

# The CAP Chaplain Corps

The purpose of this lesson is for students to comprehend the mission, history, and role of the CAP Chaplain Corps.

## Desired Learning Outcomes:

1. Explain the mission of the CAP Chaplain Corps.
2. Describe the history/origin of the CAP Chaplain Corps.
3. Discuss the two categories of assignment within the CAP Chaplain Corps and summarize personnel duties/responsibilities.

**Scheduled Lesson Time:** 30 minutes

## Introduction

Freedom of religion is a constitutional right of US citizens. CAP provides opportunities for CAP members to exercise this right by providing Chaplain Corps personnel and allocating required resources. Chaplain Corps personnel are endorsed and supplied by the religious bodies of the United States to assist the moral, religious, and spiritual growth of CAP members. Furthermore, the Chaplain Corps is based upon recognition that religion plays a positive role in developing the moral character of the nation and its people. Standards for appointment as a CAP chaplain are high, as one must meet the same educational, ecclesiastical and professional standards as active duty and reserve chaplains.

### 1. Explain the Mission of the CAP Chaplain Corps.

CAP fields the largest volunteer chaplaincy in the world, numbering close to 900 chaplains and character development instructors. The Chaplain Corps is committed to: the free exercise of religion for all CAP members; promoting spiritual care, moral leadership, and character development; responding as trained crisis responders to community and military contingencies such as disasters, aircraft accidents, or acts of terrorism. The CAP Chaplain Corps regularly supports active duty, reserve and Guard components as a volunteer component of the USAF Chaplain Corps.

### 2. Describe the history/origin of the CAP Chaplain Corps.

#### EARLY DAYS

From its establishment in 1941 through the rest of the decade, Civil Air Patrol units were served by Army Air Corps chaplains as part of their pastoral mission. Air Force Maj

Gen Lucas V. Beau, the CAP national commander and CAP-U.S. Air Force commander from October 1947 to December 1955, and then-Colonel D. Harold Byrd, Chairman of the CAP Board from April 1959 to April 1960, joined the CAP founder, Gill Robb Wilson, in 1949 when he visited with the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, Maj Gen Charles Carpenter, asking for help in organizing a chaplain program.

A few months later, in January 1950, Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Robert Preston Taylor was appointed by the Chief of USAF Chaplains as the first National Chaplain to CAP National Headquarters with a mandate to develop a professional model for ministry that resembled that of the Air Force. Assisting him were one Air Force enlisted member and one secretary. The primary task of the National Chaplain's office was to be the single liaison point between the CAP volunteers and the Air Force Chaplain Service. This relationship continued until the 21st Century when the Air Force decided that providing an active duty Chaplain was no longer feasible. However, the Air Force Chaplain Corps continues to exercise direction and interest in the CAP Chaplain Corps. CAP Chaplains who qualify are named in AFI 52-101 and AFI 52-102 and may be authorized to augment the Air Force Chaplain Corps as "force multipliers".

Growth brought other changes as well. In the early days Extension Course Institute (ECI) courses relating to active duty Air Force chaplains were used for CAP chaplains as well. As the Air Force chaplaincy grew and professional growth and development courses improved, specialized CAP chaplain training courses were developed to match the quality and focus of Air Force programs while emphasizing the special needs of Civil Air Patrol. The first Civil Air Patrol chaplain conference brought together 144 CAP chaplains from all 48 states, plus Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. This March 1951 event at Bolling AFB, Washington, DC, was the forerunner of the annual regional Chaplain Corps staff colleges today. Then as now, USAF chaplain resources supplemented CAP resources to insure the volunteers received the best possible training. In many ways, this relationship has benefited both the Air Force and CAP.

1960s

CAP Headquarters moved from Ellington AFB, Texas, to Maxwell AFB, Alabama, in 1967. This year also saw another major change. CAP Regulation 35-5 brought the initial appointment rank of CAP chaplains in line with Air Force appointment policy. This meant that chaplains with both seminary education and pastoral experience were appointed in the rank of captain. By December 1968, almost 1000 chaplains served CAP. In addition, some Air Force Reserve chaplains earned retirement points without pay by ministering to CAP units. Chaplain Clarence Hobgood, the National Chaplain (as the office was then known), recognized that the special needs of the CAP Chaplaincy required a special "think tank." He spearheaded the creation of the National Chaplain Committee to do advance planning and work as required fulfilling the potential of the CAP chaplains. Chaplain Hobgood also appointed the first female chaplain for Civil Air Patrol. The Rev. Phyllis Keller Ingram, of the Congregational Church, was appointed in 1969.

