

**Minnesota Wing
US Air Force Auxiliary
Civil Air Patrol**



PAO Workshop

**North Hennepin Composite Squadron Hangar
Crystal, MN
7 March 2003**

Welcome!

Welcome to the March 2003 Public Affairs Officer Workshop! Thank you for attending this session and for your continued work as Squadron Public Affairs Officers.

Some of the workshop material you are looking at has been adopted from the Georgia Wing PAO Workshop put together by 1LT. Rick Williamson the former Georgia Wing PAO. Other materials comes from CAP National Headquarters, Lt Col Mike Marek and Capt Jerry Reynolds the Indiana Wing PAO

The purpose of this workshop is to give you an introduction to what Public Affairs is, the duties of a Public Affairs Officer, how to get started with Public Affairs, Civil Air Patrol News, Squadron Newsletters, Press Releases, and squadron websites.

On another note, I would like to point out a very important role of the Public Affairs Officer – member recognition. In an all-volunteer organization the only payment for a member is recognition for his or her actions. The Public Affairs Officer should make a point to send out press releases whenever a member has done something significant. They should also encourage the Commander to recommend individuals for awards for their efforts. Any part that we can play in recognizing our members will surely boost morale.

Again, my thanks to you for attending this Workshop and I look forward to working with you to build a strong Minnesota Wing Public Affairs program!

AL PABON, 1st Lt, CAP
Minnesota Wing Public Affairs Officer

Today's Agenda

Time	Event
0845-0900	Social Time and Treats
0900-0910	Welcome and Introductions
0910-0930	The Minnesota Wing Public Affairs Program
0930-1000	The Unit PAO – How Do I Get Started
1000-1010	Break
1010-1030	Press Releases – Why Do Them and How do I Do them?
1030-1100	Membership Development 101
1100-1110	Break
1100-1120	Submissions to CAP NEWS and WingTips/The Gremlin
1120-1130	PAO Reporting – Why do I need to fill this stinky piece of paper out?
1130-1230	Lunch – On your own
1230-1315	Building a great squadron website
1315-1400	The Squadron Newsletter
1400-1430	Recognition and Critique

Public Affairs - An introduction

"What is 'Public Affairs'?"

The term Public Affairs is often interchanged with the terms "Public Information" or "Public Relations." In any case, the goals of a Public Affairs or Public Information Officer are to:

- 1. Educate and inform the public about your organization.**
- 2. Influence them into supporting it.**
- 3. Create a positive image of your organization within the community.**

In order to be able to recruit new members and raise funds, you must establish a higher level of awareness in the community. People will not support an organization they are not familiar with.

"What makes a great PAO?"

Since the PAO position is so important, it is equally important that a qualified person fill this position. This position isn't for everyone.

Here are some of the skills and traits necessary for a PAO:

Enthusiasm: Even the most qualified person won't be an asset to the organization if they don't have the enthusiasm to do the job.

Imagination: The ability to come up with ideas that will promote your squadron and CAP.

Language Skills: The ability to express you in both written and verbal formats is absolutely vital. Nothing will thwart your efforts faster than the inability to write and speak in an intelligent, articulate, and understandable manner.

Media Relations Skills: You must be able to interact with the media in a professional manner, establishing and keeping open lines of communications with media and their representatives.

Knowledge: You need knowledge of public affairs and CAP. The more knowledgeable you are, the better you can do your job.

Community Relations Skills: By learning about the people in your community, you can target your PA efforts more effectively.

Audio-Visual Presentation Skills: Through pictures, video, written and other visual means (newsletters, etc.), you can help spread your message.

Getting Started

Going from zero to 60

One of the most daunting facets of becoming a unit PAO is knowing where to start. Obviously, there are a few administrative steps that you must complete (filling out a CAPF-2a to be appointed your unit's PAO and getting enrolled in the PAO Specialty Track come immediately to mind.) But from there... WHERE do you go?

These are steps, in no particular order, which will help you get started if you have no experience whatsoever in the Public Affairs/Public Relations arena.

Learn about your organization:

Learn as much as possible about your squadron, the Wing, and Civil Air Patrol. CAPM 20-1 (Organization of Civil Air Patrol) is an excellent source of information for CAP information. The Civil Air Patrol News is a great resource to learn about the activities in which members across the nation are involved. Talk to your squadron commander and other staff members (Operations, Historian, etc.) to learn the activities in which your squadron is involved.

