

# CAPP 170-1

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## CAP Comprehensive Response Plan



NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS CIVIL AIR PATROL  
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

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## OVERVIEW

Civil Air Patrol is committed to its members, employees, and partners. Therefore, CAP implemented this Comprehensive Response Plan to ensure that, in the event of an incident, every effort is made to first safeguard CAP personnel and then to recover the business operations of CAP that might be affected. The Plan is reviewed and, as necessary, updated on a regular basis to provide for contingencies that affect personnel, physical property, paper and electronic records and CAP's various business activities. The Plan includes Annexes consisting of Quick Reaction Checklists (QRC) to swiftly and easily guide members through a variety of scenarios. Some scenarios may necessitate the use of multiple QRCs.

NOTE – With the exception of Chapter 6, *Mishap – Aircraft, Vehicle or Other*, this Plan's use of the term "incident" refers to any unforeseen event that negatively impacts CAP personnel, resources or business activities and should not be confused with "mishap" as a safety-related classification.

This Plan serves as a guide to assist members at all levels on how to respond to a crisis, especially one presenting a significant emotional event for those responding to or closely connected with the event. This Plan is applicable to all CAP members, specifically commanders at all levels, functional leaders, and responding or affected parties. As a guide, it serves to help decision makers know what they should be doing and what they should *not* do immediately and in the days following an incident.

NOTE – The terms "crisis" and "crises" are subjective calls based on the incident and the degree to which members and business operations are affected. In reality, a crisis to one could be perceived as a challenge or inconvenience to another. This statement is not made to diminish the significance of impact perceived by the affected members nor does it imply weakness on the member's part or that one functional area is less important than another. Rather the intent is to emphasize with leaders that each situation and the reactions of those involved are unique. Therefore, this Plan makes no attempt to define these terms or the threshold at which an incident is deemed a crisis.

Fortunately for CAP, we seldom witness mishaps or events that pose emotional stressors on our members; however, when these situations occur the potential exists for unit operations to be disrupted. For example, members might participate in an emergency services mission involving an immense catastrophe to their home town. Witnessing such destruction could create emotional stresses for them personally. This emotional stress can cloud good judgment even for the highly experienced member and could ultimately compromise mission safety and overall success. As such, when these events occur, history has shown that even with the best of intentions, members' actions are not always helpful nor are they always accomplished in a rational, time-appropriate manner.

This Plan serves to take the guesswork out of what actions to take and when, what actions are inappropriate, and who is best suited to perform the necessary actions. This Plan minimizes the chaos and uncertainty often caused by these emotional events by providing Quick Reaction Checklists (QRCs) to control the pace of crisis response activities and ensure needed actions are accomplished. The QRCs are provided separately as annexes to this Plan.

**CAUTION – As a guide, this Plan should not replace sound judgment nor is it intended to supersede statutory and regulatory guidance. Instead, QRCs outline considerations decision makers should take while allowing adjustments to fit the situation at hand.**

This Plan also provides pre-incident considerations to better posture leadership and unit members to handle the unexpected.

**NOTE – Unless stated otherwise, this Plan’s use of the term “organization” or “unit” applies to both CAP National Headquarters (NHQ) and any other traditional level of unit (e.g. region, wing, group or squadron).**

## **HOW TO EFFECTIVELY USE THIS PLAN**

This Plan is divided into chapters. The first chapter provides members with preparatory considerations to heighten readiness for the unexpected incident. The post-incident chapters that follow highlight select scenarios that, in today’s operating environment, present some degree of likelihood they could occur.

While it’s not reasonable to expect members to read this pamphlet cover-to-cover, members should know the major contents and be able to refer to applicable chapters and associated QRCs should the need arise. Each chapter begins by identifying the applicable QRC(s) followed by text germane to that chapter’s scenario. After reviewing the chapter, refer to the QRC for recommended actions to take.

Some scenarios might require multiple QRCs to effectively deal with the situation. The table on the next page highlights where multiple QRCs might apply. Since no two incidents are the same, leaders have latitude in using other QRCs, or portions thereof, as needed for the situation.

- Annex A – Unit Contact Information
- Annex B – NHQ Contact Information
- Annex C – Crisis Communication
- Annex D – Death or Casualty Reporting
- Annex E – Aircraft Accident
- Annex F – Mishap – Aircraft, Vehicle or Other
- Annex G – Cadet Protection Violation
- Annex H – Suicidal Verbalization, Suicide Attempts or Suicide
- Annex I – Search and Rescue (Missing or Overdue)
- Annex J – In-Flight Emergency (IFE)
- Annex K – CAP Distress Beacon Activation
- Annex L – Active Shooter
- Annex M – Heightened Threat Awareness Posture
- Annex N – Temporary Curtailment of Operations (Stand-down)
- Annex O – NHQ Business Continuity
- Annex P – Continuity of Operations (Units)

All annexes are marked  
**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

Annexes A and B may contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and therefore must be protected (not releasable outside CAP)

		Initiated Annex															
Annex		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Possible Supporting or Related Annex	A	-		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	B		-														✓
	C			-		✓		✓					✓		✓	✓	
	D			✓	-	✓			✓	✓			✓			✓	
	E			✓	✓	-										✓	
	F			✓			-										
	G			✓				-									
	H			✓	✓				-								✓
	I			✓						-							
	J										-						
	K											-					
	L			✓									-				✓
	M			✓										-			✓
	N														-	✓	✓
	O															-	
	P														✓		-

## SCOPE

The scope of this Plan is to help decision makers address and respond to crises, such as a single isolated event or a large-scale catastrophe, which might negatively affect their organization and its members or the successful conduct of CAP's affairs. It is designed to:

1. Identify personnel responsible for taking specific actions before, during and after an incident, as well as the recovery of any affected business activities.
2. Identify event-driven situations that could negatively impact CAP affairs or degrade member/employee performance.
3. Identify alternate operating locations and resources required for continued conduct of the Corporation's affairs.

**NOTE** – This Plan is intended to support CAP's internal audience, specifically CAP's members and employees. This Plan is not intended to supersede plans common to an external audience such as the National Response Framework; however, portions of this Plan may be used to enhance decision making in support of other plans.

**CAUTION** – Nothing in this Plan supersedes federal or state/local statutes, applicable Air Force directives, or CAP regulations. When in doubt, consult your wing's legal officer or CAP General Counsel.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Plan are as follows:

1. To protect CAP personnel from danger and injury and to anticipate personal needs following exposure to a significantly emotional event.
2. To minimize damage to or loss of the Corporation's assets and informational resources.
3. To minimize interruptions to business functions.
4. To provide a plan of action and associated QRCs to guide members and employees during incident response, as well as through an orderly recovery of business operations.

## PLAN UPDATES AND TESTING

The CAP Plans and Programs Office (CAP/XP) is responsible for the development, implementation and testing of this Plan at the National level, as well as communicating any adjustments or revisions to the Plan. Commanders are responsible for testing elements of the Plan applicable to their level. All members may suggest improvements to this Plan and supporting Annexes using the CAPF 1-2, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*.

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

The following assumptions are made regarding this Plan:

1. Risk management won't be able to prevent all incidents.
2. A CAP unit has experienced either a significantly emotion event or an incident that negatively impacts the conduct of CAP affairs.
3. The incident occurs unexpectedly and can come from any source at any time.
4. Key personnel, or their designated backups identified in the plan, are available following the incident.
5. The organization's current facilities are either partially or totally damaged or inaccessible and the disaster is not a city-wide event.
6. Alternate facilities are available for use and will be able to handle the specified additional volume of people and support equipment.
7. Procedures for back-up and off-site storage of computer media and manual files have been followed and the data is readily available.
8. Critical resources listed in the plan are available from identified suppliers or off-site storage facilities.
9. No plan is perfect, nor can one predict all possible scenarios. Therefore, individuals involved in executing portions of this Plan should remain flexible and adapt as needed to keep people safe and resume normal operations as soon as reasonably possible.



## CHAPTER 1: PRE-INCIDENT PREPARATION

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklists: *Annex O – NHQ Business Continuity FOUO*  
*Annex P – Continuity of Operations (Units) FOUO*



Civil Air Patrol members are well trained in responding to natural disasters, search and rescue and a variety of other missions, but we seldom prepare for how we'd respond if the incident involved one of our members or impacted our operations. Since the expectation of a serious incident negatively impacting CAP is very low, few members are well prepared for one. When the incident occurs, potential is great that it will disrupt unit operations as well as individual members' performance and concentration. The more one can learn about the process in advance, the more efficient they'll be in their response. Leadership is extremely important during a disruptive event. Not only do members turn to leaders for guidance, but leaders, especially the unit commander, set the tempo for what actions to take and when, and control the rumor mill. Decision-making and management of resources, specifically the human capital aspect, are crucial to a successful outcome.

The old saying of "practice makes perfect" is indeed true; however, it's also assumed that no process is ever perfect. Leaders are encouraged to periodically review this Plan and accompanying QRCs so they know the contents and can better manage expectations when the real incident occurs. Given the frequent turnovers members experience in their CAP duties, it also helps members newly appointed to leadership positions to get their questions answered during periods of calm than during the turmoil of a chaotic situation.

NOTE – The following are suggested pre-incident preparation considerations. The positions identified are applicable to all levels. For example, Commander considerations are just as relevant to a squadron commander as they are to the National Commander (CAP/CC). These considerations are also applicable to the primary member's alternate, such as a deputy or vice.

## **Commander**

Be the commander and be visible. People need to know who's in charge and who they can turn to for direction and factual information. History has shown that in the presence of higher authority, people will defer decision making. Be present to guide your team through the difficult decisions; that's why you, and only you, bear the mantle of command for your respective unit.

Keep people informed. Initial reporting is never...repeat *never*...accurate; however, your chain of command and your members crave information. Don't speculate but provide information as you know it. When in doubt, caveat the information's accuracy to minimize assumptions. Tell your members what you know, but also let them know that YOU will keep them informed and to avoid speculation, rumor-mongering, and all the other bad things that happen when "no one is in charge." Establish a schedule, for example every couple of hours for the first day and twice a day thereafter, for up-channeling information. Keep your experts in the loop and solicit their feedback.

Control the rumor mill. Whenever an incident occurs, people are quick to speculate what happened. Speculation and rumors have never helped in a situation; rather they tend to complicate things tremendously. Squelch rumors and leave the investigation up to the experts.

Set the tempo. Invariably when an incident occurs, CAP members are anxious to get involved. Now more than ever, it's important for commanders to slow the process so that decisions are thought through, risks are managed, and consequences of contemplated actions are considered prior to turning members loose. The last thing a commander needs during a serious incident is to have well-intentioned members do things that complicate the situation or draw embarrassment on CAP.

Know the checklists. The QRCs serve as a guide but cannot possibly cover all situations. It's important for commanders to know the QRCs' limitations and expected actions. Commanders should anticipate tailoring QRCs to fit the local situation.

Know your key players. Much like knowing the QRCs, commanders need to know who they'll turn to for carrying out checklist items and for sage counsel. Commanders aren't expected to know everything; however, they are expected to know upon whom they can rely to get things accomplished.

Know your lane. It's human nature to want to be the one that has all the answers. However, it's often best to leave certain tasks up to the experts. For example, as the involved unit, many might turn to you or your Public Information Officer (PIO) for information. Depending on the situation, local law enforcement, National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigators or National Headquarters (NHQ) Public Affairs (PA) might be the more appropriate source to provide the answers. Use restraint

and direct inquiries to the proper authorities.

Distribute the load. Along with knowing your lane, consider delegating your tasks to others (where authorized and appropriate) to allow you to better manage the situation and perform your primary duty of taking care of your members. Similarly, remain cognizant of members whose workload might exceed their limitations and help them delegate. The intent is to avoid individual task overload that could potentially create a single point of failure.

