



The First 180 Days

RETENTION STARTS EARLIER THAN YOU THINK

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National Recruiting & Retention Manager



Who IS This Guy?

- 36 year CAP veteran, Michigan & New Hampshire
- 6 time squadron commander
- Recruiting & Retention Manager since 2015
- Army Veteran, Helicopter Mechanic, Skydiving Instructor
- Curently: Sq CC, Wing Personnel & Recruiting, National Recruiting



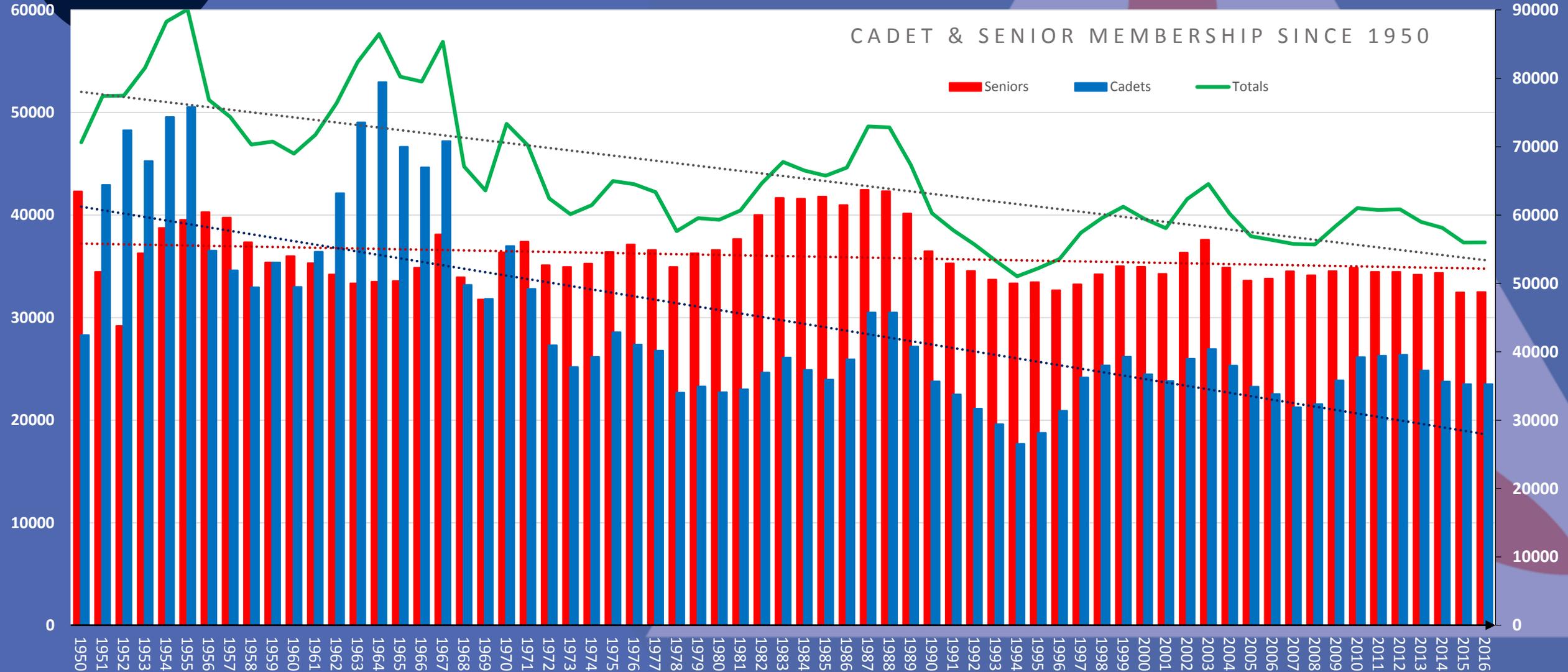
Today

- Membership & Retention Statistics
- The Overall Concept
- Retention
 - Before membership
 - In the membership process
- Challenges
 - Change declining new member joins
 - Fix engagement in the first 180 days