Accumulate skills:

Learn the tools you need to become an effective Public Affairs Officer. Take writing classes if they are available from a local school. Read newspapers to see how "the pros" write. Read CAP News to see how other PAO's have written similar activities. Write up some of your squadron's past activities for practice.

Analyze your resources:

Determine supplies and resources you need in order to perform your duties. Then determine what resources are available to you. What materials (brochures, etc.) are available from National HQ (Marketing & Public Relations)? Check with your Group PAO or Wing PA for other resources. Once you've inventoried what you have, you can work up a plan to gain the resources you need.

Set Goals/Develop your plan:

Determine what you want to accomplish. Set some basic goals, and develop a plan to accomplish them. Goals could be: Getting published in CAP News, Hosting an Open House, Getting your unit published in the local paper.

Learn your audiences:

Please notice that I spelled audiences. That's PLURAL. Each and every organization has more than one audience that it wants to reach. In CAP, obviously, a unit PAO wants to reach the public at large. But you should think of other audiences that you want to reach.

Government: You want the powers-that-be to know about your organization. In return, they may provide funding or other resources, or enlist your squadron's assistance in major public outreach events

that will provide much-needed exposure. Your local Emergency Management Agency needs to be informed what your unit can do for them.

Schools: Schools are an excellent source of potential recruits. If you can effectively present your squadron and CAP as an organization to local schools and school boards, you can tap this market.

Businesses: Local businesses are a prime source of badly needed funding for unit projects or activities. If you can come up with activities that will benefit local businesses or make them more aware of what you do, they will be more likely to support your unit's efforts. There are programs available that are targeted toward local business sponsorship of units.

Media: This is the audience that you must reach first in order to reach the public at large. You must get to know the reporters and editors at your local newspapers. Develop a working relationship so that when you call, fax, or e-mail them, they know from whom they are hearing from. Learn what they need (deadlines, submission formats, etc.) in order to get your unit published. Editors and reporters change with great frequency, so this is an on-going commitment.

CAP Members: Internal information is an important component in the PA effort in CAP. Periodic briefings, monthly newsletters and e-mailing can help you keep your unit's members up-to-date on the squadron's latest activities.

Basics of the CAP Public Affairs Officer's Job

An essay by Lt Col Mike Marek

Here are some keys to the PAO job, in my opinion:

I. PLANNING

The PAO effort is, fundamentally, a marketing process. You need to know 1) what message you want to tell about your organization and 2) have some standard strategies about how to accomplish that.

These might be as follows:

Newsletter -- Internal information is very important to retention of members. Make sure that you have a regularly produced, interesting newsletter. also do your best to make sure that everybody in the group gets to see it. CAP newsletters sometimes only get handed out to the people who show up for meetings. They probably already know what's going on. It's the people who are less regular who most need your newsletter.

CAP News -- Develop a standard plan so that each month you evaluate what information you have that might be of interest to the CAP News. Don't let a couple of failures to get something used discourage you. Talk to Jim tynan at NHQ if you are not sure about whether something might be of interest.

Missions -- Make sure you have a process in place such that when units under your jurisdiction get activated for a REDCAP, the PA function is not forgotten. When it comes to positive PR for CAP, actual missions are the time to "make hay while the sun shines."

Other activities -- It is sometimes more difficult to gain publicity for other kinds of CAP activities, but this does not mean you shouldn't try. There are a wide range of variables here, making it hard to generalize. That being said, Wing and Group conferences, training activities, encampments, etc., all have the potential to interest reporters. Depending on the size of the community, recruiting nights and award ceremonies can also be attractive. Develop a system to make sure that you get the information to the media that you think they should be interested in.

II. GET TO KNOW YOUR MEDIA

Many inexperienced PAOs are intimidated by the idea of writing a news release, and taking it into the local newspaper. The better you get to know the staff of your local newspaper, radio and TV stations, the better you will be able to prepare information that meets their needs. In turn, that will increase the odds that they actually *use* the information.

III. MENTORING

If you are a PAO above the Squadron level, you have a responsibility to work with the unit PAOs in subordinate units. Unfortunately, many may be inexperienced and intimidated by the job. Find ways to give them positive reinforcement, and to get them feeling that they are part of a team of PA staff members. Share ideas, successes and failures. I have found that it is often difficult to get people to centralized PAO conferences. I suspect that you will need to a significant amount of this mentoring one-on-one, by phone or E-Mail. Remember -- in the final analysis, they do not "work for you." Rather, you are there to help them!