## 1970s

The seventies were a decade of continued major change. The first Sunday in December was designated as CAP Sunday in 1971. Chaplain Ralph Pace gained approval for CAP chaplains to join the Military Chaplains' Association in 1972. That same year he published "Values for Living," Part 1. In 1974 the Freedom Foundation, Valley Forge, PA, awarded their Honor Award to CAP for its "Values for Living" character development curriculum. That same year, Air Reserve Personnel Center assigned five reserve chaplains to the National Chaplain's office to write the "Values for Living" curriculum. Chaplain, Lt Col (later Colonel), Frank Ebner chaired this group for the next twenty years.

## 1980s and 1990s

By the end of the seventies, the National Chaplain Committee proved so valuable that the National Board approved changing the titles of the chairman and vice chairman. In 1980 these positions became the Chief of Chaplains, CAP, and Deputy Chief of Chaplains, CAP, respectively. The 1990s brought new challenges. The Air Force began shrinking to a size smaller than it had ever been in its history. Consequently, many of the humanitarian missions formerly performed by active duty and reserve components are now conducted by CAP and other civilian relief organizations. At the same time, the emphasis on quality forced changes in the established ways of doing things. Chaplains at every level of responsibility became more proactive in planning and executing their ministry. In December 1993 the first chaplain from a non-Judeo-Christian faith group entered the US Armed Forces Chaplaincy. The Civil Air Patrol Chaplain Service made similar adaptations as the nation became more pluralistic in religious composition. The concept that non-clergy officers could teach moral leadership emerged and then developed. CAP members who met the 2-year educational requirement and had a letter of recommendation from a leader in their church (synagogue, mosque, stake, etc.) were given the opportunity to lead character development lessons. They do not function as chaplains and they do not have confidentiality privileges. The name Moral Leadership Officer (MLO) was chosen. The MLO was to be supervised by the chaplain in the unit or by the Wing Chaplain.

The National Chaplain Committee approved the Moral Leadership Officer program at their meeting in August of 1995. The responsibility of administering this program was given to the Chaplain Service, not the squadron commanders, and specific oversight went to the Wing Chaplain. All applicants were to send their applications through the Wing Chaplain to the National Chaplain at national headquarters. The MLO badges for all three levels of the specialty track were quickly developed and approved for use by qualified recipients. During the late '90s the National Chaplain Committee was renamed the Chaplain Service Advisory Committee.

## CHAPLAINCY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Significant changes have taken place with the Civil Air Patrol Chaplain Corps since 2000. In 2001 our nation entered into a "War on Terror" following the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon by terrorists which took place on September 11th. With the downsizing of the military in the '90s and the frequent deployments of military personnel (including chaplains), many Civil Air Patrol chaplains have served as "force multipliers." They have offered counseling, officiated at weddings and military funerals, visited military hospitals, performed chapel services, prayed for soldiers leaving the country, performed flight line and deployment visitation and conducted services for returning troops.

Organizational changes took place at National Headquarters which have seen the day to day oversight of the Civil Air Patrol Chaplain Service shift from an active duty USAF Chaplain to a Corporate Director (2002) to the volunteer National Chief of CAP Chaplain Service (2005). In November, 2007, the National Executive Council (NEC) changed the name of the moral leadership program to character development. Moral leadership officers (MLOs) were renamed character development instructors (CDIs). The program itself was not altered. The change was patterned after the character development program at the Air Force Academy, and provided greater flexibility for the use of the character development material.

The USAF Chaplain Service was renamed the USAF Chaplain Corps in 2009. In keeping with the MOA with the Air Force that the CAP Chaplain Service has enjoyed since 1950, it followed suit and was renamed the CAP Chaplain Corps.

### **3. Describe the Two Categories of Assignment of the Chaplain Corps and Summarize Personnel Duties/Responsibilities.**

The CAP Chaplain Corps is designed to provide pastoral care and support to CAP members throughout a senior or cadet membership. This ministry is extended to the member's family when appropriate. The Chaplain Corps conducts religious services at CAP activities, assists CAP personnel when making death/serious injury notifications, acts as a moral and spiritual example/influence for cadets, conducts the CAP character development program for cadets and provides spiritual assistance during CAP SAR, DR and other missions.

#### **CATEGORIES OF ASSIGNMENT**

There are two categories of assignment of membership within the CAP Chaplain Corps. Both must meet the full standards for senior (adult) membership in CAP as a starting point. **Chaplains** have the more demanding qualifications and, therefore, have the greater responsibility. In essence, CAP chaplains must meet the same academic and ecclesiastical standards as active duty Air Force chaplains. **Character development instructors** (CDIs) have more limited qualifications and, therefore, more limited responsibilities. "Limited" certainly does not mean unimportant, however. CDIs assist chaplains by facilitating character development classes when chaplains cannot be present. Character development instructors (CDIs) are valuable members of the

CAP Chaplain Corps team, but they may not use the title "Chaplain" nor wear chaplain insignia. Finally, as stated, CDIs do not have confidentiality privileges.

## DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

The commander is responsible for the operation and welfare of the entire unit, including the chaplain program. The chaplain is the specialist who ensures this work is done. Only certified/endorsed chaplains are authorized to provide clerical ministry within CAP. Clerical ministry includes: religious ministrations (baptisms, communion, funerals, worship services), solemnizing of events, and confidential counseling. Any CAP member may provide non-clergy support for chaplain ministry when working under the guidance of a chaplain.

## CORE PROCESSES OF THE CAP CHAPLAIN CORPS

There are five core processes that members of the CAP chaplain corps are responsible for fulfilling : 1) Conducting religious observances, 2) Providing pastoral care, 3) Modeling ethical leadership, 4) Advising leadership, and 5) Providing training, involvement and recognition. These core processes are carried out with considerations to the mission of the unit, the needs of the unit's people, and the resources of the unit chaplain. Every chaplain is responsible for implementing all the processes within his/her unit. Precisely how the chaplain does that is determined in consultation with the commander. The heart of the chaplain's job as a staff officer is to provide advice on religious, ethical, moral and quality of life concerns. Because of the chaplain's complex network of relationships with all members of the unit, the chaplain is uniquely qualified to assess concerns within the unit. The chaplain's job is to provide the commander this information as accurately as possible as often as necessary. The commander's job is to address these concerns.

Typically, chaplains and character development instructors fulfill the responsibilities set forth in the five core processes by:

a. **Offering to open/close unit meetings with prayer.** Chaplains can choose to have a moment of silent prayer and encourage the members to search for creative ways to express their innermost feelings. If they choose to pray aloud, Chaplains are encouraged to offer a non-sectarian prayer.

Any senior member may offer non-sectarian prayers in the absence of a unit chaplain. Within the limits allowed by their denominational authority, CDIs, like all CAP Senior members and cadets, are most welcome to assist chaplains with worship leadership when requested.

b. **Personally interviewing each new member who wishes and maintaining a confidential CAP Form 48, Religious Interview Guide.** This form contains data that is pertinent to the chaplain's counseling program. It is confidential information given only to the chaplain conducting it and is not to be transferred. The interview is conducted in a private setting where the content of the interview cannot be overheard

by others. Once completed, the CAP Form 48 cards are kept in a secure manner (i.e. locked file; a computer file that is password protected, etc). When a member leaves the unit, that member's card is destroyed by either burning or shredding. When the chaplain leaves the unit, ALL completed CAP Forms 48 are destroyed by either shredding or burning.

CDIs may not grant the privilege of confidential communication or clergy/penitent relationship, nor may they complete the CAP Form 48 or maintain the CAP Form 48 file. This restriction also applies to ordained ministers who are assigned as a CDI.

**c. Actively encouraging regular church or synagogue attendance by unit members.** In 1972 the CAP National Board designated the first Sunday in December as CAP Sunday. Soon after that, the Saturday before was added to the celebration for those whose day of worship is Saturday. This event commemorates the fact that CAP was chartered by the U.S. Congress on December 1, 1941. It gives members of the Chaplain Corps an opportunity to acquaint their churches with their service within CAP and the three-fold mission of CAP. Members of CAP are encouraged to wear their uniforms to their worship services. Often members of the local squadron will attend the church where their Chaplain is pastor or where the CDI attends.

**d. Conducting the character development portion of the cadet training program.** Chaplain Corps personnel (chaplains and character development instructors) are also assigned to facilitate the character development portion of the cadet training program. The office of the CAP Chief of Chaplain Corps publishes a new edition of CAPP 265-2, "*FLIGHT TIME: Values for Living*" periodically. Each new edition contains suggestions for discussing dozens of timely topics. The National Chaplain Corps office provides the necessary resources and guidance pertaining to the conduct of the character development class. As the job title suggests, the function of the CDI in the unit is to facilitate the character development forums of cadets. They are responsible to provide a meaningful, inclusive and interesting exploration of moral reasoning for the cadets. CDIs use the same character development material that chaplains do and are expected to be as effective.

If both a chaplain and a CDI are assigned to a unit, the CDI reports to the chaplain to develop a teaching schedule. When no chaplain is assigned to the unit, the CDI is responsible to the Wing Chaplain.