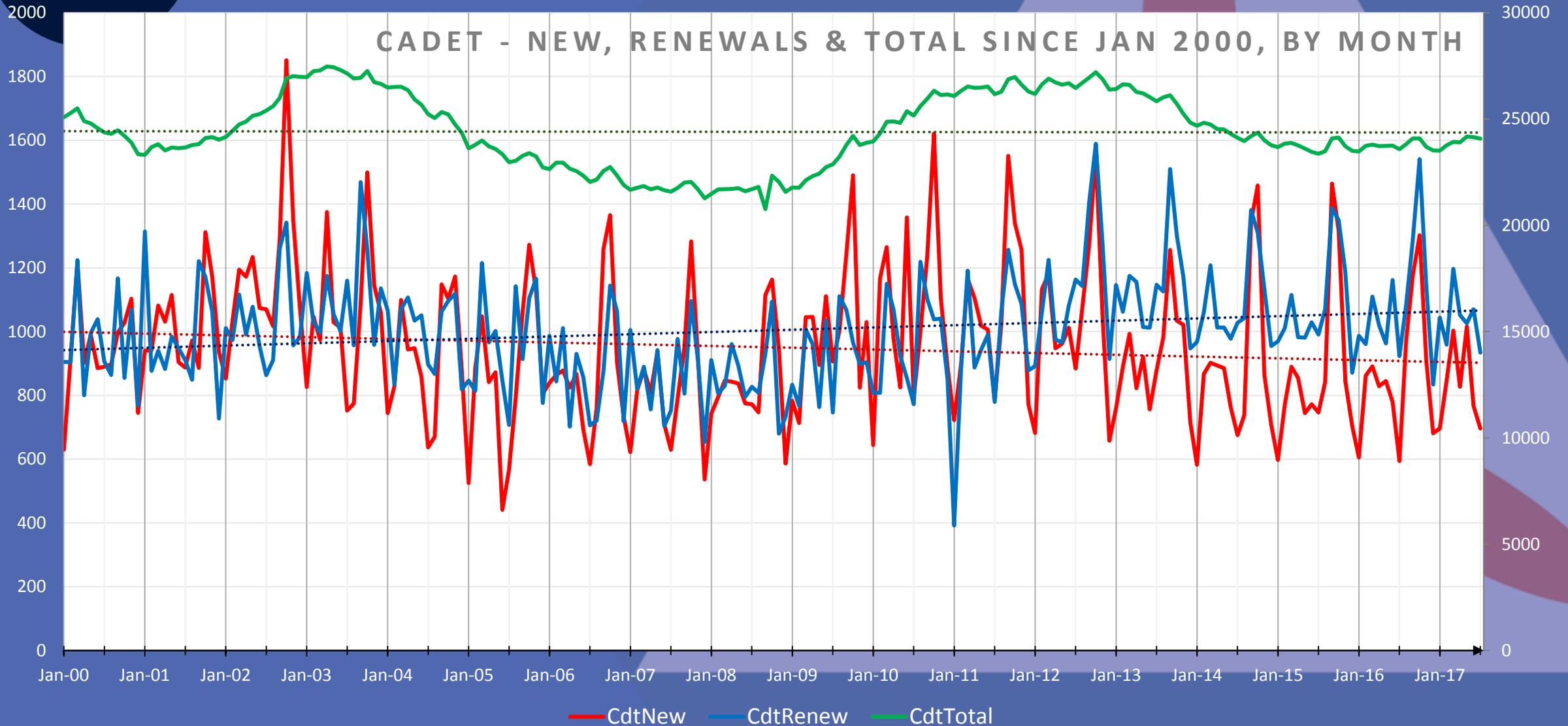
Membership Since 1950

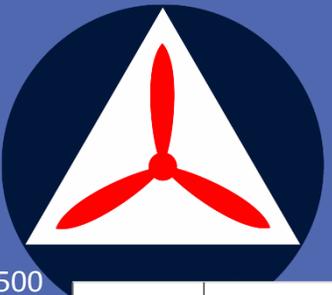
CADET & SENIOR MEMBERSHIP SINCE 1950



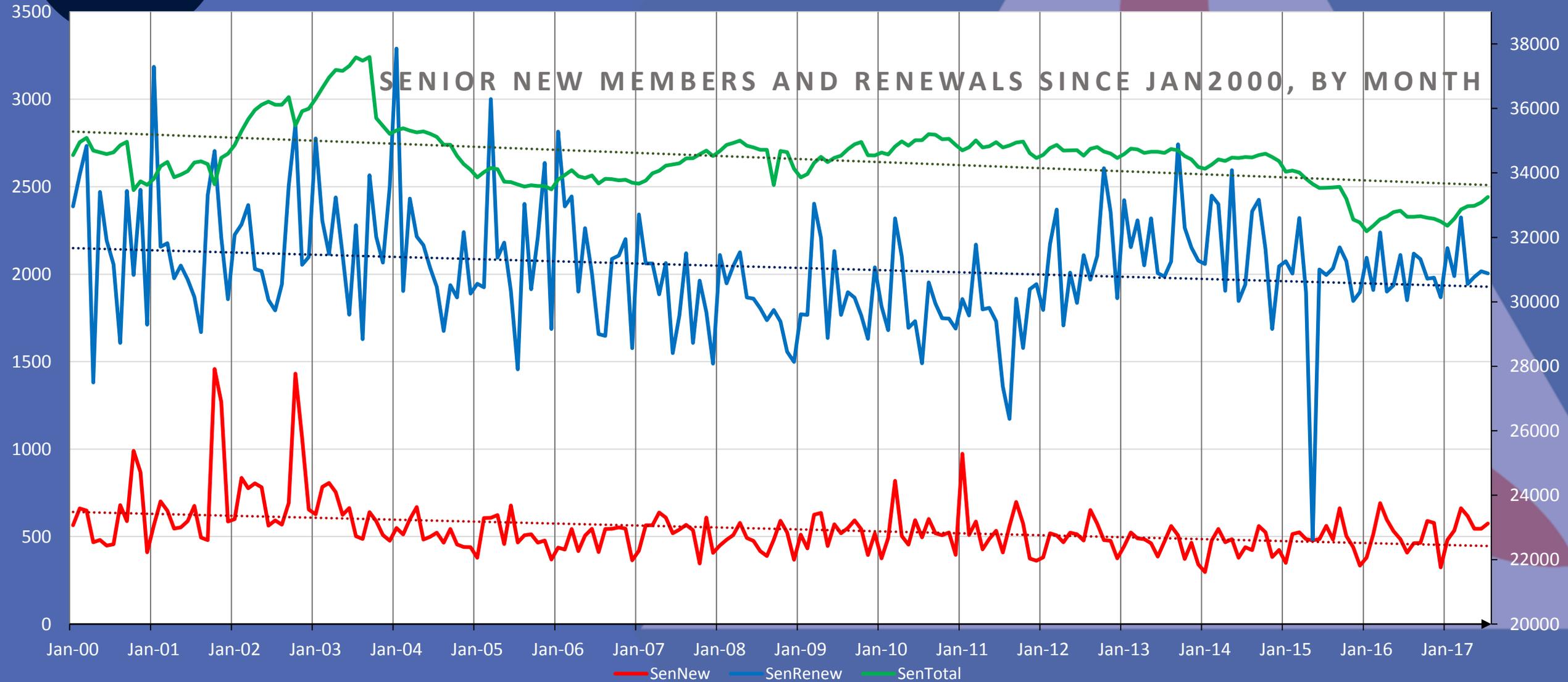


Cadet Membership Since Jan 2000





Senior Membership Since Jan 2000





The Metrics

- 57,331 Members
 - 24,077 Cadets
 - 33,254 Seniors
- Cadet Retention:
 - ~35% First Year, ~55% Subsequent Year
- Senior Retention: ~74%



The Concept

- **60-65%** of first year members leave in the **first 180 days**.
- Takes a pilot an *average* of **180 days** to get an **initial CAPF 5**
- The Military Retention Model of “interview in the last 60-90 days” misses most of our first year members”



All of This Starts *Before* Membership

- Engage the entire unit in the process, not just the recruiting officer and commander.
- Sell the CAP you *have*, not the CAP you *want*.
- Recruiting for **fit** and **needs**, not for numbers



All of This Starts *Before* Membership

- Know what you need, then go get it.
 - What are your needs? How many? This informs your goal.
 - Knowing the need informs targeted recruiting.
- Putting your best foot forward in the process.
 - Be professional and squared away
 - Knock off the 7th grade science fair displays
 - Have a process in place and ensure people know it.



All of This Starts *Before* Membership

- CAP Membership is a privilege.
- You don't have to take every warm body with a pulse and a set of fingerprints
- Screen for fit **before** you even get to the membership board.



Engagement *In* the Membership Process

- Use the Membership Board to set expectations
 - The board should be stakeholders themselves
 - **Don't oversell** the program.
 - Look for **fit** (*time commitment, schedule, longevity*)
 - This is an **interview**. Treat it like one.
- HR adage: "Hire slow, fire fast"
 - Take your time to get to **know** the prospect **before** you get them to part with a dues check.



Engagement *In* the Membership Process

- There is no shame in someone not joining the organization.
 - If the fit isn't there, it's OK to say so.
 - The unit doesn't have to take every person with a pulse and fingerprints.
- Better to recruit 2 members for specific positions than 5 members for none.



Deliver on the expectations

- Leadership & the process
 - Command team buy-in. **All on the same page.**
Include major staff officers to determine your needs.
- Training Roadmap (cadet & senior)
 - New members need to be guided thru the initial process. Communicate that. **Constantly.**
 - Can't know where you're going or when you'll get there without a roadmap to check progress against.