Exercise the QRCs and key players. An exercise may be accomplished as a “table top” event during a weekly meeting or may be included as a scenario during an operational exercise or evaluation. Historically, CAP members practice and exercise to help others, but we seldom consider that the “others” might be one of our own.

Next-of-kin notification. Discuss with your CAP chaplain how, when and who will provide next-of-kin notification. Commanders are also encouraged to include their legal officer in this discussion.

Mourn the loss. Coordinate with your CAP chaplain on how to write and deliver a eulogy. Realize you might not be asked to deliver a eulogy, but if asked, you can’t say no.

Protect personal information. Never release the names of members involved in an incident unless next-of-kin notification is confirmed complete AND you have approval to do so.

Recognize that crises and stress is all relative. As will be discussed in later chapters, people and organizations handle crises and stress differently. Be attentive for individual’s vulnerabilities or lower thresholds for coping with stress when compared to their fellow members and be prepared to offer personal assistance or remove them from the activity if you feel they could compromise safety or mission success. Also anticipate the turbulence a crisis can bring to a unit and provide the source of calm for participating and personally affected members.

Keep the lights on. As much as reasonably possible, continue unit operations. Sometimes a temporary stand-down is prudent following a significant emotional event. Then there is the rare occasion where the unit’s facility is destroyed, perhaps by a fire, tornado or hurricane. Anticipate the latter and consider how you and the unit will continue operations under alternate or even austere conditions.

### ***Administration***

Keep the roster. Knowing how to get in touch with key people during and after an incident is vital to the success of the organization’s response to and recovery from the event. Depending on the extent of the damage, internet and telephone connectivity might not

exist. Rosters should be current, reflecting telephone and email contact, as well as alternate methods for contact should electronic means fail or be unavailable. One such alternate method is face-to-face contact, requiring that home addresses be available.

### ***Chaplain***

Set priorities. Take the time to examine the situation and the members involved to determine where your skills are most needed. Be particularly attentive to members displaying manifestations of stress and know when to bring in the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) trained experts.

Manage stress. Become trained in CISM or determine how to involve trained CISM members on short notice.

Next-of-kin notification. Discuss with your commander how, when and who will provide next-of-kin notification.

Mourn the loss. Coordinate with your commander on how to write and deliver a eulogy.

### ***Information Technology***

Know your network. Given CAP's reliance on technology and online-based resources, continuity of operations is paramount. Ensure networked resources are properly and frequently backed up. Ideally, network servers supporting online applications should be geographically separated to prevent their loss should the primary facility be damaged or destroyed.

Secure your network. Hackers are prevalent in today's technologically savvy world. Ensure the systems relied upon for conducting CAP's daily affairs have the latest security tools installed and access procedures are enforced.

### ***Legal***

Be situationally aware. During times of chaos, it's human nature to revert to a level of comfort. In other words, to instinctively perform the tasks one has been trained to perform. However, chaos can oftentimes lead people to make decisions out of haste. Be situationally aware to recognize those situations where the decision could violate law or accepted standards of conduct and provide sage counsel to prevent others from making the situation worse.

Be the advisor. People don't know what they don't know. Along with being situationally

aware, pay attention for those situations where your sage counsel could help steer leaders and teammates in a better direction.

### ***Logistics***

Know your resources. Know what you have readily available to support the incident response. If something is not readily available, know how to get it quickly and from whom. If your organization's facility is damaged or destroyed in the event, know how to get alternate resources. If salvage operations are required, contact NHQ Logistics and Safety.

Know the backup. If the organization's facility is damaged or destroyed, offer advice on alternate working locations suitable as rally points or temporary operations centers.

### ***Operations***

Secure the records. Once it's known who might be involved in a flight-related incident, either by intent or by accident, have a plan to secure all unit-retained records on the member. Also seek additional advice from NHQ Operations (CAP/DO) and Standardization & Evaluation (CAP/DOV) for additional actions to take.

### ***Personnel***

Keep the records. Know where your organization's records are kept, including electronic backup copies, and be prepared to provide member's data should the commander ask for it. Have a telephone roster available in case you can't get into your facility. Should your organization's facility be damaged or destroyed, know how to access online member information.

Secure the records. Once it's known who might be involved in the incident, either by intent or by accident, have a plan to secure all unit-retained records on the member. Also seek advice from NHQ Personnel & Membership (CAP/DP) for additional actions to take.

### ***Public Affairs***

Follow the plan. All wing- and region-level PAOs are expected to develop a crisis communications plan and periodically review it for currency. Like this Plan, the crisis communication plan guides Public Affairs Officers (PAOs), and more likely Public Information Officers (PIOs), through the fog of the chaos.

Be ready to go and prepare for the unexpected. Establish a crisis kit that includes essential items for operating in austere conditions. Crisis kits should contain:

- Crisis communication team contact list that includes assigned roles
- Potential command/media center facilities
- Complete crisis contact list that includes key CAP personnel as well as media contacts
- Hard copy anticipated scenarios and their respective action plans
- Pre-written, fill-in-the-blank press releases
- Administrative supplies: legal pads, pens/pencils, local/state maps, press badges, two-way radios, clothing suitable for the environment, pre-printed letterhead, cell phone, laptop computer
- Electronic copies of the above (as applicable)

Know what to say and what *not* to say. Inquiring minds are hungry for details. Provide the facts without speculation or assumption, but know that some information is privileged and should not be released without proper authority.

**CAUTION – Names of injured or deceased is one example of privileged information. Under no circumstances should names be released publicly until next-of-kin notification is confirmed complete and the immediate commander or CAP/PA has approved the release. When in doubt about releasing information, contact CAP/PA.**

## **Safety**

Be the expert. You are the commander's subject matter expert for mishaps and risk management. Know the rules and regulations that govern your duties, to include 49 CFR, Part 830, so you can properly advise the commander and others.

Know who to talk to. Although you're the commander's safety expert, you're not expected to be the expert of all things. In fact, depending on the situation, you might be too close to the incident to provide objective advice. Have phone numbers and email addresses readily available should you need to seek another experts' advice. Suggested phone numbers include:

- CAP's National Operations Center (NOC) – 1-888-211-1812, option 1, available 24/7
- NHQ Safety (CAP/SE, reachable through the NOC)
- Local law enforcement numbers (where 9-1-1 service is not available)
- Local fire department numbers (where 9-1-1 service is not available)
- Salvage operators in the area (coordinate with CAP/LG first, reachable through the NOC)
- NTSB and FAA contact information (NHQ only)

NOTE – the NTSB may interview any member who they believe has knowledge of an accident and could contribute to the investigation. However, to protect members and the Corporation, CAP/SE, CAP/DO and CAP/GC are usually the only offices authorized to speak directly with NTSB and FAA officials on behalf of the Corporation. NTSB and FAA inquiries should be referred to these three offices.

Have a seat at the table. Under routine situations, safety is often viewed as a mission supporter. However, when incidents occur that involve safety matters, either confirmed or presumed, your commander needs to include you in discussions. Better yet, it shouldn't require an incident to have your inputs heard. Get a seat at the table now so you become familiar with your unit's operations and inject into the conversation sage risk management considerations.

Know your lane. It's human nature to want to be the one that has all of the answers. However, it's often best to leave certain tasks up to the experts. For example, as the involved unit's safety officer, some might turn to you for information. Depending on the situation, local law enforcement, NTSB investigators or CAP/SE might be the more appropriate source to provide the answers. Use restraint and direct inquiries to the proper entity. When in doubt, contact CAP/SE for advice.

Report and Review. Depending on the nature of the incident, comply with CAP regulation requirements to report and review incidents. Keep in mind that the nature of the incident might relieve you of some of your responsibilities (see "know your lane" above).

Be prepared. Assemble a "Go Kit" to assist in CAP conducted safety reviews. Suggested kit contents include:

- This Comprehensive Response Plan
- Applicable regulations and a list of key people you might need to contact
- A video or still camera
- Portable GPS receiver and/or area maps
- Several sterile containers
- Small hand-held tape recorder
- Tape measure
- Face mask, safety vest, safety goggles and latex and/or working gloves
- Flashlight
- Pens and note pads

The above information provides pre-incident considerations to prepare members for the unexpected. The next several chapters, along with their accompanying QRCs, highlight specific scenarios and suggested actions to take.

## CHAPTER 2: CONTACTING THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklists: *Annex A – Unit Contact Information FOUO*  
*Annex B – NHQ Contact Information FOUO*



Knowing who, when and why to contact others following an event that has potential to negatively impact CAP's operations and members is vitally important. There are times when all members in the organization need to know what's happened. At other times, it's prudent to prioritize who needs to know before others. Yet still, there are situations where the release of information should be more strictly controlled, for example, next-of-kin notification.

Some organizations employ recall rosters, alert rosters, telephone trees or phone rosters. Whatever they're called, it's important that these documents remain current. Information should include phone and email contact for key members as well as their deputies and vices. Information should also include an alternate contact method should electronic means fail, be disrupted or be unavailable. The roster should not be limited to CAP members. Although 9-1-1 can almost always be dialed, the roster should also contain contact information for the local fire department, law enforcement, hospital, state and/or federal agency members routinely partnered with, and higher headquarters key personnel. NHQ personnel may be reached through the National Operations Center using the toll-free number 1-888-211-1812, option 1.

Keep in mind that contacting personnel on the roster could be a time-consuming task. While it's often appropriate for the commander to make such contacts, when time is of the essence, commanders should ask for assistance in making the contacts. A properly designed recall roster or telephone tree simplifies the process of who should call whom. However, for maximum effectiveness, members must be trained on how the process is to be conducted. Part of this training should include a discussion on what should and what *should not* be stated. Remember, serial distortion is a very real phenomenon, especially when someone down the chain attempts to translate what the previous caller informed them or adds speculation or assumption into the conversation.

A template for capturing unit contact information is found in Annex A. Both Annexes A and B are considered **For Official Use Only** when filled in.



## CHAPTER 3: CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex C – Crisis Communication FOUO*

Additional References: CAPR 190-1, *Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs Program*

[Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs website](#)



It's often been said that a crisis is all relative. What one considers a crisis could be nothing more than daily business for another. The key is to keep the situation in perspective, both for those immediately affected and for those who have awareness of or want or need awareness of the situation.

Crises span the scale from unit-level disparaging or negative “rumor mill” comments on one end to real world large-scale disasters on the other. Leaders need to understand that a crisis on either end of the spectrum, or anywhere in between, has potential to cast a notable adverse effect on CAP’s reputation. The risk to CAP’s corporate image, both internally and externally, is very real. As such, CAP members have inherent responsibilities that are founded in our Core Values:

- Squelch rumor and speculation to prevent the spread of misinformation. Yes, everyone likes to believe they know what happened, but until the incident is thoroughly investigated by competent authorities, it’s all speculation.
- Do not speak outside your lane unless authorized to do so by competent authority.

NOTE – Depending on the nature of the event, a federal or local agency might be in charge of the response effort. In these cases, unless told to do otherwise, all queries should be referred to their public affairs/media representative to provide the response.

- When authorized to speak on behalf of the Corporation, provide only known facts. If you don't know the answer, state so and offer to get back to the individual with the answer.
- Recognize that there's an appropriate time and place for providing facts. For example, the names of individuals involved in an incident might be known; however, releasing those names publicly prior to next-of-kin notification is inappropriate.

NOTE – Names of injured or deceased is one example of privileged information. Under no circumstances should names be released publicly until next-of-kin notification is confirmed complete and the immediate commander or CAP/PA has approved the release. When in doubt about releasing information, contact CAP/PA.

Crisis communication serves to provide timely, accurate information to those with a true need to know while also mitigating opportunities for “bad press” that often occurs when the general public speculates on what happened, how and why. Crisis communication controls the flow and timing of information to CAP's internal and external audience. Crisis communication also defines who has authority to provide information to the intended audience.

