



HEADQUARTERS
CIVIL AIR PATROL MINNESOTA WING
United States Air Force Auxiliary
6275 Crossman Lane
Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota 55076-1815
26 February 2012

Wing Public Affairs Plan

I. Introduction

This annual plan, required to be prepared annually by CAPR 190-1, represents the plans of Headquarters Minnesota Wing for its Public Affairs Program, including regular marketing communications, mission communications, and crisis communications. It was prepared by Wing Public Affairs officer Captain Joseph Bradfield.

II. Situation Analysis

Minnesota Wing is organized in four Groups containing 22 Squadrons. Calendar year 2012 began with 641 cadet and 774 senior members. Wing conference, SAREXs, O-flights, encampment and flight academy, change of command ceremonies, air shows, professional training and cadet national special activities provide some of the activities in which Minnesota Wing is involved.

In 2011 the following were noted: 21 USAF-assigned reimbursable missions with 62 aircraft hours and 1,845 personal hours. Mission training included 38 missions, 399 aircraft hours and 16,458 personal hours. Of the wing's emergency and disaster relief missions, 6 were disaster relief, 2 missing persons, 1 overdue aircraft, and 4 were "other" (HS, NWS, CD, etc). Twelve were emergency locator transmitter missions.

Minnesota Wing Headquarters Squadron is responsible for the smooth conduct of all CAP squadrons in the state of Minnesota. The community we serve is all of the people of Minnesota. Our greatest strength lies in our members throughout the state, who maintain their readiness to assist in the community and are always eager to be called upon to do so, ever vigilant for opportunities to serve. Internally, we generally conduct the CAP program with significant effectiveness. One weakness, however, is that we have not maintained as a priority our collective duty to share CAP story. Our story is told as a serendipitous consequence in incidental media coverage of our public presence at events and occasional news releases submitted by a few wing members. As a result, the community as a whole is unaware of our missions, our successes and our availability to serve them further.

- Public affairs at the squadron level can promote unit cohesion and a willingness to conduct the mission and program with greater emphasis on documenting and recording what we do. Our MN Wing publication, which is informative and promotional, is an obvious vehicle for this purpose.
- We can provide better Public Relations Officer knowledge, skills and abilities training at the squadron level.
- All squadron members should know how to provide visitors and new members with prepared informative and promotional materials they need, as well as give direction to further assistance.
- Opportunities to establish sponsoring relationships with the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars posts with the squadron should be examined. Coordination between these groups for ceremonial events will encourage interest and bonding between them.

III. Goals

Provide PA instructional classes at squadron level. Support air shows throughout the state as recruiting opportunities. Ensure new squadron PAs are equipped and supported in shortest time possible after accepting their positions. Solicit and assess data to determine continuing improvement goals and means to them for standing PAs. Evaluate effectiveness of, and amend as necessary, the delivery, goals and objectives of the general wing public affairs program throughout the year, aligning them to regional and national goals and directives.

IV. Objectives

Schedule, design, deliver and evaluate squadron and group level PA officer instruction classes that result from the wing PA's formal and informal inquiries to determine need or the requests of the units themselves. The wing PA will call, visit and email lower echelon PAs to determine and provide support for their public relations activities, including air shows, dedication events, local flying programs, flight history clubs, volunteering in the community, and promotion of membership drives and events. The wing PA will conduct ongoing, periodic evaluations of public affairs program effectiveness and apprise wing staff at regularly scheduled wing meetings, promoting wing staff awareness of wing public affairs activity.

These items are in place at this time:

- Newsletter for internal communications
- Regular submissions to the wing newsletter, the North Central Region News newsletter, Civil Air Patrol Volunteer magazine and VolunteerNow, CAP's national news website.
- Wing-coordinated Wreaths Across America sales, PR and ceremonial tribute

V. Strategies

- 1. News Releases.** The Public Affairs staff will prepare news releases for each significant activity other than regular meeting night activities. If appropriate, an advance news release will be sent to local news media. After such an event, a news release will be sent to the local media, if appropriate, and to the wing and region newsletters and the CAP News Online. Such activities may include, but not be limited to: Unit participation in SAR exercises and actual missions (other than Counter Drug); public appearances of members of the unit in uniform, such as community relations events; special or unusual unit training, either on a meeting night or other time; and "milestone" promotions and awards for members.
- 2. Photography.** The Public Affairs staff will strive to obtain quality photography to illustrate news releases and newsletter articles. Photographers should avoid "grip and grin" posed photographs in favor of photographs that show actions. Photographs distributed outside of the local unit should show proper conduct and uniform wear.
- 3. Monthly Newsletter.** The PA will produce a monthly newsletter telling about unit success stories and previewing upcoming activities. This newsletter will be distributed electronically to all members. Members who do not have email or web access will receive printed copies. The newsletter will be posted on the unit website. The monthly deadline for members wishing to submit information for the newsletter will be the first of the month and the newsletter will ordinarily be distributed within a week after that. The goal of the newsletter will be to project the image of an active, vital unit that has many good things happening. It will primarily be an internal communications and retention tool, however it will be available for distribution to community partners, prospective members, and other interested parties outside CAP.
- 4. Higher Headquarters.** Each significant news release will be delivered to the wing and region PAs (or designee) and to the Civil Air Patrol News Online. In addition, units will keep the wing and region PAs advised of problems, challenges, and upcoming opportunities in the Public Affairs Program.

5. **Community Relations.** The unit PA will collaborate with other appropriate staff members and the commander to increase unit visibility in the community with activities such as color guard performances, service club presentations, and support for worthy community events. Discuss specific events the unit may be planning, based on goals.
6. **Internal Communication.** The PA and the Commander shall communicate regularly, if possible in person and at least monthly, about Public Affairs opportunities and challenges.
7. **Website.** The PA will collaborate with the webmaster/IT officer of the unit website to ensure that the direct and subconscious messages for the general public all reflect positively on the unit and the organization.
8. **Branding.** Whenever possible, the CAP marketing slogan "Citizens Serving Communities" shall be used in both internal and external communications. In addition, the nationally-standardized explanation paragraph shall be incorporated into every external communication.
9. **Recruiting and Retention.** The PA will collaborate with the unit's Recruiting and Retention Officer to stage several recruiting events during the year. As example, the various air shows throughout the state offer significant opportunities to meet the people of Minnesota and share our story.
10. **Professional Development.** The PA will pursue professional development in Public Affairs. Possible areas appropriate to your unit may include:
 - a. Entering and progressing in the Public Affairs Specialty Track.
 - b. Training to become a mission Information Officer, or renewing qualifications.
 - c. Subscribing to the NCR ALL-PAs listserv and the national CAP-PA listserv.
 - d. Taking other available in-person or correspondence courses for Public Affairs.

VI. Evaluation

The PA will institute and the lead the Public Affairs staff in quarterly evaluations based on the contents of this plan to be held in March, June, September and December. The status of the wing's public affairs program will be documented and made available to the wing staff during the wing meeting held the following month of evaluation. Results will be incorporated into the annual revision of the wing's Public Affairs Plan.

APPROVED:

JERRY P. ROSENDAHL, Colonel, CAP
Minnesota Wing Commander

DISTRIBUTION: 1 Each (Electronic)

Wing/PA

RECORD OF REVIEW:

Review Date Commander's Initials

Review Date	Commander's Initials
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