Public Affairs (PA) Plan

31 December 2017

I. Introduction:

a. Purpose: "The mission of the Civil Air Patrol" (CAP) "Public Affairs" (PA) Program is to inform internal and external audiences of CAP's national importance, safeguard the image and assets of the corporation, and strengthen relations with key audiences and customers, which enables the organization to grow."¹

b. CAP PA Plan Objectives: CAP's overall PA objectives are as follows:
   i. "Increase public awareness of CAP, its local, state, and national missions, and its contributions to the nation.
   ii. Develop and conduct a comprehensive internal and external PA plan.
   iii. Promote cooperation between CAP and other aviation organizations, the military, business, industry and civic groups.
   iv. Consistently communicate the CAP brand identity and inspire every member to help build awareness of CAP."²

c. "Planning: PAO's at the flight, squadron...levels will develop an annual PA plan to promote CAP, its goals and missions for internal and external audiences. These PA plans should complement the PA objectives in the National Strategic Plan. The PA plan will follow the four-step planning process for PA:
   - Step 1 – Determine PA needs and opportunities.
   - Step 2 – Establish Objectives designed to fulfill needs and opportunities identified in step 1.
   - Step 3 – Establish goals and action strategies for each objective, including a way to measure the effectiveness of the tactics being used.
   - Step 4 – State the desired impact envisioned for the goal provided in step 3. The unit PAO will submit a PA plan annually in the first quarter of the calendar year, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of the previous year's goals to the wing PAO for review and input."

¹ CAPR 190-1, Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs Program, (Maxwell AFB, AL: National Headquarters Civil Air Patrol, 2016), 2.
² CAPR 190-1, 2.
In addition to the four-step planning process, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the 2016 goals is required by the Wing PAO.©

d. **External:** PAO’s will develop goals and initiatives that help build relationships with external constituencies of CAP and emphasize its importance in the performance of its missions."®

e. **Internal:** PAOs will advise the commander on internal PA strategies and methods in order to conduct an effective program. PAOs will develop strategies that emphasize CAP’s importance, member recognition, retention and encouragement of member participation in unit, wing, region and national activities and training.®

f. **PA Planning Guidance:** The purpose and scope of the Public Affairs Plan is contained in CAP Regulation 190-1, *Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs Program.*

II. **Determine PA Needs and Opportunities:**

a. **Squadron Composition:** The Cheyenne Composite Squadron (CCS) consists of 63 current members. There are 29 senior members (SM) and 34 cadets in the CCS. Of the 29 senior members, 20 are active at least part of the year. Of the 34 cadets, at least 25 are active and 6 are semi-active or inactive.

b. **Special Annual Events:** The squadron develops an annual planning calendar in September. The planning meeting attempts to offer no more than two special events per month due to the limited number of active senior members.

c. **Important Note:** The PA Plan is based upon the Calendar Year (January-December) while the CCS’s Planning Calendar is based upon the Fiscal Year (October-September).

d. **Targeted Improvement:** The squadron has identified several areas for improvement.

i. **Public Affairs Program:** Continue to improve the Public Affairs Program by following our baseline agenda in the PAO program. Begin addressing the major issues of concern within the PA Program. Continue developing the squadron’s local procedures and guidance for the squadron’s unique missions and capabilities.

ii. **Cadet Program:** Training of squadron members, as well as the local community, on Cadet Program topics and the nature of the program and how it is essential to CAP’s, the Wing’s, and the squadron’s mission in Wyoming. Increase Cadet recruitment and retention by 10%.

iii. **Senior Member Recruitment and Retention:** One essential area of improvement is the targeted recruitment and retention of Senior members in vital squadron duty positions. Increase SM recruitment and retention by 10%.