Every crisis presents some degree of “fog and friction” that impacts members, good order and discipline, and the effective conduct of operations. The crisis communications plan guides members during this turbulent time and assists commanders and their public affairs officers (PAO) in dealing with what could be a rapidly evolving situation.

Examples for when commanders should activate their crisis communication team and plan include, but are not limited to:

- Suspected or confirmed criminal activity by a unit member or a member's arrest, indictment or charges being filed regarding criminal activity
- Internal wrongdoing by a member that may not violate a law, but if the information were made public could damage CAP's reputation
- A situation that results in a unit's logistical freeze or temporary stoppage/restriction from performing missions
- CAP's participation in a large-scale disaster response
- A fatality or serious accident that occurs during a CAP mission or activity

All wing- and region-level PAOs are expected to develop a crisis communications plan to ensure a rapid and effective response during a situation that may damage the Corporation's reputation if mishandled. The QRC found at Annex C, *Crisis Communication*, offers additional considerations while the information below provides the desired structure for the plan. Additional tools may be found on the [National Headquarters Public Affairs](#) web page.

When developing crisis communications plans, commanders and crisis communication team members should keep the plan's goals and objectives in mind, namely to:

- Develop and present clear, concise, unified messages and message delivery strategies during a crisis;
- Provide timely and accurate information to CAP leadership, members, stakeholders, news media and the public;
- Protect CAP's reputation and integrity by providing reasonable media access and by releasing clear, straightforward and honest information;
- Act proactively to head off or correct any misinformation or misperceptions regarding CAP and the crisis;
- Ensure the appropriate people are designated to speak on behalf of CAP and that the team consists of a enough subject matter experts to cover most CAP functional areas; and
- Record events of the crisis and the team's actions, to include the good, bad and ugly outcomes, that will serve as lessons learned and opportunities to improve the crisis communications process before the next crisis strikes (real world or exercise).

The crisis communications plan is not challenging to create; however, it will require considerable thought to make sure it effectively serves its intended purpose. Developing the plan is broken down into [six simple steps](#):

1. **Establish crisis communication team and roles.** A good plan covers all predictable bases and clearly defines team members' roles to prevent duplication of effort while ensuring all members know who is responsible for which tasks. Team members are selected for their maturity, professional decorum and knowledge of CAP operations and procedures. Typical team members and their roles include, but not limited to:
  - Designated spokesperson (usually the PAO, but could be the commander)
  - Assistant to the spokesperson
  - Command or media center coordinator
  - Liaison to community and support groups
  - Liaison to government or military agencies
  - Phone bank workers to assist at the call center
  - Media coverage collector (to keep leadership and the team informed of what the media is disseminating)
  - Scenario planner (for creating plan templates for anticipated scenarios)
  - Press release and speech writer (work closely with CAP/PA)
  - Team administrator (for performing duties associated with but not assigned to the unit admin officer)
  - Team training coordinator
2. **Secure possible locations for the command/media center.** It is difficult to predict the size or number of personnel, media, phone calls, requests and demands for information that an incident might generate. The command/media center offers a facility for coordinating people and tasks necessary for responding to the incident.

This facility is usually centrally located within the city or near the incident. However, depending on the nature of the incident, it's often wise to establish a facility that's sufficiently distant from the incident such that prying eyes will not compromise response activities, such as removal of decedent's bodies or a post-aircraft-accident investigation. Sometimes it's prudent to separate the command and media center locations. Doing so allows the command and response elements to operate without media intrusions.

Oftentimes a federal or local agency will be in charge of the response effort. When this happens, they will usually determine the command/media center. For example, at the local level this might be the state's Emergency Operations Center. If no external agency has the lead, the responsibility for determining the command/media center will rest with CAP. Considerations for command/media center location include:

- Availability with little-to-no notice
- Already equipped with internet connections, telephone lines and other utilities
- Centrally located to the incident or city (situation dependent)
- Both a primary and alternate facility should the primary not be available
- Letters of access or permission from the facility's owners
- Facilities should be provided gratis; if not, contact CAP/GC, CAP/LG and CAP/FM prior to making any commitments

3. **Maintain up-to-date contact information.** When a crisis occurs, knowing who to contact and how to get in touch with them is paramount. Contact lists should be kept current, include primary and secondary telephone numbers, email and other forms of contact, and be available in both electronic and paper format. Furthermore, key personnel should always have ready access to the contact list.

NOTE – Contact lists will most likely contain some personal information. Therefore, those maintaining or possessing copies of the list are obligated to protect the included personally identifying information. Such contact lists should be marked FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY when filled in.

Sometimes people forget to notify others when their contact information changes or another person takes their place. Therefore, PAOs and admin personnel are encouraged to establish a periodic reminder to seek updated/verified contact information.

Having the right people on the list is just as important as having the right contact information. Annexes A (*Unit Contact Information*) and B (*NHQ Contact Information*)

provide the structure for sample contact lists. In addition to CAP unit, wing, region and national-level contacts, lists should also include the following for easy reference:

- Medical, fire and law enforcement contacts for locations not served by 9-1-1
- Local, state and national emergency and community service personnel
- Local media outlets and their representatives
- Anticipated command/media center contact information
- Group contact information, such as a group email inbox established for access by multiple persons

4. **Anticipate crisis scenarios.** As a reminder, crises span a large spectrum. When posturing for anticipated scenarios, consider the most likely (e.g. run-of-the-mill unit rumor control or loss of a mission essential capability) to the most severe (e.g. a large-scale disaster that destroys your unit facility and the surrounding community). Keep in mind that the crisis could be limited to just your unit (e.g. CAP aircraft accident) but could escalate into widespread media attention.

The scenarios could be specific, in the case of a most likely event, or be generic to provide flexible guidance for a variety of situations. Anticipated scenarios should also posture for the sudden unexpected event, the long-term/protracted event, as well as the bizarre never-thought-that-could-happen event. When developing scenarios, consider the following:

- Be as detailed as possible, but flexible enough to allow adaptation when needed
- Be relevant to your specific locality (e.g. tornado alley, flood plain, etc.)
- Include natural and man-made disasters
- Include a scenario that directly impacts the unit and members (e.g. aircraft accident)
- Include a scenario that has potential for Congressional, Air Force or long-term media scrutiny (e.g. fraud, cadet protection, or misuse of appropriated resources)
- Involve unit members to help identify most likely scenarios and, if under CAP's control, bring the scenario to leadership's attention to devise preventative actions to keep the incident from occurring in the first place (in other words, think risk management)

5. **Develop action plans for your crisis scenarios.** No plan is one-size-fits-all perfect. Depending on the nature of the real event, one plan might be insufficient requiring decision makers to review multiple plans to ensure a satisfactory response. Based on anticipated scenarios, develop action plans to help guide the unit should the scenario become reality. Action plans should consider:

- When and how to convene the crisis communication team
- When, how and where the command/media center will be established

- Risk managed assessments and safety precautions for the respective situation
  - How to continue operations should utilities not be available/restored in a timely manner
  - When should CAP voluntarily get involved in a response effort and, if doing so at too early a stage, will CAP's involvement complicate the response effort or place lives in danger
  - Pre-written, fill-in-the-blank press releases applicable to the anticipated scenario
6. **Compile a crisis kit.** Often referred to as a "go kit," the kit contains essential items needed to effectively operate in austere conditions or away from the home unit. Refer to Chapter 1, under [Public Affairs](#), for a list of items to consider for the kit.

## CHAPTER 4: DEATH OR CASUALTY

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex D – Death or Casualty Reporting FOUO*

Additional References: *Annex N – Temporary Curtailment of Operations (Stand-down)*

*CAPR 35-2, Notification Procedures in Case of Death, Injury or Serious Illness*

*CAPR 160-2, Safety Reporting and Review*



The loss or serious injury of a CAP member presents a significant emotional event for other members of the organization, especially when the tragedy occurs unexpectedly or in the line of CAP duty. Members' distractions could jeopardize ongoing or upcoming missions and activities. When this occurs, leaders should be cognizant to step in and take action. Considerations include:

- If the organization is first to learn of the death or casualty, one must assume the affected member's family is unaware. Next-of-kin notification is never easy; however, time is of the essence. Notification normally rests with the unit's commander, usually accompanied by a chaplain or a close friend of the deceased. Commanders are encouraged to contact a chaplain for assistance and advice prior to meeting with the family. Note the key word "meeting." If at all possible, avoid making next-of-kin notification by telephone and *never* do it via letter, email or some other form of electronic communication.
- Next-of-kin notification is a delicate matter that deserves being carried out in a dignified manner. As such, wearing the Air Force style or Corporate Service Dress uniform or similar attire is appropriate when making the notification, especially if the loss occurred during a CAP activity or mission.
- Bring in a chaplain or Critical Incident Stress Management expert to assist the unit's grieving members.

- Remove members from the mission or activity to give them time to cope with the loss. The last thing one wants is to have an emotionally impacted person involved in an activity that, while their head is not properly engaged, could jeopardize their own safety or the safety of others involved in the activity or compromise the overall success of the mission.
- Recognize members' manifestations of stress and ask them directly if there's anything you can do to help. Sometimes people simply need to talk through it. If this conversation takes place, it is recommended that it be done privately.
- Don't hesitate to seek relief or ask for assistance from unaffected units so you can slow down your organization's tempo. Often following a close, personal tragedy, the best course of action is to direct a "down day" or some period to allow members to work through their time of grief.
- Remember that for some, only time will heal their wounds. Keep these members engaged as much as they are willing or capable; however, don't place them in any position where their compromised participation could negatively impact others or the mission, or lead to embarrassment for the grieving member.

Commanders and organizational leaders play a significant role following a death or casualty incident. They set the tempo and provide stability and healing for the organization. There are a couple of key things leaders must keep in mind:

- **Never...repeat never...allow anyone to publicly release the names of those involved in the tragedy until next-of-kin notification is confirmed complete. When complete, it's essential to let the chain of command know notification has been accomplished.**
- Don't forget about the family members left behind. More often than not, the family will appreciate caring support and interest in their well-being.
- Keep others informed, especially the chain of command, CAP/DP and CAP/SE.

Funeral services and other honors typically occur within a few days of the member's passing. As a CAP member, the family often asks for a "CAP presence" at these services. Commanders should *anticipate* the following:

- Delivering a eulogy. Before doing so, contact a chaplain for pointers on how to professionally honor the fallen with dignity.
- Presenting an honor guard. If the decedent was a military veteran, they are eligible to receive some fashion of a military honor guard. If not, the family might request CAP members perform this service.

NOTE – it's conceivable for a CAP member to have no other living relative. In these cases, unit commanders or a member close to the decedent should consider contacting a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) local office for assistance in arranging military honors.



- Pall bearers. Often family members serve as pall bearers; however, fellow CAP members may be considered close friends. It is not unheard of for the family to ask close friends to carry the fallen.

## CHAPTER 5: AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex E – Aircraft Accident FOUO*

Additional References: *Annex N – Temporary Curtailment of Operations (Stand-down)*

*CAPR 35-2, Notification Procedures in Case of Death, Injury or Serious Illness*

*CAPR 160-1, Civil Air Patrol Safety Program*

*CAPR 160-2, Safety Reporting and Review*



Civil Air Patrol defines in CAPR 160-2 safety-related phrases, such as accident, serious injury, and mishap. In the aviation world, accident has a specific meaning as defined by Federal agencies. However, for the general public, it's possible to associate different meanings with these words, usually under the commonly shared phrase "accident."

Accidents are indeed serious events and they almost always draw forth an unwelcomed spotlight of attention on CAP's operations and processes. Depending on the nature of the accident, CAP as a Corporation, is exposed to risk of litigation and intense scrutiny from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and other external audiences, not to mention the dark cloud of doubt it potentially creates for our mission partners. Often these risks continue to exist long after the accident is cleaned up. For example, the NTSB may take a year or longer to complete their investigation and the decedent's family may attempt litigation years later.