180 Days Roadmapping (Examples)

CADETS

- 1st 6-8 weeks: Great Start/BCT, C/Amn.
- Month 2: Uniform(s)
- Month 3: 2nd test
- Month 4: O-flights
- Month 5: 3rd test, ready for C/A1C
- Month 6: 4th test, etc

SENIOR

- Month 1: Level I & First talk, POA, commander/mentor talks
- Month 2: Determine interest area
- Month 3: Assign track & train
- Month 4: CAPF 5, next POA steps
- Month 5: Prep for promotion
- Month 6: GES, etc.



2nd 180 Days Roadmapping (Examples)

CADETS

- Month 7: Encampment on the radar
- Month 8: GES, Comms
- Month 9: Next test
- Month 10: Promotion
- Month 11:
- Month 12:

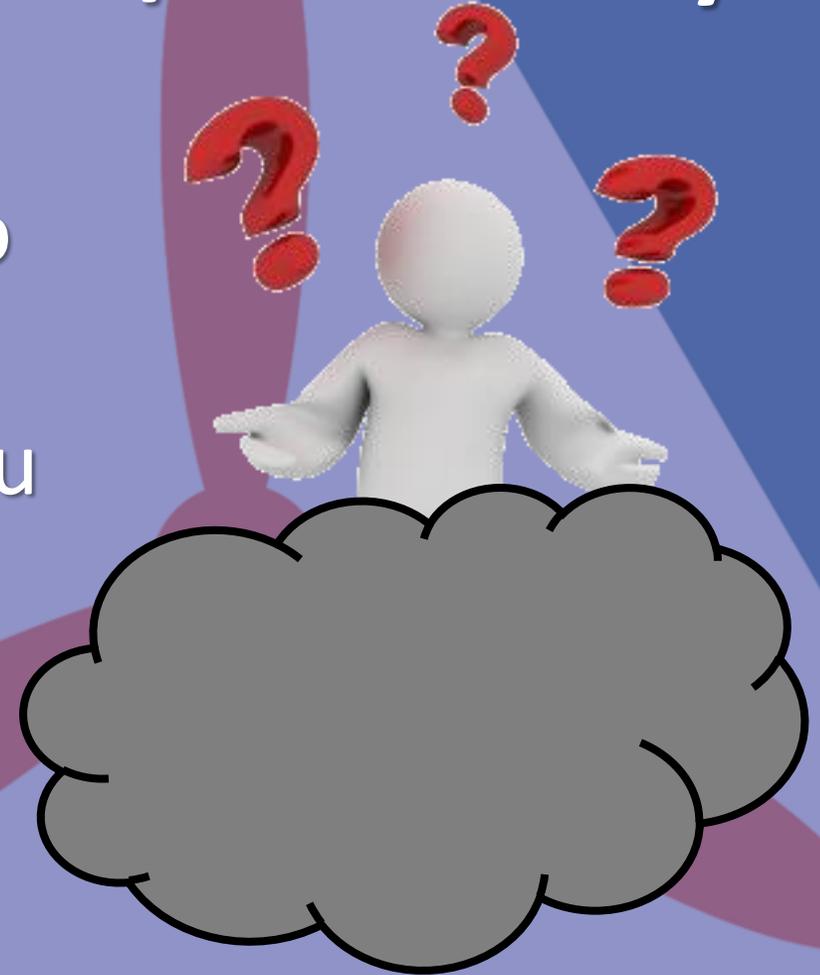
SENIOR

- Month 7: ICS/GES, ICUT
- Month 8: MP/MS/MO Training
- Month 9: Prep for SLS
- Month 10: Update POA
- Month 11:
- Month 12:



Member's Expectations – 1st/2nd 180 days

- With a roadmap, they know what to expect.
- Remember what it was like when you were a newbie. Work to that angle.
- Always look at it from the member perspective.





Training in Those First 180 Days

- **Deliver on the promise.** We tell people “We have training!” when they join. Lets do it.
- Member training, commander training, technical / functional training, mission training
- **Regularly schedule** this training and **execute.**
- Use **data** to eyeball your training needs. x need SLS, etc



Leadership in Those First 180 Days

- **Good leadership keeps people.** Bad leadership drives people away. Its really that simple. Retention problem at a unit usually means leadership problems.
- **With sufficient membership,** you have choices in a unit. When a unit has 8 seniors, 4 of whom have been the commander before, your choices are limited to “who’s available,” not “who’s the best choice.”



QUESTIONS?

You can always email me at dninness@cap.gov





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