IV. WORK VERY CLOSELY WITH THE COMMANDER

The only way you can be effective is to be really in the know about what is going on. Many commanders tend to forget about external publicrelations until the opportunity is past. It is your job to advise the commander to keep this from happening.

Those are just some random thoughts. Hopefully there is some information there that is relevant to your situation. Public Affairs is an art, not a science. AS I said above, There are no magic answers, and I am far from the final authority. I do think, however, that the above points make for a good starting place.

The PAO in CAP - Who does what?

CAPR 190-1: "The Squadron PAO's in CAP are the backbone of the national program. The major efforts of National Headquarters/PA are directed on their behalf. As a CAP member, you have an obligation to the people of the United States, to the U.S. Air Force, and to CAP to carry out your responsibilities and services in a professional manner."

The majority of CAP contact with the public is done at the unit (i.e. squadron or flight) level. School programs, presentations to civic groups, etc., are usually performed at the unit level.

WING PAO DUTIES:

- Organize and conduct an effective public affairs program for the wing.
- Ensures all PAO/Membership Development functions are carried out within the Wing and Subordinate Units.
 - Release information on Wing activities to news media.
 - Publish Wing newsletter or bulletin.
 - Coordinate participation of Wing members in community activities.
 - Coordinate with other organizations and agencies as required.
 - Supervise all public affairs activities of subordinate units.
- Provides guidance and oversight to subordinate PAO's, Recruiters and Wing PA team members.
- Encourage assignment of qualified and effective PAO's and Recruiting Officers in each group, squadron, and flight within the wing; assist them in carrying out their information/membership development duties.
- Supervises Deputy and Assistant Wing PAO's (Group PA Chiefs).
- Performs the duties of working PAO's at the wing level, acts as PAO for the WING HQ only (not the entire wing).
- Formulates plans and establishes policies, procedures, and programs, designed to assist CAP in attracting new members and retaining current members.
- Liaison to National Headquarters/PA and Region PAO.

GROUP PAO DUTIES:

- Acts as an advisor to subordinate squadron and flight PAO's in the same manner as the wing PAO.
- Coordinates efforts of all squadron and flight PAO's in their group.
- Makes frequent visits to local squadrons.
- Encourage unit PAO's to exert maximum efforts in all phases of the public affairs program.

UNIT PAO DUTIES:

- Responsible for an effective program for the squadron and for publicity on squadron activities.
- Establish and maintain contacts with local newspapers, radio and TV stations to promote public relations.
- Arrange speaking engagements for CAP personnel, including cadets, before civic organizations, schools, and municipal and local gatherings.
- Advises commander on all public relations matters regarding the squadron.

Any PAO may contact Group, Wing, Region and National PA personnel without moving directly up the PAO "Chain of Command."

Civil Air Patrol News

Submission Guidelines

" First, we ask that you use the subject line of your e-mail (where it currently says "RE: News Release") to give us very specific information. The best analogy to explain why is this: It is like a label on a box. If you have 50-100 boxes, it makes sense to put a label on them so you do not have to open each one when you want to find something. The subject line is that label. When there is a generic tag such as news release, press release, article, submission, etc., we can only file it by opening it. It doesn't take long to open one box, but when you have 100 to work with, it adds up.

Same thing here - we get in hundreds of e-mails and it takes forever to open them.

" Please put in the subject line the following information: Wing/Unit/ 2-3 words about subject, and date if possible. Here is an example of how this should look for this story: "N.Y. Wing/Canandaigua Comp Sqdn: Cdts get USAF award 1/31/01"

" That way, without opening the e-mail, we know who to send it to, where to file it, and if we have to refer back to it later, we can find it by scrolling through the list of e-mails, rather than scrolling through the list, opening each one.

"... A properly sized image is so big that at 100% you cannot see it all on the screen, and in jpeg form it takes up at least 200K, not 10K. If it is an image shot from a digital camera, the camera needs to be capable of high-resolution images and set at the setting to take high res. photos, too.

Photos MUST be at least 1000 x 800 pixels, preferably 1200 x 960 or better.