Accidents also generate much fodder for the rumor mill. It is human nature to speculate on cause but doing so serves no positive purpose. Rather, the spreading of rumor and speculation only damages the Corporation's credibility, especially if shared with an external audience, and demoralizes fellow members. Therefore, it is paramount that all personnel, not just those in leadership positions, refrain from rumor or speculation.

The following considerations help guide the affected organization's response:

- First and foremost, prevent further injury or damage. If you witnessed the accident and emergency response is warranted, contact 9-1-1 immediately.
- Notify leadership of the situation and let them inform fellow members at an appropriate time. State only the facts; do not make assumptions or speculate.
- Inform CAP/GC, CAP/DO, CAP/LG, CAP/SE and, as applicable, CAP/DP (fatality or injury) of the accident.
- Consider a teleconference with key personnel and functional leaders (e.g. CAP/SE, wing/DOs, etc.) to provide guidance and set near-term direction for recovering from the accident, returning to normal operations, and preparing members for any anticipated procedural changes.
- Offer assistance to the family as if they were unit members too. Regardless of injury or fatality, the family will most likely need support.

NOTE – it's customary for news/media outlets to seek, under the Freedom of Information Act, air traffic control and 911 voice recordings following an accident. Family members should be forewarned that they may be exposed to recordings of their loved ones' final words.

- If members were injured in the accident, continue to support them without judgment as to their role in the accident.
- Support fellow members who might be susceptible to or be displaying signs of emotional stress.
- Be prepared to delay or cancel missions or assign unaffected members to missions that cannot be postponed. Units should also consider a stand-down period to help members heal emotionally or to refocus members, say, from a safety perspective.
- Secure all records to include as minimum personnel, training, driving and flight records of those involved in the accident.
- Assist investigators with any needs they might have.

Keep in mind that an accident often results in fatalities and casualties. Refer to Chapter 4, [Death or Casualty](#), for additional guidance.

## CHAPTER 6: MISHAP – AIRCRAFT, VEHICLE OR OTHER

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex F – Mishap – Aircraft, Vehicle or Other FOUO*

Additional References: *CAPR 35-2, Notification Procedures in Case of Death, Injury or Serious Illness*

*CAPR 160-1, Civil Air Patrol Safety Program*

*CAPR 160-2, Safety Reporting and Review*



Civil Air Patrol defines in CAPR 160-2 a mishap is any occurrence or series of occurrences that results in damage or injury. Any damage or injury is evidence that a mishap occurred. It's also possible to have non-mishap reportable events. When in doubt, consult the regulation. When a mishap occurs, unit operations might be degraded temporarily; however, alternative solutions are usually available to mitigate the degrading affects.

CAPR 160-2 is the primary source of information; however, the following considerations help guide the affected unit's response:

- First and foremost, prevent further injury or damage. If you witnessed the mishap and it's appropriate to do so, contact 9-1-1 immediately.
- Notify leadership of the situation and let them inform fellow members at an appropriate time. State only the facts; do not make assumptions or speculate.
- Inform CAP/SE and, as applicable, CAP/DO and CAP/LG of the mishap.
- Support members injured in the mishap without judgment as to their role in the mishap.
- Support fellow members who might be susceptible to or be displaying signs of emotional stress.
- Be prepared to delay or cancel missions or assign unaffected members to missions that cannot be postponed. Units should also consider a stand-down period to help members heal emotionally.

- Secure all records to include as minimum personnel, training, driving and flight records of those involved in the mishap.
- Assist those reviewing the mishap with any needs they might have.

## CHAPTER 7: CADET PROTECTION/ABUSE CONCERNS (ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED)

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex G – Cadet Protection/Abuse Concerns (Actual or Suspected) FOUO*

Additional References: CAPR 60-2, *Cadet Protection Program*



NOTE – this chapter serves to complement CAP’s cadet protection policy and regulatory guidance. Nothing in this chapter is intended to supersede directive publications or federal/state law. Refer to CAP publications for information related to “mandatory reporters.”

**IMMEDIATE ACTION – if you have reasonable belief that a cadet is in imminent danger, call 9-1-1 or local law enforcement immediately.**

**If you have reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred or conditions exist that could allow abuse to occur, notify your wing commander of your suspicions.**

All CAP members have an obligation to protect youth under their care and to provide a safe environment conducive to nurturing cadets’ leadership skills. Our cadets deserve it and their parents who have entrusted us with their children expect it.

Incidents of a cadet protection nature must be handled with utmost care. On one hand, the victim must be immediately protected and removed from harm’s way. However, if the response is not handled in a proper and professionally discreet manner, the protective actions could lead to more embarrassment for the victim and exacerbate the level of significant

emotional stress they're already feeling. On the other hand, a reasonable but swift level of care should also be afforded to the member suspected of violating CAP's cadet protection policy.

Two key words are stressed in the latter point: reasonable and suspected. CAP's cadet protection policy expands on reasonable suspicion of abuse and guides members through the process of identifying two critical factors.

1. The suspecting member has specific, credible information that a cadet has been hurt or harmed by another person.
2. Another experienced adult would come to the same conclusion if provided the same information.

NOTE – the first factor states “by another person.” Therefore, members should be aware that suspicions could be raised that the harm may have been inflicted by a non-CAP member. When this happens, inform leadership and the legal officer of your suspicions. They will most likely advise you to contact local law enforcement.

NOTE – it is possible to have a reasonable suspicion of abuse without having proof of abuse. The actions taken remain the same – contact the wing commander. However, if suspicions are raised against the wing commander, the concerned member may contact CAP General Counsel to voice their concerns. CAP/GC can be reached toll free at 1-877-227-9142, ext 234.

Another factor members need to be aware of is the human factor. Far too often, people have disregarded the rational suspicions of others. Sometimes it's because the suspected violator is a longstanding and well-liked member of the community or organization where others easily deny their potential for wrongdoing. At other times, the suspicion is downplayed because the suspected violator holds a prestigious position within a respected organization, has passed a screening process, or a variety of other reasons that tend to favor the suspected violator over the victim. The “halo effect” is a very real human factor. If left unchecked and not properly investigated, the end results are clear:

- Potential victims could still be in harm's way
- The suspected violator continues their questionable behavior and habits

Conversely, some have been known to make claims of abuse or harm as an attack on another whom they don't like. In these cases, it's human nature to want to make judgment and feed the rumor mill. Leaders should be aware of this tendency and foster an environment that squelches rumor and places the responsibility of judgment and investigation with the proper authorities.

The bottom line is simple – protect the cadet and advise leadership of your concerns. Then let the proper authorities look into the matter to reveal the facts that enable commanders to make the right decisions.

## CHAPTER 8: SUICIDE (VERBALIZATION, ATTEMPTS OR ACTUAL)

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex H – Suicidal Verbalization, Suicide Attempts or Suicide FOUO*

Contacts to keep handy: **National Suicide Prevention Hotline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**  
or text 838255



Suicides, either attempted or actual, present a significant emotional event for both the family and members of the unit, especially those who were close to the involved member. Suicide is a permanent solution to what is often a temporary personal problem. To further complicate things, history has shown that many successful suicides were preceded by clues so subtle (or none at all) that it went undetected by others, whereas those displaying overt suicidal verbalizations often were not intent on committing suicide, rather their signals were more akin to cries for help.

**IMMEDIATE ACTION – if you believe suicide is imminent or a member gives indications that they could harm themselves or others, call 9-1-1 immediately.**  
**DO NOT LEAVE THE MEMBER ALONE UNLESS YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER.**

**CAUTION – if a cadet verbalizes that they are thinking about suicide or other behavioral changes are being displayed AND THEY ARE NOT IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, consider raising your concerns with the parent/guardian prior to attempting a conversation with the cadet so the parent/guardian can be included, and the cadet can be best cared for.**



It is highly unlikely that a suicide will ever be attempted at a CAP event. However, friendships are often developed through CAP and these friendships tend to carry over to activities outside the CAP environment. Therefore, it is more likely that attempts and overt verbalizations will occur outside of CAP.

When a person displays verbal thoughts or threats of suicide, or an actual suicide is perceived to be attempted, those witnessing the actions are often caught off guard for what immediate actions to take. The simple acronym “ACES” makes it easier to remember what to do.

**Ask** if they want or wanted to hurt themselves, calmly but directly. If needed, start lifesaving medical attention and call 9-1-1.

**Care** by listening openly, taking them seriously, and identifying what their plan is/was.

**Escort** them to the next level of help, for example by calling 9-1-1 or taking them to the hospital. All verbal threats of suicide and potential suicide attempts are required to be evaluated by a non-CAP medical professional.

**Self-care** for yourself; report the incident through the chain of command and see a helping professional to ensure you are “okay” (for example CAP CISM officer, CAP chaplain, school counselor, work counselor or religious leader).

Self-care is also applicable to commanders at all levels. Commanders have additional stress and oftentimes feel a sense of responsibility for the members that is unique. Commanders should consider seeing a helping professional to ensure that they are “okay” and address those special leadership stressors. Examples of helping professionals include, but are not limited to:

- CAP CISM officer
- CAP chaplain
- Work counselor
- Social worker
- Healthcare provider

**Climate of Resiliency.** Commanders, as well as their subordinate leaders, are expected to promote a climate of resiliency. They do this by making sure the unit fosters a climate that is accepting of those who have the strength to seek counseling and is positive about healing. Unit leaders should be accessible, open and honest about what might occur or what has occurred.

Commanders can also bolster members’ preparedness for such a crisis by holding open and candid conversations about the topic. In doing so, members should ponder the following and be prepared to share their thoughts with leadership:

### ***How to make people be more attuned to the subtle clues***

Subtle clues are best detected by family members and close friends. The Air Force employs the Wingman concept to emphasize the significance of detecting subtle hints. Family members and close friends know the affected member’s habits, behavior and

anticipated responses to predictable situations. The following are just a few examples to illustrate subtle clues that could easily be undetectable by others:

- The member is normally outgoing, but recently has become sheltered or distant in their conversation or withdraws from gatherings of any size.
- The member has a predictable diet; however, lately they've overindulged in food or drink, or might have a greatly reduced appetite.
- The member smokes more or less than their accustomed manner.
- The member habitually attends unit meetings, but of late has been tardy or missed meetings altogether.
- The member, usually calm in their demeanor, begins to be easily angered or presents hostility towards certain people, processes or ideas.

The affected member may not make overt verbalizations about personal problems or suicidal thoughts, so it becomes vital that others recognize the out-of-the-ordinary hints being displayed. Periodic education of all members helps to reinforce the significance of being attuned to others, even if they don't know a potential suicide victim very well.

Suicide, while an uncomfortable topic for discussion, is a very real and growing problem in our society. It's not a topic to be avoided; rather it should be discussed openly and frankly (tailored for the appropriate audience), not only to educate members on how to detect and help potential victims, but also to let potential victims know that friendly assistance is available.

### ***What to do when overt suicidal verbalization is observed or reported***

**Top Priority – keep the member out of harm's way, but don't place yourself in harm's way in the process. Call 9-1-1 if you believe suicide is imminent.**

**DO NOT LEAVE THE MEMBER ALONE UNLESS YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER.**

Overt signals require sensitive handling to prevent further embarrassment to the member that could lead to a future suicide attempt. Sometimes it's best to confront the member privately, or with a small group (2-3 people) of close friends or family and ask them directly if they plan on harming themselves. If the answer is yes, re-read the Top Priority.