---

3 CAPR 190-1, 3-4.
4 CAPR 190-1, 4.
5 CAPR 190-1, 4, 5.
e. **What can the PA do?**
   i. **Cadet Programs:** Assist the squadron Commander, Deputy Commander for Cadets, and Cadet Program Officers in "getting the Word Out" about the Cadet Program. Create closer relationships and partnerships with the local community.
   ii. **Recruiting:** Assist the squadron Commander with recruitment by providing external communication with news outlets, government agencies, and military units. In addition, assist the squadron Commander with the posting of duty position openings to the public through the squadron's Facebook© page, public webpage, and media outlets. Assist the Commander by exploring new ways to publicize position openings. Develop closer communications with military and civic groups to bolster CAP's and the CCS's mission. Track the recruitment of senior members by updating e-services duty position information and training as needed and by keeping track of our social media postings monthly prior to the second Monday of the Month and present our progress at our Senior Member Staff Meeting.
   iii. **Improve the PA Program:** Create closer partnerships and relations with the military and the local community to create greater visibility for the squadron. Participate in local events such as Super Day, Hero Appreciation Day, etc. to enhance community relations and public awareness of the CAP mission. Develop a priority listing of all PAO responsibilities and actions for review monthly by the PAO and squadron Commander.

III. **Establish Goals:**
   a. Support and exceed the WYWG Initiative to Show Growth and Retention by providing value based PA support. The initiative states: “Show net growth of two members per unit.” Work closely with the Recruiting and Retention (R&R) Officer to develop a FY2018 Recruitment Plan which addresses events, activities, targeted audience information, etc. and strategies to retain members.
   b. Participate in local events which will bolster the Squadrons visibility; Encourage squadron members to seek out opportunities to increase the squadron’s visibility in the community. Continually update the squadron planning calendar with updated opportunities for contact with the public.
   c. Develop contacts and relationships with local news agencies; Inform local news agencies of CAP happenings and events; Appeal to local news agencies for coverage of CAP events. Develop a media contact file to track contact names and numbers as appropriate. Attempt to contact 100% of local media outlets during CY2017.
   d. Foster a closer working relationship with the many military organizations in Cheyenne (AMVETS, VFW, etc.); Foster closer working relationships with the Wyoming Military Department, F. E. Warren Air Force Base, The
Wyoming Air National Guard, the Wyoming Army National Guard, and the United States Naval Reserve.

e. Continue to strengthen relationships with local and state governmental agencies. Establish a working file on all pertinent governmental agencies.

f. Develop better relationships with other Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado CAP squadrons.

IV. Action Strategies:

a. Include a Public Affairs "what are we doing right" and "lessons learned" briefing at each senior member staff meeting; Develop a comprehensive list of contacts within the local community and encourage squadron members to develop contacts. Encourage squadron members to share contacts.

b. Continue to encourage senior and cadet members to submit articles and photos; Advance noteworthy essays, photos, and articles to the Wing PAO and NHQ for publication; Fully utilize the squadron's Facebook© and public website as a media outlet.

c. Continue to develop media, government, military, and community contacts and utilize these contacts to further the squadron's mission and recruitment goals.

d. Visit schools, military societies and organizations, local events, etc. to foster better working relationships, inform the public about our mission, and recruit new members.

V. 2017 PA Plan Effectiveness Review:

a. 2017 PA Plan Targeted Improvements, Objectives, and Goals:
   i. 2017 Targeted Improvement: The squadron has identified several areas for improvement.

   1. Public Affairs Program: Institute a comprehensive Public Affairs Program by establishing a baseline PAO program. Before addressing the major issues of concern within the PA Program the squadron needs to address the basics and allow the PAO to inaugurate local procedures and guidance for the squadron’s unique missions and capabilities.

      a. A baseline PAO Program is instituted with a clear line of communication between the Unit CC and the PAO. The basic issues and local procedures have been addressed and corrected. A clear understanding of the procedures and guidance has been disseminated to squadron members.

   2. Emergency Services and SAR Evaluations: Training of squadron members, as well as the local community, on Emergency Services topics and the nature of SAR Exercises and Evaluations is essential to CAP’s, the Wings’ and the squadron’s mission in Wyoming.
a. The use of the squadron’s internal Public Affairs channel has assisted the ES team in training unit members by informing unit members of the CAP SAR mission. During the Cheyenne and Laramie Open Houses, as well as the several local activities the squadron participated in, the public learned of CAPs ES and SAR missions.

3. Senior Member Recruitment and Retention: One essential area of improvement is the targeted recruitment and retention of Senior members in vital squadron duty positions.
   a. Recruited a R&R Officer who is implementing a comprehensive R&R Plan for the squadron.

ii. What can the PA do?