**e. Certifies that all cadets participate in and complete the character development training.** The character development lessons are to be offered every four weeks and satisfactory attendance and participation are a requirement for this portion of the cadet program. There should be no confusion. This is a cadet program. Cadets are learning to take moral responsibility by trying on different roles and situations. They are the ones who are learning leadership. However, the chaplain or character development instructor's role is both key and essential. This is not a religion class - nor is it a time for the chaplain to rehearse or rehash his/her Sunday sermon. Their primary job is to facilitate (i.e., make easier) the cadets' experience. The chaplain or CDI does this by setting up the situations and establishing the boundaries within which cadet discussion can take place. In other words, the chaplain or CDI guides the process, while the cadets take responsibility for the content.

**f. Participating in unit exercises or actual missions.** Chaplains provide pastoral support for CAP members and other relief workers at a mission base. Chaplains offer pastoral care for families of missing persons and disaster victims. Though there is no specific role for a CDI in an Emergency Services mission other than performing their ES specialty. Familiarity with the Chaplain Corps may lead them to recognize potential problems and bring them to the attention of the mission chaplain.

**g. Conducting or arranging for worship services in the field when the unit is deployed during times of worship or religious observances.** Frequently, the easiest way to accomplish this accommodation is to provide an interfaith worship to which all unit members may be invited. When specific religious needs exist that the chaplain cannot meet, the chaplain must take all reasonable steps to ensure they are met through religious resources from a nearby community.

**h. Completing required written reports of chaplain activities in accordance with CAP Regulation 265-1** (i.e. Form 34, After-Action reports, etc.).

**i. Developing personal relationships.** It is important that chaplains be equally available to all members of the unit as pastor, priest, or rabbi, while giving all due respect to grade and position among unit members. Successful chaplains will be equally comfortable with the commander and with the newest senior member or cadet. Likewise, since CDIs work with cadets, it would be to their advantage to nurture relationships with cadets.

**j. Providing Chaplain services to local USAF installations when requested.** As operations tempo continues to rise in the Air Force, many bases do not have enough chaplains to serve remaining personnel and their families. CAP Chaplains (who also meet additional requirements) may be invited by installation commanders to provide chaplain services, such as ministry. Wing chaplains and wing commanders play a role in gaining NHQ approval for such assignments through WMIRS, and CAPR 265-1, Section E provides detailed guidance.

**k. Providing training, involvement, and recognition.** The need to supply training and recognition for people who voluntarily support the chaplain program is a pressing matter for CAP chaplains. Cadet discussion leaders and recorders for character development classes need training. So do cadets and seniors who may assist the chaplain with field services. Some may provide the chaplain genuine service by keeping the chaplain apprised of ministry opportunities. Public recognition and/or letters of appreciation help keep these volunteers involved and motivated. Besides the personal sense of satisfaction from a job well done, the certificates, ribbons and/or awards are in essence the only "paycheck" that members of CAP receive.

There are some duties outside the normal sphere of the clergy which the chaplain MAY NOT perform. CAP regulations follow the pattern and policy set by the Air Force in regard to these assignments. Chaplains are strictly prohibited from any activity which is incompatible with the chaplain's function and status as a clergy. Even voluntary service in such duties is prohibited. CAP chaplains must be free to perform the services and ministry of their calling. The question is one of propriety, not ability. Prohibited non-chaplain duties include, but are not limited to, those of commander, executive

officer, deputy commander for cadets, testing officer, inspector, investigating officer, or member of any grievance committee (CAPR 123-1, paragraph 5. e). Should a chaplain desire to accept any such position, that chaplain must immediately notify the National Chief of the CAP Chaplain Corps, who will notify the chaplain's endorser and request the chaplain's endorsement be withdrawn without prejudice to that person's continued CAP senior membership.

Character development instructors, on the other hand, may serve as a commander, executive officer, deputy commander for cadets, or a testing officer. CDIs will not serve as inspectors general or investigating officers. However, chaplains and CDIs may serve as inspectors on an assessment team.

### **Lesson Summary and Closure**

CAP volunteers serve across the length and breadth of this nation. The CAP Chaplain Corps provides support and encouragement for these volunteers. Presence at and participation in unit meetings, cadet activities, training events, search and rescue exercises/missions are essential to the overall mission of CAP. The counsel and expertise offered by members of the Chaplain Corps contribute to the well being of the units they serve.

For over 60 years, as members of a multicultural community, CAP Chaplain Corps personnel have provided ministry to persons of their own faith group, yet have acted as guardians of the free exercise of religion for all CAP members and their families. That is an objective that remains unchanged.

### **Works Cited**

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