As stated earlier, oftentimes an overt signal is a clear indicator the member simply needs help seeing through the problem. The old saying of "too close to see it" is applicable here; however, to the affected member, it's also highly emotional and very personal. Initially you can help the member to see the problem from another's point of view and perhaps assist them in working through the problem to a rational solution. However, in doing so avoid giving the appearance that their problem is insignificant; to

them it's a very real and insurmountable problem. Additionally, unless you, as the comfort provider, are specially trained in dealing with such crises, do not make commitments you can't keep and don't overstep your level of knowledge. Instead, offer to assist the member in contacting professional experts and perhaps volunteer to take them to and from the scheduled appointment(s).

### ***How to address subtle clues or overt signals without worsening the situation***

If not handled properly and discretely, approaching a member about behavioral observations and your concern about their wellbeing could create an embarrassing moment for the member that exacerbates the stress they're already feeling. There's certainly nothing wrong with talking to them about perceived changes in their behavior; however, the conversation should occur in private, or ideally with another family member or close friend.

You also should avoid mentioning that others have noticed the change which might give the appearance that the member has been the root of gossip or private conversations.

**CAUTION – if a cadet verbalizes that they are thinking about suicide or other behavioral changes are being displayed AND THEY ARE NOT IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, consider raising your concerns with the parent/guardian prior to attempting a conversation with the cadet so the parent/guardian can be included and the cadet can be best cared for.**

If concern is raised but not to the point someone believes the member is in imminent danger, leadership should consider asking a CAP chaplain, CISM team member or a member with medical expertise to talk with the person. Before doing so, consider the member's personality or beliefs as they might not feel comfortable talking with a chaplain or medical expert. Additionally, it's advised that the member have an established relationship with whoever approaches them, otherwise the member faces the same question regarding who's been talking about them.

**NOTE – only competent medical/legal authorities outside CAP can declare whether an incident is a verbal threat, attempt or actual suicide. If you have a concern for someone's safety, follow the Ask, Care, Escort steps and call 9-1-1 immediately.**

### ***How to anticipate situations and operating environments that might exceed a member's ability to cope with increased stressors***

Just like no two missions are the same, no two people react the same way under like conditions. Humans do not "flip the switch" very well and often bring their personal and

work life into a CAP event. While they might be performing a CAP mission, their mind could be thinking about problems at home or work. The result is they're not fully engaged on the task at hand, potentially compromising the safety of others or jeopardizing mission success.

Conversely, things might be going well at home or work, but what they witness on a CAP mission, such as mass destruction from a tornado that ripped through their home town, could lower their tolerance for coping with stress.

Without invading someone's privacy, members should apply the Wingman concept and be attentive to the stressors fellow members might have in their life and consider what added stress the mission might place on them. Below are a few examples of situations that might increase a member's emotional stress level:

- An imagery sortie of large-scale destruction, such as a tornado or hurricane, or mass carnage as was witnessed when hundreds of cattle died during the blizzard of 2013
- A cadet failed the Spaatz exam on their last opportunity to test
- A pilot was relieved of their flying privileges due to a mishap
- A member was involved in an accident that cost another member their life
- A cadet was not accepted to the college they dreamed of attending
- A member who had lost their job was caught falsifying travel claims

***How to recognize and assist members who are vulnerable to the effects of stress or might have a temporarily lowered threshold for coping with stress***

They say recognition is the first step to recovery. But recognizing that someone might be having problems is not always easy. The key is members have to know their fellow members. In the days of Strategic Air Command, bomber and tanker crews were manned by "hard crews" meaning the same people always flew together. The rationale was each person needed to know their fellow crew members, how they thought and how they consistently reacted under the "heat of battle." The same principle applies here – know your fellow CAP members.

Each person handles stress differently. Some members are capable of handling more stress than others. Here are a few examples of what might negatively impact a member's stress-coping threshold:

- A new parent who hasn't had a good night's sleep in weeks
- A member who recently started a new job or is working a big project at the office
- Extended or serious illness for the member or someone in their family
- A cadet starting their first year in college
- A cadet approaching their first solo

- A former military member who might be struggling with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms (diagnosed or undiagnosed)

When members go through situations such as mentioned above, sometimes the best assistance one can offer is to engage them and simply let them talk through what they're experiencing. In the case of the last item, encourage them to seek professional guidance.

Depending on the member's needs and the situation they're facing, the following might provide valuable assistance:

- A close friend or family member
- A person in a leadership position whom they trust
- A CAP chaplain or one from the church they attend
- A Critical Incident Stress Management team member
- A professional medical expert
- The National Suicide Prevention Hotline, **1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text 838255**

The above information is provided to educate members and preempt a potential suicide. If a member successfully commits suicide, refer to Chapter 4, [\*Death or Casualty\*](#), for additional guidance.

## CHAPTER 9: SEARCH AND RESCUE (MISSING OR OVERDUE)

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex I – Search and Rescue (Missing or Overdue) FOUO*



CAP members are well trained on performing search and rescue missions. Fortunately CAP seldom has to search for one of their own. When thinking of missing or overdue, the tendency is to assume an aircraft sortie. However, this chapter is equally applicable to overdue or missing ground teams, as well as a member who failed to show for an event.

### ***Preparatory Actions***

As the saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, or in this case, concern. If members are traveling by ground, the following should be considered:

- Ensure you have a means to contact the member(s) (e.g. cell phone or radio)
- Ask the member(s) for the point of departure, route of travel, intended destination and estimated time of arrival. Query them on anticipated detours, interim stops and expected delays, and encourage them to keep you informed if plans change.
- Establish with the member(s) pre-defined check-in times for progress reports
- As applicable, ensure sufficient information is loaded into the Web Mission Information Reporting System (WMIRS) to enable progress tracking and overdue reporting

If members are participating in an airborne mission, the considerations are similar:

- Ensure you have a means to contact the member(s) (e.g. cell phone or radio)
- Although much of this information is in WMIRS, confirm with the member(s) their point of departure, route of travel, intended destination and estimated time of completion.
- Query the members on the use of other airfields, interim stops and expected delays, and encourage them to keep you informed if plans change.

NOTE – when the pilot files a flight plan, they may include contact information to be used in the event of an emergency. If this information is included, the responsible Flight Service Station (FSS) will normally contact that person if the flight plan is not closed within 30 minutes of estimated landing time. If no contact information is provided with the flight plan, FSS will normally contact the registered owner, in this case the National Operations Center as the agent for CAP.

NOTE – per CAPR 70-1, *CAP Flight Management*, flights beyond 50 nautical miles from the point of origin require the pilot to either file and activate an FAA flight plan or obtain VFR flight following. However, flights conducted under visual flight rules within 50 nautical miles do not. If not notified that the flight was safely concluded or extended, FROs are responsible for initiating missing aircraft procedures two hours after the estimated landing time for aircraft not on an FAA flight plan.

### ***Missing or Overdue***

The first indication that an aircraft is overdue is usually when a Flight Service Station or the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center calls the National Operations Center Duty Officer to report that a pilot hasn't closed their flight plan within 30 minutes of estimated landing time. The key phrase is "flight plan," something that's not required for every CAP sortie. As allowed in CAP regulations, many flights occur without a flight plan ever being filed. For these types of missions, accountability is less timely. As noted above, FROs are responsible for initiating missing aircraft procedures two hours after the estimated landing time for aircraft not on an FAA flight plan.

Likewise, the first indication that a ground team or member is overdue is when they fail to show at the designated rally point or destination at the expected time.

In either of the above cases, there is often reasonable justification for the delay or something as simple as the pilot forgot to close the flight plan. However, the crux of the problem usually points to poor or failed communication on the part of the affected member(s). The ounce of prevention to remedy breakdowns in communication is for those responsible for overseeing the activity, such as the FRO, incident commander, or activity leader, to establish predictable progress check-ins. While progress checks aren't as easily accomplished for aircrews as they are for ground teams or for someone driving to an activity, airborne crews have the added backup of air traffic control.

For members traveling on ground, be it in a vehicle or on foot, the person overseeing the activity should ensure they have suitable modes of contact (e.g. radio or cell phone number) with the member(s) involved.

The following are suggested actions to take when a member is overdue or assumed missing:

- First, attempt contact with the missing or overdue member(s) using the pre-established modes of contact.
- Attempt contact with the member's family using the home phone number or emergency contact data available in e-services. Be cautious and understanding of the situation. Contacting the family can cause panic, and personnel doing so need to act with tact and diplomacy, knowing that there may not be an issue at all, but we are acting with an abundance of caution. When appropriate to do so and cautiously to not overly alarm others, make contact with the member's family. Sometimes the family might have knowledge pertinent to the situation, such as a known delay.
- Attempt contact with the receiving party or FRO to see if the member(s) arrived.
- Inform leadership that a member is missing or overdue.
  - The FRO should call the unit commander (or deputy commander or operations officer) if this is routine unit flying for things like member proficiency. The unit leadership should then contact their Wing leadership (Commander, Vice Commander and/or Director of Operations) to be sure they are aware as quickly as possible, and then follow up with Group leadership if there are Groups within the Wing.
  - If operating under a more traditional mission like an emergency services exercise or providing customer support to border operations, the Incident Commander (IC) should notify Wing Leadership who, in turn, contacts the National Operations Center. If the IC cannot reach Wing Leadership, the IC should call the NOC.
- Prepare to conduct search and rescue operations, but do not begin until approved through the NOC and/or the AFRCC. It helps by contacting someone at the point of origin to find out when the member departed and learn their intended route of travel to the destination.
- When directed to do so, commence with search and rescue operations.

To avoid becoming a missing or overdue victim themselves, search teams should establish modes of contact and pre-determined progress check-in times. Should the search result in a tragic find, refer to Chapter 4, [\*Death or Casualty\*](#), for additional guidance.



## CHAPTER 10: IN-FLIGHT EMERGENCY (IFE)

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex J – In-flight Emergency (IFE) FOUO*



In-flight emergencies normally conclude rather quickly. While most IFEs are caused by a mechanical problem, an IFE could also be the result of a crew member or passenger suffering a physiological incident. Depending on the nature of the emergency, the aircraft could be on the ground in a matter of minutes. Sometimes the aircraft lands at the departure airfield. Sometimes the crew lands at an alternate airfield. And yes, sometimes they land in a field. What this means is during an IFE there's literally nothing members at the CAP unit can do to assist the imperiled aircraft and crew.

Usually, members back at the unit first learn of the IFE after the dust settles and the crew makes a notification. For the unit, here are some considerations that might help expedite closure:

- Find out where the aircraft is located, the aircraft and crew members' condition, and the nature of the IFE
- If due to a physiological incident, ask if the affected member sought medical attention (e.g. emergency responders), if they were taken to a hospital and if so the name of the hospital
- Ask the crew if they need assistance, such as transportation back to the unit or to relay information to their family or employer(s)
- Contact the National Operations Center (toll free 1-888-211-1812, option 1) to advise of the situation and seek approval if the crew needs to remain overnight at their present location
- Inform CAP/LG and advise of the maintenance needs and whether the aircraft is at a location with maintenance capabilities

- Inform unit leadership of the above information
- Follow up with CAP/SE on the next business day for any reporting requirements as outlined in CAPR 160-1.

## CHAPTER 11: CAP DISTRESS BEACON ACTIVATION

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex K – CAP Distress Beacon Activation FOUO*



NOTE – although this chapter focuses on Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELT), the most commonly activated form of distress beacon, considerations are similar for Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) and Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) activations.

Notification of a CAP aircraft ELT activation starts with the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC) or Joint Rescue Coordination Centers in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico contacting the National Operations Center (NOC). When this happens, the NOC calls the applicable unit to verify the aircraft is safely on the ground. Sometimes the aircraft is in for maintenance and the ELT was accidentally activated. Regardless of the reason for activation, the process is the same: find the aircraft, determine the reason for activation and turn off the ELT.