" If it is a scanned image, it needs to be scanned in at 203 dots per inch. If you cannot go in and adjust the dpi, please set it to scan the image at 300% of the original size in the highest resolution setting you can get. Again, when it is done, if the image is at 100% in the view, you should not be able to see all of it at once on even a 19" computer screen, and it should take up around 200K or more of memory.

" Finally, I need specific contact info, most of which you have, at the top of the press release. Please put in single line spacing, your name and daytime phone number, plus an alternate no. If possible (cell, evening, home/work, etc.)

" Next, put the name and location of the unit, and the unit phone number in case I have a question near deadline time and cannot reach you."

--Dan Meredith
Assistant Editor, CAP News

This could be appropriate, but I would stick to the basic facts, telling where the drill-down was held, how many cadets participated, who they were (full names and ranks), and what this means to the overall annual competition. I would also explain what the Kevlar award is and how it got its name.

Also, since the two cadets have the same last name, I would answer the question most people will automatically ask: are they brothers (you say some "brotherly tension was in the air", but you do not say the two are brothers. Sometimes squadron members are described as being family, and people who are not brothers can have a "brotherly" relationship. So say it outright. Then I would add in other information, such

as: Which one is older? How many other family members are in CAP? What outside experience, if any, do the winners have?

Please stick to the basic facts, though, and avoid asking questions in a news report. I recommend reading the Coast-to-Coast section for stories on cadets winning competitions, looking to see what information those articles would include. Also, think of questions you might have if you heard on the news that a person won first place in a competition. I think I would immediately say "out of how many?" It is a lot different to come in first place out of 10,000 than to come in first place out of 7. So try and foresee what kind of questions people would ask, such as what a drill-down is and what the cadets had to do, how long it lasted, etc.

Providing answers to the questions will help you write a report that could be suitable for the Coast to Coast, but I am not saying that the story will make it in if you provide the answers. Keep in mind that space is limited and your story will be up against stories from a variety of events. I am not saying it won't go, here - just letting you know there are no promises, especially since I do not know yet what else I have from your region for the March edition.

--Dan Meredith

Press Releases

The purpose of your news release is to alert the media of newsworthy events. You may distribute your releases via fax, regular mail, or e-mail. Ask your media representatives which format they prefer. Research newspapers and TV and radio stations to learn assignment editors names. Make a list of these people and keep it in a convenient place. For your convenience, several sample news releases are provided in this section.

Advisories

A summary of who, what, when, where, how, and why.

Hints

1. News editors appreciate concise, well-written stories that they don't have to edit much.
2. Most papers use AP style, and you should too. Some papers will run the story just as you submit it. Others will treat your release like a news advisory and have their staff write a story.
3. TV and radio stations generally prefer advisories and public service announcements.

Crafting Your News Release

The first rule of thumb in writing news releases is to make it reader-friendly. It must be neatly presented and easy to understand. The less rewriting or revising the editor has to do, the more likely your story will be printed.

News Release Fundamentals

Always follow these basics in preparing your news releases:

Use letter size (8½ X 11) white paper. Do not use legal length or other odd sizes or colors.

Be sure your news release letterhead contains pertinent information:

1. Organization's name.
2. Address.
3. Contact person.
4. Telephone, fax numbers, and e-mail address.
5. The words "News Release."
6. A specific date or time to run the story. For Immediate Release is commonly used.

Sample Press Releases

You can find more in CAPR 190-1

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Sam Spade, Capt., CAP
Deputy Commander for Cadets
Minneapolis Composite Squadron
xxx-xxx-xxxx
sam.spade@mnwg.cap.gov

NOW SEEKING APPLICANTS FOR OUR CADET PROGRAM

MINNEAPOLIS, MN - October 26, 2000 – Minneapolis Composite Squadron a part of the United States Air Force Auxiliary better known as Civil Air Patrol, is currently accepting new applicants for its aviation and emergency services related cadet program and senior (adult) program.

The cadet program is open to individuals 12 to 18 years of age. The cadets will have an opportunity to participate in activities ranging from: Survival Training, Search and Rescue, Disaster Relief, Radio Communications, Land Navigation, Model Rocketry, Flight Training (powered and glider), Leadership Training, Public Speaking, First Aid & CPR, Physical Fitness, Sports Activities, Orientation Flights (aboard CAP or Military aircraft), and Astronomy.

