understand the complexity of CAP and its relationship with different agencies and partners. CAP is not just local units serving their communities. It is also a Congressionally chartered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and a member of the USAF Total Force. Ensuring members train to SQTR-set standards helps CAP adhere to NIMS standards, integrate with other agencies, and maintain the federal funding stream. Using checklists found in specialty track pamphlets makes members more valuable in their specialty both to current and future CAP members. Serving and participating above the squadron level gives members an operational and strategic understanding of why pursuing excellence in all of CAP's three main missions matters.

**Resources**

- Air Force Doctrine Publication 1 - The Air Force, doctrine.af.mil/Operational-Level-Doctrine/AFDP-1-The-Air-Force/
- CAP Dictionary
- National Incident Management System, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims, 16 Mar 2026
- The Levels of War as Levels of Analysis, Army University Press, armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/November-December-2021/Harvey-Levels-of-War/, Nov-Dec 2021

**Acronyms and Abbreviations Used in this Document**

- AFAM: Air Force Assigned Mission
- CAP: Civil Air Patrol
- CAPP: Civil Air Patrol Pamphlet

- CAPR: Civil Air Patrol Regulation
- COO: Chief Operating Officer
- DHS: Department of Homeland Security
- DLO: Desired Learning Objective
- ELT: Emergency Locator Transmitter
- FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency
- GC: General Counsel
- ICS: Incident Command System
- JROTC: Junior Reserve Officer Training Course
- MOA: Memorandum of Agreement
- MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
- NESA: National Emergency Services Academy
- NHQ: National Headquarters
- NIMS: National Incident Management System
- SAR/DR: Search and Rescue/Disaster Relief
- SG: Student Guide
- SOFA: Status of Forces Agreement
- SQTR: Specialty Qualification Training Record
- ViR: Virtual In-Residence

## Local to Global: A Broadened View of Civil Air Patrol

## Student Guide

### CASE STUDIES

**Case Study 1:**

The wing emergency services officer is amazing! He runs wing exercises with amazing realism, featuring real-world scenarios. He's so successful that the region emergency services officer has added him as an assistant in charge of region-level training exercises. At a wing conference you are visiting, you have a brief encounter with one of his trainees. The trainee asks about your view on SQTRs and whether they are important. You continue the discussion and find that the star emergency services officer appears not to be using or following CAP SQTRs or the training guidance set forth in the training guides. What do you do?

**Case Study 2:**

You have just been installed as the new region commander! Congratulations! You and your newly appointed deputy commander have been invited to attend the dining out for a state Air National Guard unit, and you both accept. You decide to meet at his house and ride together to the event. You assume that your deputy commander, who is not within the height and weight standards to wear the USAF-style uniform, will come appropriately dressed. You knock on the door, and your deputy commander opens it wearing his new service coat and tie. He smiles and says, "Now I can wear these as the deputy commander, finally!" What do you do? The dining out starts in 30 minutes.

**Case Study 3:**

You are a member of the region promotion board. This week, a member has finally met all the minimum requirements of lieutenant colonel and is excited to be promoted. You review her record and find that while the member has met the minimum requirements to be promoted, her duty assignment at wing level was in name only, with no notable involvement. Also, after talking with the wing promotion board, you learn that this member recently reengaged in CAP after a 5-year hiatus. The candidate has not been active and is just a member of a local squadron that isn't really that active. What do you do? Can you promote this member? Should you promote this member?

**Case Study 4:**

You finally made it to the National Emergency Services Academy (NESA) and are attending the sUAS basic course this week with the advanced course next week. As the new region director of emergency services, you want to get your region spun up and headed in the right direction. You note that only a couple of cadets are in the class of 20 members. As the class progresses, several things become apparent. First, the instructor is not a fan of the new SQTRs and disagrees with how the program was established. Second, the instructor, along with several other "older" senior members, doesn't believe cadets should be part of this program, even though regulations allow it. The cadets are starting to feel alienated, and no one seems to care about the deteriorating condition in the class but you. What do you do?

**Case Study 5:**

As the region commander, you charged your wing commanders with improving relationships with all levels of state government. The idea is to show these entities our CAPabilities and our willingness to partner with them for future exercises or disaster relief efforts. All wings had resounding success, but one wing agreed to and signed an MOU without running it past NHQ. What do you do?