1. Emergency Services and SAR Evaluations: Assist the squadron Commander, Operations Officer, and Emergency Services Officer to ensure appropriate training and mission data is transmitted to the appropriate authorities, new agencies, and the public. Incorporate ES and SAR educational information into all PAO activities and ensure the squadron PIO is informed of all educational as well as operational mission data. Create closer relationships and partnerships with ES providers and the Air Force to enhance cross-communications and visibility for CAP ES missions and exercises.
   a. The PAO did not assist the squadron Commander, Operations Officer, and Emergency Services Officer in ensuring appropriate training and mission data was transmitted, this task was upchanneled to the Wing PAO/PIO. The Wing PAO/PIO accomplished all of these tasks.

2. Recruiting: Assist the squadron Commander with recruitment by providing external communication with news outlets, government agencies, and military units. In addition, assist the squadron Commander with the posting of duty position openings to the public through the squadron’s Facebook© page, public webpage, and media outlets. Assist the Commander by exploring new ways to publicize position openings. Develop closer communications with military and civic groups to bolster CAP’s and the CCS’s mission. Track the recruitment of senior members by updating e-services duty position information and training as needed and by keeping track of our social media postings monthly prior to the second Monday of the Month and present our progress at our Senior Member Staff Meeting.
a. The PAO assisted in recruiting by providing external communication with news outlets, government agencies, and military units by delegating tasks and developing a PA action plan for the squadron Open Houses. The PAO did not post job opening on social media.

3. **Retention**: Research methods of retention and use internal retention information gathered from members to develop a comprehensive retention plan by seeking information from unit members on squadron programs and how they affect retention. Recruit a Recruitment and Retention Officer. Update e-services duty position information as needed upon recruitment.
   
a. The R&R Officer is researching methods of retention, recruitment, and developing a comprehensive retention plan.

4. **Improve the PA Program by Establishing a Baseline**: Create closer partnerships and relations with the military and the local community to create greater visibility for the squadron. Participate in local events such as Super Day, Hero Appreciation Day, etc. to enhance community relations and public awareness of the CAP mission. Develop a priority listing of all PAO responsibilities and actions for review monthly by the PAO and squadron Commander.
   
a. Participated in local high visibility events.
   
   Discussed PA actions list and plan as needed.
   
   Informed commander of pressing issues within the PA program.

iii. **2017 Squadron Goals:**

1. Develop a Comprehensive Retention and Recruitment Plan.
   
a. Recruited a Recruitment and Retention Officer, currently Developing a Comprehensive Plan.

2. Participate in local events which will bolster the Squadrions visibility; Encourage squadron members to seek out opportunities to increase the squadron’s visibility in the community. Continually update the squadron planning calendar with updated opportunities for contact with the public.
   
a. Participated in several local events throughout the year. Offered a squadron Open House in September after increasing the squadron’s visibility in the community.
   
b. Still need to expand our community awareness program.

3. Develop contacts and relationships with local news agencies; Inform local news agencies of CAP happenings
and events; Appeal to local news agencies for coverage of CAP events. Develop a media contact file to track contact names and numbers as appropriate. Attempt to contact 100% of local media outlets during CY2017.

a. **Working tirelessly to improve our contacts with local news agencies.** Keeping the local news informed of upcoming events. SMs developing a media contact file. Only 80% of local media outlets contacted during CY2017.

4. Foster a closer working relationship with the many military organizations in Cheyenne (AMVETS, VFW, etc.); Foster closer working relationships with the Wyoming Military Department, F. E. Warren Air Force Base, The Wyoming Air National Guard, the Wyoming Army National Guard, and the United States Naval Reserve.
   a. **Fostered a closer working relationship with F. E. Warren AFB Public Affairs.**

5. Continue to strengthen relationships with local and state governmental agencies. Establish a working file on all pertinent governmental agencies.
   a. **Increased our visibility with state and local governmental agencies. Continuing to increase awareness and mutual relationships.**