Cadets will also have the opportunity to apply for several National Activities that include: Flight Encampment – where a cadet can earn their solo wings! Other activities range from Cadet Officer School, National Ground Search and Rescue School, to Pararescue Orientation Course – supervised by Air Force Pararescue.

The Civil Air Patrol is the volunteer, civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force, and was formed December 1, 1941, as an emergency measure to make civil aviation aircraft and pilots available to the national defense effort thru activities such as: search and rescue, and coastal patrol – yielding 2 confirmed U-boat kills. Today, the Civil Air Patrol conducts more than 85% of all inland search and rescue missions in the continental United States.

Squadron meetings are every Thursday evening at 7PM in classrooms #1 and #2 at the Minneapolis National Guard Armory. For more information visit the Minneapolis Composite Squadron website at: www.mnwg.cap.gov/minneapolis or call Lt. Col. Ashcraft at xxx-xxx-xxxx.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

SAM SPADE, Capt, CAP
Public Affairs Officer
Minneapolis Composite Squadron
(xxx) xxx-xxxx
jeffinvent@yahoo.com

MINNEAPOLIS COMPOSITE SQUADRON PARTICIPATES IN LOCAL SEARCH AND RESCUE TRAINING.

MINNEAPOLIS, IN – June 25, 2000 – Five members of the Minneapolis Composite Squadron, Civil Air Patrol took part in a local search and rescue training exercise.

Lt. Colonel Mark E. Ashcraft led the squadron's search and rescue team on a joint exercise with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Department. The two organizations worked together on a practice missing person search down by the banks of the Mississippi River.

“The exercise went very well and I was very impressed with Civil Air Patrol's skill at search and rescue.” - Deputy Sheriff Smith.

The Civil Air Patrol is the volunteer, civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force, and was formed December 1, 1941, as an emergency measure to make civil aviation aircraft and pilots available to the national defense effort.

Today, the Civil Air Patrol conducts search and rescue missions for missing aircraft, provides emergency disaster relief in conjunction with other relief organizations, and encourages and fosters civil aviation in local communities through adult and youth aerospace education programs.

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Here is a sample press release that could form one model for how a CAP training activity could be promoted.

Put it on a letterhead that clearly identifies your unit.

NEWS RELEASE
(For Immediate Release)

(ANYTOWN)--Around 100 members of Civil Air Patrol from around the state will be in Anytown this weekend (November 5, 1997) for a search and rescue training exercise.

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is the civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force. Members, including around 350 in South Dakota, conduct search and rescue missions assigned by the Air Force, operate a youth program, and promote aerospace education.

While CAP members wear military-style uniforms, they are civilian volunteers. The XYZ Composite Squadron of Civil Air Patrol, based in Anytown, is hosting the training exercise this weekend. Mission headquarters for the exercise will be at the Anytown Regional Airport.

During the exercise, CAP members will search in the Anytown area for targets that simulate a missing aircraft and its occupants. CAP aircraft and ground search teams are expected to be operating anywhere within 60 miles of Anytown.

Members of the CAP youth program, known as Cadets, play an important role during the search missions. Under the supervision of the adult members, the cadets direct and refuel search aircraft at the airport, and participate in the ground search teams. They are trained in first aid, radio communications, map reading and navigation.

CAP air crews receive extensive training in visual and electronic searches from the air, often flying grid searches or other patterns that can detect targets from the air. CAP ground teams, law enforcement and ambulance personnel can then be directed to the target site, as needed.

Last year in [your state], CAP conducted X actual search missions, resulting in Y lives saved.

For information on the CAP training exercise, or about CAP membership, contact XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX at (xxx)xxx-xxxx.

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Editors: You are invited to visit CAP mission headquarters Saturday, November 5, 1997, at A & B Aviation at Anytown Airport, anytime between 8am and 3pm. Please call MMMM MMMMMMMM at XXX-XXXX to coordinate your visit.

-----End of Sample Release-----

Squadron Websites

Internet Operations

SQUADRON WEBSITE AS AN INTERACTIVE TOOL

From website to email to cell phone

By Capt. Jeremy Reynolds

In the past if Senior member Jones or Cadet Brown wanted to know what was going on they needed to be at the squadron meeting to receive any handouts or verbal announcements. Information was only disseminated to those in attendance and was passed out beyond this based on the quality and efficiency of the phone tree in use. Always a good way to pass out information, but what if we could augment this process so that information was passed out over several mediums, reached more members, reached them repetively, and could be used to disseminate to potential or non-members.