If the ELT was accidentally activated, simply resetting it is usually the proper course of action. If in the custody of one of the consolidated maintenance providers, contact the Aircraft Maintenance Officer (AMO) to work with the shop to gain access to the facility for the shop to turn it off. However, if the ELT was activated due to other causes, for example severe weather so extreme that it triggered the ELT or vandalism, there's potential that the aircraft suffered physical damage. In this case, a phone call to the NOC for relay to CAP/LG and CAP/SE is warranted. Contact the AMO and ground the aircraft until the determination can be made that the aircraft is safe to fly. If the AMO cannot be reached, contact the unit leadership who, in turn, notifies wing leadership, or if the aircraft is supporting a mission away under the control

of an IC, the IC should contact the Wing Leadership that is responsible for the aircraft and then the NOC.

If the aircraft is reported as airborne, the process of tracking down the aircraft becomes a little more challenging. If the call sign is known; the NOC using the national live radar and ADS-B feeds, can check to see if the flight is being tracked. Alternatively, since AFRCC has an established relationship with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), AFRCC could ask the FAA representative to check if air traffic control is in communication with the aircraft. If so, air traffic control could query the aircraft about their ELT.

CAP also owns Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons and Personal Locator Beacons. These are normally found in the water survival equipment assigned to Wings in the coastal regions or the Great Lakes Region, but could be temporarily be assigned to Wings without large bodies of water in preparation for support to Wings that do. Like ELTs, these distress beacons are registered to CAP National Headquarters, but are not tied to a specific tail number. The NOC will normally contact the Wing Leadership to determine the current custodian of this equipment if it is not apparent from a search of ORMS and determine if this equipment was accidentally activated or if it may have been activated in conjunction with a mission sortie. If accidentally activated, the Wing will need to work with the NOC to get the equipment repaired and recertified for use. If truly used in an emergency, personnel should refer to procedures in [Chapter 9](#) for a missing or overdue aircraft.

CAP has Friendly Force Trackers (FFTs - also known as Blue Force Trackers) for special missions to be able to track aircraft on high visibility missions. These FFTs have an emergency notification capability. When an FFT is activated in an emergency, the NOC is notified, and the NOC Duty Officer will reach out to the IC for the mission that the FFT is assigned to support to determine if there was an accidental activation or if emergency resources are needed.

If none of the above is successful in locating the aircraft, the flight release officer can wait until the estimated landing time and then attempt contact with the crew. If unsuccessful, reviewing Chapter 9, [Search and Rescue \(missing or overdue\)](#), and initiating the Annex I checklist, *Search and Rescue (Missing or Overdue)*, is warranted.

## CHAPTER 12: ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENT

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex L – Active Shooter FOUO*



Recent years have witnessed an increasing number of workplace violence and Active Shooter incidents. Because CAP members wear an Air Force style uniform, an unaware person intent on causing injury might not recognize CAP members as volunteers of a non-profit corporation. Rather, our members could be viewed as a “soft target” of uniformed military members, meaning that our gatherings and facilities are relatively unprotected and allow easy access to those wanting to do harm. Additionally, many CAP activities occur on military installations, exposing members to the same risk as military members.

An Active Shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area. In most cases, there is no discernible pattern or method to the selection of victims. The Active Shooter incident may or may not be terrorism related. The mentality of an Active Shooter can be described by the following traits:

- Desire is to kill and seriously injure without concern for his/her safety or threat of capture
- Normally has intended victims and will search them out
- Accepts targets of opportunity while searching for or after finding intended victims
- Will continue to move throughout the building/area until stopped by law enforcement, suicide, or other intervention

The following terms are common to Active Shooter and similar hostile incidents:

- **Immediate Danger** – you can either see the shooter directly or see the effects of the gunfire.
- **Risk of Danger** – you can hear shooting but are not in the immediate vicinity to see the effects of the gunfire or shooter.
- **ALARM RED, LOCK DOWN** – an audible warning *on military installations* that indicates active shooting/hostile act is imminent or in progress. The audible warning will usually be followed by a wavering tone and will be repeated every 10 minutes.
- **AN ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENT HAS BEEN REPORTED, SHELTER IN PLACE** – an audible warning that active shooting/hostile act is occurring at a *non-military* location.
- **ALL CLEAR** – an audible signal to indicate the Active Shooter/hostile situation has been neutralized or terminated.

The first priority during an Active Shooter event is to move yourself and others out of harm's way. If fleeing the scene is not an option, your second priority is to mitigate the potential for harm.

Regardless of on or off an installation, if active shooting occurs and you're in [immediate danger](#), seek cover or escape from the scene. If outdoors, hide behind concrete structures or the engine end of a vehicle (i.e. engine block or something that will stop a bullet), or attempt to get inside another building.

NOTE – A common practice is to lock external and internal facility doors during an Active Shooter event. If the doors are secured, immediately seek shelter elsewhere. Unless you know for certain that the shooter is not nearby, DO NOT unlock the door to let yourself in. Doing so could allow the shooter to gain access to the building and compromise the safety of all occupants.

From your shelter location, quickly assess the situation and your environment. Look for ingress routes the shooter might take, as well as egress routes you might need to take to escape the situation. Attempt to make your location seem unoccupied by turning off the lights, closing blinds and locking doors and windows. If possible, move furniture or other large items to barricade access to the area. Finally, take additional shelter by hiding behind or under furniture. Do not open the door until you hear the ALL CLEAR signal or are instructed to do so by proper authorities.

NOTE – Persons moving about make apprehension and identification difficult. Cooperate fully and do as directed by response forces.

NOTE – In the United States, there are still some remote areas that lack a 9-1-1 emergency service capability. Additionally, dialing 9-1-1 from a cellular phone while on a military installation will usually route the call to the local municipality only to have the call re-routed back to the installation which ultimately delays the response. Members should make it a habit to learn the correct emergency number(s) to dial when traveling to a new location. Therefore, the below references to “9-1-1” are used in the generic sense and may not be the correct number to dial for local emergency response.

**WARNING – SILENCE CELL PHONE AND DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CALL OR TEXT ANYONE THAT MAY POSSIBLY BE INSIDE THE DANGER AREA. A ringing cell phone could call the shooter’s attention to your or others’ presence.**

**WARNING – DO NOT PULL THE FIRE ALARM as doing so will drive people out in the open.**

### ***Immediate Actions***

#### If the Shooter is Outside Your Building:

- Seek cover and concealment, stay out of sight and/or escape the area
- Get behind something capable of stopping a bullet
- If at a safe location, dial 9-1-1 and provide location, incident details and follow the dispatcher’s directions
- Stay in place until the ALL CLEAR signal is issued by recognized authority

#### If the Shooter is Inside Your Building:

- If safe to exit, flee the area. If not safe, ensure you stay concealed (DO NOT roam the hallways).
- If safe to do so, dial 9-1-1 and provide location, incident details and follow directions
- Lock and barricade doors, stay low and remain silent. Use furniture for cover. If possible, hide behind something capable of stopping a bullet.
- Stay in place until the ALL CLEAR signal is issued by recognized authority

**CAUTION – most facility interior walls and furniture are not capable of stopping a bullet. Hiding under a desk or behind a sofa or chair may be effective at hiding your presence; however, do not assume you are safe from flying shrapnel or bullets. If possible, attempt to seek shelter behind sturdier objects such as a safe or filled filing cabinet.**

### ***If the Shooter Comes Into the Room or Office***

- Immediately drop to the floor, seek cover and concealment, and play dead by remaining still
- If safe to do so, dial 9-1-1 and provide location, incident details and follow directions
- As a last resort, fight the shooter. Rush with available people, throw things or use improvised weapons to take the shooter to the ground.
- Stay in place until the ALL CLEAR signal is issued by recognized authority

### ***When Law Enforcement Arrives***

- Remain calm and follow the responder's instructions
  - Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
  - Keep hands visible at all times
  - Avoid making quick movements
  - Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling
  - Evacuate as instructed without question until safely outside
- } The last thing you want is to be perceived as a threat when tensions are already high.

### ***After the Fact and Post-Incident Investigation***

- Follow direction of emergency responders
- Do not speak to the media. Refer inquiries to the appropriate Public Affairs office, usually the agency performing the investigation.
- The entire area will be treated as a crime scene; do not touch or move anything in the facility
- Once you have been evacuated you will not be permitted to retrieve items or access the crime scene
- After evacuation you will be taken to a holding area for medical care, interviewing, counseling, etc.



## CHAPTER 13: HEIGHTENED THREAT AWARENESS POSTURE

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklist: *Annex M – Heightened Threat Awareness Posture FOUO*



Our world is an increasingly dangerous place with new threats popping up daily. Today's society faces threats that were mostly unheard of just a decade ago; threats like cyber attacks, identity theft and terrorism. Until recently, most probably felt that a terrorist attack was something that happened abroad and not in the United States. However, the number of cases of domestic terrorism, usually inspired by foreign actors, is growing at an alarming rate.

Terrorism is the use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce governments or people, especially for political purposes. In the past, terrorists would tend to target militaries or government officials. Now the target has broadened to include the general population. Terrorists, much like an Active Shooter, desire to kill and seriously injure without concern for his/her safety or threat of capture. Historically, terrorists tend to target the following:

- Large gatherings of people often associated with holidays, special events or transportation nodes
- Cherished icons or facilities of national significance
- Soft targets, meaning those that are relatively unprotected such as religious facilities, schools and other public venues
- Uniformed personnel, to include military and law enforcement

CAP is vulnerable to several of the above conditions. We often have large gatherings, especially during conferences. With most of our units not located on a military installation, we represent soft targets. Finally, because CAP members wear a military style uniform, to the unaware terrorist we represent a military unit.

Federal agencies have the ability to assess threats within the United States. Depending on the information received, the threat could be to a generalized area, event or type of facility. The threat could also be rather specific, identifying a location, method and time. The national threat level may change nationwide, across a region, or a specific location. Additionally, military installations might change their protective posture through a process called the Force Protection Condition (FPCON, pronounced ef-pee-kon).

The FPCON defines specific actions the installation will take to increase or lower their protective posture based on five levels: Normal, Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta. For example, an FPCON might require 100% identification to access the installation. To the extreme, the FPCON might require denying all access. Somewhere in between might be the requirement to not wear uniforms off the installation. FPCON Normal is the most relaxed whereas FPCON Delta is the most restrictive.

Other than what might be mentioned in the media, CAP members typically don't have access to threat information, so we rely upon the Air Force, via CAP-USAF, to provide suggested actions to take in order to mitigate the previously mentioned vulnerabilities.

Here are just a few examples of actions CAP members might be encouraged to take:

- Cancel or postpone an activity
- Don't wear an Air Force style uniform to an activity
- Increase awareness and report suspicious activities
- Avoid a certain area
- Don't operate a CAP vehicle downtown
- Restricting information posted to CAP units' social media and official websites (i.e. operational security considerations, or OPSEC for short)

Although actions are encouraged, members may deviate from them at their own risk. CAP-USAF provides to the National Operations Center (NOC) information regarding suggested actions to take and the applicable area. The NOC relays that information to CAP leadership and region/wing commanders who, in turn, pass along to their respective members.

## CHAPTER 14: TEMPORARY CURTAILMENT OF OPERATIONS (STAND-DOWN)

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklists: *Annex N – Temporary Curtailment of Operations (Stand-down) FOUO*



Sometimes the best course of action following a crisis is to temporarily stand down operations; however, it doesn't always take a crisis for a commander to direct a temporary curtailment of operations. For example, a spate of vehicle dings or hangar rash incidents, while not necessarily a crisis, might prompt a stand-down to refocus members on safety and risk management. Stand-downs can be an effective tool to allow members to catch their breath, regroup, ponder a situation or implement corrective actions to an undesirable trend.