6. Develop better relationships with the unit’s sister squadron’s in Wheatland and Laramie. Develop better working relationships with other Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado CAP squadrons.
   a. **Developed a very close relationship with Laramie Valley. Visible to the Colorado Wing and several Colorado Squadrons, especially Thompson Valley.**

iv. **2017 Action Strategy:**

1. Include a Public Affairs “what are we doing right” and “lessons learned” briefing at each senior member staff meeting; Develop a comprehensive list of contacts within the local community and encourage squadron members to develop contacts. Encourage squadron members to share contacts.
   a. **A Public Affairs Briefing now included at every Staff Meeting. Still working on a contact sharing format.**

2. Continue to develop the squadron Quarterly Newsletter and encourage senior and cadet members to submit articles and photos; Advance noteworthy essays, photos, and articles to the Wing PAO and NHQ for publication; Fully utilize the squadron’s Facebook© and public website as a media outlet.
a. The Newsletter abandoned due to available man-hours needed to accomplish. Utilizing the squadron FB page to deliver CAP, WYWG, and CAP News.

3. Continue to develop media, government, military, and community contacts and utilize these contacts to further the squadron’s mission and recruitment goals.
   a. Continuing to develop media, government, military, and community contacts.

4. Recruit as Recruitment and Retention Officer as well as other key staff members through social media and other methods.
   a. R&R Officer recruited.

5. Visit schools, military societies and organizations, local events, etc. to foster better working relationships, inform the public about our mission, and recruit new members.
   a. Still working on having a presence in the schools. Visited several local events in CY2017 to inform the public of our CAP missions.

6. Include the Laramie and Wheatland squadrons in developing an outreach and exchange program that will incorporate all three squadrons.
   a. Laramie Valley is included in our outreach and exchange programs.

7. 

v. 2017 NHQ Goals:

1. Support NHQ, PCR and Wyoming Wing Public Affairs Objectives by familiarizing squadron members and staff with Public Affairs Marketing Plan, Goals and Strategies.
   a. The squadron continues to support NHQ, PCR, and Wyoming Wing PA objectives.

2. Post news and events to our unit website and Facebook page.
   a. Frequently posting to our social media pages.

3. Submit articles and photos to the Wing and National newsletters.
   a. Periodically submitting articles.

4. Provide news releases to our only local media outlet as situations require or provide. Attempt to get more “coverage” of events, promotions, and the like.
   a. The squadron has failed to submit news releases to local media outlets.

5. Continue to “market” our local CAP and Wing Capabilities to 1st Responder Agencies by participating in training exercises and events where and when possible and resources permit. Continue utilizing the excellent CAP
abilities Manual with our own local information and present it, in person, whenever possible, with narrative.
a. The squadron is actively participating in USAF and CAP SAREX and SAR Eval events whenever possible. PA information released via WG PAO/PIO.

6. Acquaint members with all areas of the Professional Development Program. Attempt to find one member interested in Public Affairs and encourage them to enter the PA Track and MIO Qualification in Mission Base Staff.
a. Recruited a potential PAO with marketing background and a lot of local contacts.

vi. **Overall PA Plan Effectiveness:** Overall the effectiveness for the 2017 PA Plan was commendable and most items were accomplished satisfactorily.

VI. **Maintenance of the CCS’s PA Plan:** The unit PAO will submit a PA plan annually in the first quarter of the calendar year, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of the previous year’s goals to the wing PAO for review and input. The wing PAO will submit a PA plan annually in the first quarter of the calendar year, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of the previous year’s goals, to the region PAO and to NHQ PA for review and input. The region PAO will submit a PA plan annually in the first quarter of the calendar year, including an evaluation of the previous year’s goals, for review and input to NHQ PA. All successive PA plans and corresponding evaluations will be retained in accordance with CAPR 10-2, *Files Maintenance and Records Disposition*.³

VII. **Conclusion:** With a new active PAO the overall goal of the 2017 CCS’s PA Plan is to establish a baseline for the Public Affairs Program and to cultivate contacts within the local community and at all levels of CAP. In addition, the PA Plan addresses the need to provide and foster outreach to other squadrons, within the region which can benefit CAP and the Wing with mission accomplishment.

³ CAPR 190-1, 4.