Techno-Communication Scenario

Senior member Jones is out of town on business and hasn't had any contact with his unit in several days. He's arriving back in town the same night as his squadron meeting and has no idea of what the specific schedule is or what new events and activities have been announced. He'd like to have this information so he is prepared for the night's activities and can plan ahead for the coming weeks. He pulls out his Web-enabled cell phone and pulls up his squadron website and is able to read the latest squadron newsletter with all the happenings, events, and activities going on. Jones already knows that a leadership class is taught on the first meeting of the night but now he knows that Major Williamson is teaching a class on integrity to the cadets. When Senior member Jones arrives home from his trip he checks his email box and finds a copy of the squadron newsletter. Identical information from his phone has now been repeated to him again. Senior member Jones quickly changes into his uniform and jets off to his squadron meeting.

That night during announcements the squadron commander reviews the happenings, events, and activities. Guess what? The squadron commander has read from the exact same newsletter that Jones has read on both his phone an email. Furthermore, the written copy circulating around the room is in fact that very same squadron newsletter.

Senior member Jones has been exposed to the same information 4 times now! A week from now when a new member asks Jones about any upcoming events they can participate in he should be able to mechanically inform the new member of them. If not – he simply needs to load up the squadron website, pull out his cell phone, check his email, read the written copy, or check his palm handheld.

Is this a glimpse into the future of a squadron's utilization of technology? An idea or hope for the future? No, it's reality and it's happening right now as you're read this. The Minneapolis Composite Squadron of Indiana Wing has strategically positioned itself to be on the technological/communication cutting edge of squadron/community interaction. The application is thru the squadron website which has evolved from a passive medium to an interactive tool.

Minneapolis Composite Squadron has what you'd typically find in a squadron website: squadron roster, information about its ES activities, squadron history, recruiting information, meeting maps and directions, contact information, and a links page. What it also has is a file directory of squadron level files from a squadron patch template to the squadron theme song. Then there's the interactive tool.

The Interactive Tool

The 184th Report Squadron Newsletter functions as the key to the website becoming an interactive tool and not simply a passive one-way visual communication. The page has archived all of the past and present squadron newsletters. Each month a new one is posted to the squadron website. You can read it online and certain information has links to take you to a different location for additional information. At the same time that the newsletter is posted on the website it is sent over email to those that have subscribed to the newsletter. Concurrently, with the Webmaster merely re-copying the newsletter to the PDA-enabled page the squadron newsletter is available on any web enable cell phone, or palm handheld device.

After the newsletter has been sent out over email and is available thru the other mediums it is also printed out and read to all squadron members at the next squadron meeting. It's also passed around and stays in the squadron-reading file for future review. Just like Senior member Jones above even those that don't have web or email access are able to find out what going on by reading the printed version of the newsletter. In addition, with the newsletter available over so many formats it increases the chances of it being seen.

If Cadet Brown doesn't have web access or even email access he might have access to a web enable cell phone or received a palm handheld for his birthday that he can use to read the newsletter. On top of this if anyone (squadron member or CAP member) wishes to place an announcement of an event or activity in the newsletter all they have to do is send an email to the newsletter administrator for future inclusion.

Conclusions

Is it perfect? No. Is it error-proof? No. But it's a step in the right direction. Just as we see changes in the utilization of the National CAP website and its move to be more of a customized and interactive tool so can squadron websites move in this direction. What more practical way than the dissemination of information to the squadron members. In the future Minneapolis Composite Squadron plans to improve the quality and efficiency of its newsletter and its movement thru the various mediums of communication. Further ideas are to add audio clips and video clips of classes, and activities. There are plans to create a squadron mission database that can be modified online. These developments will produce a more efficient medium to allow squadrons to communicate and share ideas either thru improvements to the squadron newsletter or a new interactive area to the site.

Squadron Newsletters

Every unit in Civil Air Patrol, large or small, should publish a newsletter to keep its current and prospective members informed as to what is going on in their local squadron; educate them on CAP's history, purpose, objectives, operations and plans, etc., motivate them to greater interest in Civil Air Patrol; and attain greater participation in squadron activities.