Regardless of the reason, commanders should weigh the risks of temporarily standing down the unit against the impacts of such a stand-down. For example, does the stand-down have to occur now or could it be delayed a few days to a more appropriate time that serves the intended purpose but doesn't needlessly negatively impact another operation?

Standing down a unit is normally a compelled response. In other words, a situation occurred that caused a need to take a pause. As such, commanders already know the condition that warranted the stand-down, but must also establish the criteria necessary to recover from the stand-down. Returning to the example of vehicle dings, the criteria to recover from a stand-down might be to have all unit members attend a training session on the proper use of spotters. Once the members have been trained, the unit returns to normal operations.

Although acting on a stand-down is almost always a commander decision, it's vitally important that proper coordination with the chain of command occur prior to taking action. The following preparatory actions should be considered before temporarily standing down a unit:

- What occurred that got the unit to the point of considering a stand-down?
- Will a stand-down solve or partially solve the problem, correct the deficiency or provide the unit a respite its members might need? Or is the stand-down the wrong “tool” to use for the situation?
- Are there other methods or programs that are better suited for dealing with the situation than a stand-down (e.g. IG investigation, membership termination, etc.)?
- When will the stand-down begin? Is timing critical (i.e. must happen now due to the severity of the situation) or is there flexibility in selecting the date(s). For example, a wing commander might direct all subordinate units to hold a one-day stand-down sometime during the next 30 days.
- How long will the stand-down last? Note that sometimes a unit stands down for a predetermined period, say one day, but at other times the stand-down might not be lifted until defined criteria have been met. For example, there might be an emergent need that requires all unit members to comply with a critical training requirement prior to resuming normal operations.
- Is the lifting of a suspension conditional? In other words, like the previous paragraph, are there criteria that must be met in order to return to normal operations?
- Will the stand-down negatively impact other, perhaps more important activities? If so, does that negative impact outweigh the potential good of the stand-down? If so, what are the mitigating actions, for example, asking an adjacent unit or wing to cover missions during the stand-down?
- What are the caveats or limitations of the stand-down? In other words, can cadet activities continue or, if flying activities are to stop during the stand-down, will SAR/DR missions be permitted? If so, are there elevated approval authorities (i.e. missions or activities may continue on a case-by-case basis with wing commander approval)?
- Is there a specific topic to be addressed during the stand-down?
- Is there a feedback mechanism to assess if the stand-down was effective?
- Is proper authority required to lift the stand-down? If so, is it the same person who stood down the unit?
- Based on the above considerations, has the chain of command been thoroughly informed prior to directing the stand-down? If the stand-down has potential to impact operational missions, has the National Operations Center been informed so they can advise 1AF? If the stand-down impacts a functional area, has the respective National Headquarters program director been informed?
- Has the unit’s leadership team been informed of the decision to stand-down?
- How will the stand-down message be communicated to the unit’s members? Are there ramifications should a member not comply with the stand-down? Is there a relief, waiver, or exception process?

## CHAPTER 15: CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS

Applicable Quick Reaction Checklists: *Annex O – NHQ Business Continuity FOUO*

*Annex P – Continuity of Operations (Units) FOUO*



Any of the previously described scenarios has the potential to disrupt unit operations for a period, usually of short duration. Other events, such as a facility fire, tornado or hurricane disaster, could disrupt operations for considerably longer. The key to successful operations continuity is to anticipate and prepare for situations that could degrade operations and establish alternatives that will allow the unit's affairs to continue with minimal interruption.

Unlike most other scenarios in this Plan, continuity of operations is one topic that leaders can prepare for in considerable detail well in advance of the crisis. And they should! Dealing with a crisis is challenging enough. Having to consider operations continuity "on the fly" only makes matters worse. Therefore, leaders are encouraged to take advantage of periods of calm to plan for how their team would continue operations in the event of a crisis.

Planning for continuation of operations requires considerable thought and flexibility while considering the following:

- Roles of leaders, both organizationally and functionally, during a crisis response
- Maintaining a current contact list that includes both internal and external contacts
- Evacuation procedures to include initial rally points and accountability checks
- Alternate facilities, to include site selection criteria, should the unit be forced to relocate
- How to conduct damage or operational impact assessments and what to do with the information
- How to acquire basic needs for continued operations, such as office supplies

- Identify who will contact whom for assistance in resolving issues that exceed the unit’s capabilities
- Back-up and recovery strategies for mission critical systems and vital records, preferably with remote access capability
- Where and how to establish the unit’s command and media centers
- How to effectively communicate with members who might be dispersed as a result of the crisis
- How to establish interim operations and to what level services or operational capabilities will be degraded
- How to restore the original facility, services and operational capabilities
- How to expeditiously and in an orderly fashion resume normal operations
- Developing exercise scenarios that challenge the unit’s ability to sustain operations under a variety of crises. Exercises may be conducted as tabletop or “what if” drills or may be more complex when combined with an operational exercise or evaluation.

Since no one person conducts all of the unit’s activities, continuity of operations relies on the team approach where the pre-planning of required recovery actions are distributed amongst designated teams with specific task instructions for each to accomplish. The unit commander or the Corporation’s Chief Operating Officer (in the case of a situation that impacts National Headquarters) have the final authority for decisions affecting their unit’s continued operations and the orderly return to normal business.

Unit leadership may desire to establish a Management Team, usually comprised of functional area experts, to assess the impact to operations and make recommendations on actions necessary to restore services, continue operations and recover from the crisis. Recommended team responsibilities include the following:

- Developing the unit’s continuity of operations plan and defining the plan’s goals and expectations
- Securing resources and developing procedures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of CAP personnel in an emergency
- Analyzing unit and organization-wide needs and assist functional areas in identifying their mission-critical activities
- Evaluating the degree to which operations are vulnerable to several different, potentially disruptive events
- Assessing the resources, measures and tactics that can be used to mitigate risk or control the effects of disruption
- Developing recovery strategies for the unit and functional areas to ensure reasonable levels of continuity of function and service in the event of a catastrophic disruption
- Developing scenarios and exercising the unit’s ability to respond to and recover from an event that degrades operations. It is recommended that exercises occur annually or within six months of changeover in unit leadership. Exercises may consist of a tabletop

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“what if” drill or be held in concert with a planned operational exercise or evaluation.

NOTE – The first priority in any crisis is to prevent further harm to people and minimize damage. Immediate actions include, but are not limited to, calling 9-1-1 or evacuating the facility. Secondary actions include directing actions to respond to the actual situation, relocating the unit if the situation warrants, and making necessary notifications.

Given the varied degree to which a unit could be affected by a crisis, it’s prudent to develop response plans that are scalable based on the extent of impact or the anticipated duration for loss of a service or mission capability. For example, the following timelines could be used to break up response activities into more easily managed sections:

- **Level I (up to 48 hours):** A situation that results in the unit’s inability to occupy or access their facility or deliver a service. Level I scenarios are not considered a large-scale disruptive event and may consist of minor damage to the facility, adverse weather conditions, a need to temporarily stand down operations, or a significant hardware or software malfunction.
- **Level II (2 to 5 days):** A situation of a more serious nature in which the service outage, mission stoppage or facility restriction is expected to last from two to five days. Damage may mean heavier loss to equipment and documents (e.g. files, reports, etc.) due to a prolonged event such as a building infrastructure problem, fire, or flooding.
- **Level III (5 days or more):** A situation in which the service outage, mission stoppage or facility restriction is expected to last in excess of five days. This scenario is severe and could extend to destruction of the facility or services provided/hosted within the facility, requiring replacement or significant renovation prior to restoring normal operations.

Units may also develop plans specific to certain crises-related topics or functional areas that complement the Continuity of Operations plan. Examples of topical and functional area continuity plans include:

- Information Technology Contingency Plan (ITCP) – establishes procedures to address minor incidents to catastrophic Information Technology disasters and should be developed for each critical major application and general support system.
- Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) – applies to major, unusually catastrophic, events that deny access to the normal facilities for an extended period. DRP scope may overlap ITCP; however, the DRP is narrower in scope and does not address minor disruptions.
- Crisis Communication Plan (CCP) – developed by the unit responsible for public outreach. A CCP typically designates specific individuals as the only authority for answering questions from the public concerning disaster response. See Chapter 3, [Crisis Communication](#), for more information.
- Cyber Incident Response Plan (CIRP) – establishes procedures to address cyber attacks against the organization’s IT systems. CIRP procedures are designed to enable security

personnel to identify, mitigate, and recover from malicious activity.

- Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) – provides the response procedures for occupants of a facility in the event of a situation posing a potential threat to the health and safety of personnel, the environment, or property. OEP scope could include fire, hurricane, criminal attack, or a medical emergency.
- Operations Resumption Plan (ORP) – addresses the restoration of operations and processes after an event. Development of the ORP should be coordinated with the Disaster Recovery and Continuity of Operations plans.

### ***Preparatory Actions***

There are several things leaders can do to prepare for the unpredictable crisis. Some actions are normal practices in CAP, such as ensuring alert rosters are current. Others, like developing unit specific response plans and QRCs or securing alternate facilities, take more time and thought. One thing that helps in preparing for the unexpected is to identify potential crises (disruptive events) the unit could face and assess the likelihood of their occurrence and the resulting impact on operations.

The operational impact assessment serves as a guide and considers the event, the estimated downtime should the disruptive event occur, the expected response time from external agencies (e.g. low, medium, high and immediate), the probability that the event could occur (e.g. unlikely, remote, likely, medium and high), and a justification for the assessed probability. Entries are subjective in nature and may vary greatly with each location. For example, units located within a city might anticipate a rather rapid response, whereas more rural or isolated units might witness a lengthy downtime even for the simplest of repairs.

On the next page is an example of an assessment matrix sorted by highest to lowest probability of occurrence. Units may use this as a template for creating their own assessment matrix. The matrix should be tailored to the unit, deleting entries that are not applicable and adding items that are reasonable to assume could happen. For example, a unit in Hawaii might add a tsunami scenario and delete the cold weather consideration.



**Example  
Operational Impact Assessment Matrix**

<b>Crisis or Incident</b>	<b>Estimated Downtime</b>	<b>Expected Response</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Justification for Probability</b>
<b>PIPE BURST</b>	No more than 4 hours	High	High	Age of buildings and construction in and around the building.
<b>FLOOD</b>	No more than 2 days	Medium	High	Colorado river tends to flood periodically.
<b>DATA SECURITY FAILURE</b>	No more than 4 hours	High	High	2% to 5% chance of causing serious problems to operations.
<b>FIRE</b>	No more than 2 days	Immediate	Medium	Presence of ignition and fuel sources
<b>INTERNAL ACCIDENTS</b>	No more than 2 days	Medium	Medium	Human factor is not highly motivated.
<b>EXTERNAL ACCIDENTS</b>	At least 7 days	Medium	Medium	Near railroad tracks, under airport flight path, and automobiles.
<b>HADARDOUS SPILLS</b>	No more than 7 days	Immediate	Medium	Trains transporting chemical materials/petroleum fuel and industrial complex just up the road.
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL FAILURE</b>	No more than 4 hours	Low	Medium	Close proximity to a body of water that tends to flood on occasion.
<b>ERRORS</b>	No more than 4 hours	Low	Medium	Only 1% to 2% chance of causing serious problems to operations.
<b>EXPLOSIONS/ BOMB THREAT</b>	No more than 4 hours	Medium	Medium	Has occurred in the past and 5% or more of causing a serious problem.
<b>TORNADO</b>	No less than 7 days	High	Medium	WG HQ resides in tornado alley
<b>DENIAL OF ACCESS</b>	No more than 2 days	Low	Medium	Denial of access only contributing to 1% to 2% chance of causing serious problems.
<b>BASIC SERVICES/POWER FAILURE</b>	More than 2 days	Low	Likely	Occurrences where power and communication outages were experienced on occasions.
<b>COMPUTER VIRUS (CYBER CRIME)</b>	No more than 2 days	High	Likely	Has occurred in the past.
<b>HURRICANE, TROPICAL STORM AND WIND</b>	No more than 7 days	Immediate	Likely	Threat contributing about 5% or greater chance due to past occurrences.
<b>LIGHTNING</b>	Between 2-7 days	Low	Likely	Storms happen; we're in tornado alley.
<b>EXCESSIVE HEAT</b>	No more than 4 hours	Medium	Likely	5% or greater chance of causing serious problems.
<b>HAIL</b>	No more than 4 hours	Low	Likely	Storms happen; we're in tornado alley.
<b>EXTERNAL ACTIONS, CIVIL UNREST, WAR AND EXPLOSIONS</b>	No more than 7 days	Medium	Remote	Unit resides in a large city with a history of public protests.