Distribution

Squadron newsletters should be distributed to every member of your unit. Wing newsletters may be distributed only to squadron commanders if postage cost is an issue. Be sure to include the wing public affairs officer on your mailing list, as well as CAP National Headquarters, your mayor, city officials, and civic leaders. Make certain that your mailing list is updated and accurate. Nothing turns a recipient off faster than seeing mail addressed to a person that has been gone for 3 years.

Content

As the name indicates, your newsletter should contain *news*. Tell the recipients what your squadron has done recently, what you plan to do, who got promoted, who won an award, announce new members, write about your current members. Keep it informative and be sure it is *useful* to your members.

Since the newsletter will be sent to people outside of your organization, be specific about names, ranks, places and events, and always use complete and proper names. Spell out acronyms on first references. (Check *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual* for rules and exceptions.)

Consistently adhere to the who, what, when, where, why/how system of writing. Answering these five questions with complete, descriptive sentences will improve the coherency of your newsletter articles and help your readers grasp and retain your message.

Avoid writing one-sentence instorieslc for your publication. Instead of saying Congratulations to Cadet Jones on his recent promotion, l. give your readers the full story by stating his or her full rank and name, explain the cadet's position in the squadron, and explain how the cadet achieved the new rank (participation in CAP activities, exams, chairing special projects, etc.). Additional information such as what the cadet plans for the future and why CAP is an important factor would provide the human interest angle that make your readers read your newsletter instead of just skimming it.

As the PAO and/or newsletter editor, do not assume you have to provide all of the publication's articles. Encourage the cadets and senior members to write about their experiences in CAP, explain the responsibilities of the positions they hold, and what motivates them as members of an organization that emphasizes Cadet Programs, Aerospace Education, and Emergency Services. Look at the big picture when you are deciding what to include in next months newsletter.

While you and your squadron members write, keep your focus on your reader. Continually ask yourself if the topic is relevant to the organization and its missions will it grab and hold the reader's attention? Does it provide enough information for the reader to ioseela what you are writing about? Does it encourage the reader to inquire further about your squadron and Civil Air Patrol?

All of these elements give your readers the opportunity to understand the requirements and achievements encountered by members of CAP and may intrigue potential members enough to join a squadron and use their skills for the benefit of the community.

THE 184th REPORT

Minneapolis Composite Squadron

March 2001

February Practice SAR

The February Practice SAR in Clark County went rather well. There were two mission bases for this event. One mission base was at Clark County Airport where ELT/DF training took place. The other base was at Vissing Park where a Missing Person search took place. Minneapolis participated on Saturday. The members and their roles were Captain Reynolds, Ground Ops Director for Vissing Park; 1st Lt. Copes, Ground Team Leader at Vissing Park; 1st Lt. Skeens, Ground Team Leader at Vissing Park; C/1st Lt. Waggoner, C/SSgt Northam, C/SrA Carl, C/A1C Northam, C/Amn Mills served as Ground Team Members at Vissing Park.

Wing Conference and Banquet

If you haven't heard yet the Indiana Wing Conference and Banquet will be held this Saturday, March 10th at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. The Conference kicks off at 9 am and includes a CAC meeting, Commander's Call, PAO, CD, Operations, Supply, and Communications breakout sessions. The Banquet starts at 6 pm and will include food, fun, and awards. Colonel Ed Mueller is collecting registration and fees for the event. If you plan to attend but haven't mailed your registration you can contact Colonel Mueller to let him know that you are attending by sending a message to: emueller@otherside.com. See you there!

Aerospace Night with Major McClure

We'd like to thank our RAP Officer, Major McClure for stopping by on February 22nd and teaching a class on avionics to the cadets. The cadets learned about the different controls of the aircraft, the different forces an aircraft deals with and perhaps a better understanding of the Bernoulli Principle. Major McClure will be returning later this spring to teach a class on Air Traffic Control – it's going to be an interactive and fun evening!