<b>Crisis or Incident</b>	<b>Estimated Downtime</b>	<b>Expected Response</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Justification for Probability</b>
<b>ACTIVE SHOOTER</b>	No more than 2 days	Immediate	Remote	WG HQ resides on a military installation. Active Shooter scenario more likely with other agencies residing on base.
<b>SNOW/ICE</b>	4 hours to 2 days	Low	Remote	Temperate zone with minimal chance of causing serious problems.
<b>BUILDING COLLASPE/ STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY FAILURE</b>	More than 7 days	High	Remote	Adequate countermeasures have been established to reduce the likelihood of structural failure.
<b>COLD WEATHER</b>	No more than 4 hours	Low	Remote	Temperate zone with minimal chance of causing serious problems.
<b>DISEASE/EPIDEMIC</b>	No more than 4 hours	Low	Remote	Only concern is cold and flu season.
<b>OTHER BUILDING TENANTS</b>	No more than 4 hours	Medium	Remote	Unit resides on airport property; minimal chance of causing serious problems.
<b>STAFF MEMBER SUICIDE, DEATH OR CASUALTY</b>	No more than 2 days	Immediate	Remote	While possible, unit has an active wingman/resiliency program.
<b>OTHER NEARBY FACILITIES</b>	No more than 4 hours	Low	Remote	Tenants of nearby facilities are well known with minimal chance of causing serious problems.
<b>TERRORISM: (WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (WMD))</b>	No more than 7 days	Immediate	Unlikely	Unit meets on an Army post. Terrorists have and will continue to target U.S. military installations, vessels, and government buildings.
<b>SABOTAGE/VANDALISM</b>	No more than 2 days	Low	Unlikely	Unit meets across the street from PD.
<b>EMPLOYEE ACTIONS/ UNIONIZATION</b>	No more than 4 hours	Low	Unlikely	Most jobs are management and operational levels.
<b>THEFT, FRAUD, AND EMBEZZLEMENT</b>	No more than 4 hours	Low	Unlikely	Unit's financial processes employ rigorous checks and balances where any discrepancies are fully investigated and resolved.
<b>EQUIPMENT FAILURE</b>	No more than 2 days	Medium	Unlikely	Backups (e.g. cell phone, home internet) exist.
<b>DEATH OF CRITICAL STAFF</b>	No more than 4 hours	High	Unlikely	Minimal chance of causing serious problems.

The above estimates are a guide to let CAP leadership and perhaps customers know the anticipated downtime that might result from a given scenario. The actual post-event damage and operational impact assessment should reveal a more accurate “get well” timeline.

### ***Initial Actions***

As stated earlier, the priority is to prevent further harm to people and minimize damage. As the dust begins to settle, the next steps are to assess the situation and take actions to return to

normal operations as quickly as reasonably possible.

### ***Damage or Operational Impact Assessment***

Immediately after an event or even while the crisis might still be unfolding, one of the first steps the unit performs is an assessment of the damage or operational impact. The purpose of the assessment is to determine whether operations can continue in a reduced capacity or if, in the case of facility damage, relocation to an alternate facility is required. If damage has occurred, the assessment identifies which items are salvageable and which have been destroyed. The assessment also determines estimated downtime and makes recommendations for temporary or permanent solutions to restore services or mission capabilities.

Keep in mind that crises span the spectrum, from an isolated event limited to a single unit or perhaps a few members within the unit, to large scale destruction. Each crisis has potential to impact unit operations. When conducting the assessment, members need to consider the crisis and determine the scope of impact. For example, the crisis could be limited to a single system failure, such as a targeted denial of service for CAP's information technology systems.

### ***Relocating to a New Facility***

Pre-incident planning activities should have included options for a potential relocation facility in the event the primary facility becomes uninhabitable. Ideally, arrangements should have been made for gratis use of the alternate facility. Once the decision is made to relocate, ensure that affected members and CAP leadership are informed of the move and provide any new contact information, such as landline telephone numbers.

### ***Making Notifications***

Most CAP members know who to contact within their unit when a problem arises. They also know how and when to activate an alert roster. However, alert rosters typically do not include external points of contact. Contact lists should include external agencies, such as local law enforcement, fire and medical facilities, especially in locations not served by a 9-1-1 system. The list should also include service providers, such as utility companies, the unit relies upon for daily operations and owners of alternate facilities selected in the relocation portion of the plan.

Additionally, the size of the unit could make telephone notifications a time-consuming process. Units are encouraged to establish a tree-like structure that distributes notifications among several individuals making the notification calls. There is one caution with this approach: it is recommended that the message to be shared be typed or handwritten for the members making the notifications. Doing so ensures the same message goes to all recipients without the risk of distorting the message due to personalized translations of intent or purpose.

Refer to Chapter 2, [\*Contacting the Right People\*](#), for more information.

## ***Establishing a Command Center***

If the unit's facility is unaffected, then establishing a command center is probably not needed. However, if the facility is uninhabitable due to damage or lacks sufficient services (e.g. utilities) to continue normal operations, then establishing a command center at the relocation site is warranted. The command center serves as the rally point for securing the safety of CAP personnel and managing interim and recovery operations. In the absence of a defined command center, it's conceivable that members could be dispersed and continue operations remotely, for example from their home.

## ***Establishing a Media Center***

The same considerations that applied to establishing the command center are applicable to establishing the media center. Additionally, depending on the crisis, it might be advisable to separate the media from the command center. Refer to Chapter 3, [\*Crisis Communication\*](#), for the rationale behind separating these two centers.

## ***Site Restoration***

If the unit relocated, then their facility was probably damaged in the event. The damage assessment determines the extent of damage. If the facility was destroyed or severely damaged such that repairs are cost prohibitive, then the unit considers steps to locate a new permanent facility. If the facility is repairable within acceptable costs, then consideration should be given to effecting repairs. Contact higher headquarters for assistance.

## ***Resumption of Operations***

The final step in crisis management is to return to normal operations in a safe, expeditious and orderly fashion. Continuity of Operations plans should detail actions necessary to identify the conditions needed to return to a permanent facility and how to effectively transition back to normal operations.

Depending on the nature of the crisis that forced the relocation, an "all hands" approach to returning to normal operations may be unwise. Under these conditions, commanders are encouraged to consider all activities necessary to complete the transition and then prioritize actions for a more orderly return. A simple method for establishing priorities is to determine a function's dependence on the existence of another condition. For example, functional areas require internet connectivity in order to effectively perform their duties. Therefore, to prevent a lengthier downtime the primary facility's network (or the local area's cellular network) might need to be restored prior to functional areas returning to the facility.

## CHAPTER 16: CONCLUSION

No two crises are ever the same, nor are the same decisions made in response to the crisis. A crisis is also what people make of it. The nature of the event, the environmental conditions, the members involved, and countless other factors define the extent of the crisis and the actions leaders should take. Below summarize actions taken from this Plan and it starts with the unit being prepared for the unexpected by developing thorough plans and training/exercising members on their plans and the use of Quick Reaction Checklists.

1. First priority is to prevent further harm to others and minimize damage. Call 9-1-1 if warranted and know when to seek assistance from religious or medical experts.
2. Control the situation as best as possible and keep others informed. Minimize rumor and speculation.
3. Assess the damage, impact to operations and scope of the crisis.
4. Continue operations when prudent and able to do so and accept the fact that some services and mission capabilities might be degraded.
5. Relocate to a new facility if the situation dictates.
6. Resume normal operations as safely, expeditiously and orderly as possible.
7. Document everything and review processes for effectiveness and lessons learned. Then fine-tune actions to improve the next crisis' response efforts.
8. Forward recommended improvements to CAP/XP for inclusion in this Plan's next revision.



## ATTACHMENT 1 – GLOSSARY AND REFERENCES

### References.

*The Computer Security Act of 1987, Public Law 100-235; U.S.C. 759*

Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 63, *Critical Infrastructure Protection*

National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 51, *National Continuity Policy*

OMB Circular A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources, Appendix III

49 CFR, Part 830, *Notification and reporting of Aircraft Accidents or Incidents and Overdue Aircraft, and Preservation of Aircraft Wreckage, Mail, Cargo and Records*

Federal Emergency Management Agency, *National Response Framework*

Federal Emergency Management Agency, *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101*

Federal Emergency Management Agency, *Business Emergency Response Plans*

The National Institute of Standards and Technology, Special Publication 800-Series

AFI 10-2701, *Organization and Function of the Civil Air Patrol*

CAPR 1-2(I), *Personally Identifiable Information*

CAPR 1-3, *Disclosure of Confidential Information by Volunteer Members*

CAPR 35-2, *Notification Procedures in Case of Death, Injury or Serious Illness*

CAPR 70-1, *CAP Flight Management*

CAPR 60-3, *CAP Emergency Services Training and Operational Missions*

CAPR 60-5, *Critical Incident Stress Management*

CAPR 77-1, *Operation and Maintenance of Civil Air Patrol Vehicles*

CAPR 112-9, *Claims, Demands, and Legal Actions For or Against the Civil Air Patrol, the United States Air Force, and the United States*

CAPR 160-1, *Civil Air Patrol Safety Program*

CAPR 160-2, *Mishap Reporting and Review*

CAPR 190-1, *Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs Program*

CAPR 265-1, *The Civil Air Patrol Chaplain Corps*

CAPR 900-5, *The CAP Insurance/Benefits Program*

## **Acronyms.**

AFRCC – Air Force Rescue Coordination Center

CAP – Civil Air Patrol

CAPF – Civil Air Patrol Form

CAPR – Civil Air Patrol Regulation

CAP/CC – Civil Air Patrol National Commander

CAP/GC – Civil Air Patrol General Counsel

CAP/DO – Civil Air Patrol Director of Operations

CAP/DOV – Civil Air Patrol Chief of Standardization and Evaluation

CAP/DP – Civil Air Patrol Personnel and Membership Actions

CAP/LG – Civil Air Patrol Director of Logistics

CAP/SE – Civil Air Patrol Chief of Safety

CAP/XP – Civil Air Patrol Chief of Plans and Programs

CAP-USAF – Civil Air Patrol-United States Air Force

CCP – Crisis Communications Plan

CIRP – Cyber Incident Response Plan

CISM – Critical Incident Stress Management

DRP – Disaster Recovery Plan

ELT – Emergency Locator Transmitter

FAA – Federal Aviation Administration

FOUO – For Official Use Only

FPCON – Force Protection Condition

FRO – Flight Release Officer

IFE – In-flight Emergency

ITCP – Information Technology Contingency Plan

NHQ – Civil Air Patrol National Headquarters  
NOC – Civil Air Patrol National Operations Center  
NTSB – National Transportation Safety Board  
OFP – Occupant Emergency Plan  
OPSEC – Operational Security  
ORP – Operations Resumption Plan  
PA – Public Affairs  
PAO – Public Affairs Officer  
PIO – Public Information Officer  
QRC – Quick Reaction Checklist  
USAF – United States Air Force  
WMIRS – Web Mission Information Reporting System