Volunteer for the National Boards in Cincinnati, Ohio August 16-18 2001

We wanted to let everyone know that a "Summary of Wing/Region Support" document should be circulating with different support areas to volunteer for the National Boards. Areas include transportation, airport duties, communications, and public affairs. Our wing coordinator is Captain Karen Weinkle. If you have questions or would like more information you can contact her at: weinkle@venus.net

Article about our website in the CAP Leader

Captain Reynolds has written an article about the Minneapolis Composite Squadron website that has been added to the newest issue of the CAP Leader. The article talks mostly about the 184th Report and how it is available over various mediums including a handheld device. The article can be read directly by following this link: <http://www.inwg.cap.gov/capleader/SQWEB.h>'. Other articles are available on the CAP Leader website along with a synopsis of topics to expect this year. If you have an idea for an article then you can find information about submitting your article here: <http://www.inwg.cap.gov/capleader/pr06.h>'. You can get to the CAP Leader website via a link on our squadron website Links page or visit them directly at: <http://www.inwingcap.org/capleader/index.h>'

Read the 184th Report with a Handheld Device

In January we mentioned that you could read the 184th Report with any handheld device that supported AvantGo. We have updated our site with a new [Mobile Edition page](#). This page will serve as the introduction to anything relating to mobile content available on our website. For instructions on how to add the 184th Report to AvantGo visit our instructions page: http://www.geocities.com/cap12184/pda_directions.h'l

Incident Command System Course

If you haven't signed up to take the FEMA ICS course then see Capt. Reynolds at the squadron meeting to ask for a form or visit <http://www.fema.gov/EMI/enroll.h>' to enroll.

Changes to Website: New [184th Report AvantGo Instructions page](#)
New [Mobile Edition page](#)
Updated [Squadron History page](#)
Updated [Armed Forces page](#)
Updates to [our main page](#)

Awards: C/SrA Northam promoted to C/SSgt

New Files: Kevlar Award Files

Get these files and others like it at: <http://www.geocities.com/cap12184/files.h>'

March Meeting Schedule

March 1: Blue's
Drill
Testing/Study

March 8: Blue's (BDU for Cadets)
PT/PT Testing
ML

March 15: Blue's
Drill Down (3 of 3)
Review Boards
Safety

March 22: Blue's (BDU for Cadets)
Drill Down (1 of 3)
AE

March 29: BDU
Drill Down (2 of 3)
ES

Other Events

March 10 – Wing Conference and Banquet – Ball State University, Muncie [more info](#)

March 10 – Commanders Call, CAC – Ball State University, Muncie

March 17 – CN Teleconference Orientation

March 31 – National Check Pilot Standardization Course

April 28 – WG Staff, CAC – Grissom

May 5-6 – Observer School – Terre Haute [more info](#)

May 12 – Practice SAR

May 26 – WG Staff, CAC – Grissom

June 16 – Practice SAR

July 14-21 – Type A Encampment – Camp Atterbury [more info](#)

For more dates or additional information visit the [Indiana Wing Calendar](#)

If you would like to contribute to the 184th Report (or make a comment or suggestion), then forward material to Capt. Jeremy Reynolds. You can email him at jeffinvent@yahoo.com.

Visit the Minneapolis Composite Squadron website at: <http://www.geocities.com/cap12184>

Subscribe to the 184th Report email list. Send an email to: cap12184@yahoo.com with your name and email address.

PAO Reports

CAP Reg 190-1 requires Wing PAO's to submit to National Headquarters/PA a quarterly report of PA Activities in the wing and its subordinate units.

To this end Wing/PA requires units to submit a quarterly report of their PA Activities. This is accomplished by using Wing Form 14a which can be downloaded as a [MS Word Version](#) or a [Acrobat PDF](#)

Units that submit all 4 of the quarterly reports in a calendar year are awarded 1 point in the "Commander's Emphasis Items." 1/4 point is awarded for each quarter.

Reports are due to Wing/PA not later than the 10th day after the reporting quarter. See table below.

Reporting Quarter	Due Date
1st Quarter 2002 (Jan-Mar)	10 April
2nd Quarter 2002 (Apr-June)	10 July
3rd Quarter 2002 (July-Sept)	10 Oct
4th Quarter 2002 (Oct-Dec)	10 Jan

The preferred method of submission is via e-mail. Paper submissions are acceptable. Effective with the 3rd Quarter report the only acceptable submission format will be electronic.

You can use the PDF or Word versions for electronic submission. The form has fields built in for you to key your data.

Many units submitted their reports with old forms. This will no longer be acceptable. reports received on old forms will be accepted but no points awarded. The current version of the forms that are on this web site or the Wing Forms Page are the only acceptable forms, plain text e-mail is also acceptable.

If you have questions please e-mail the PAO at pa@mnwg.cap.gov