



**HEADQUARTERS
SOUTHEAST REGION, CIVIL AIR PATROL
United States Air Force Auxiliary**



31 January 2018

Region Public Affairs Plan

I. Introduction

In accordance with CAPR 190-1, This document is prepared annually and represents the plans of the Southeast Region (SER) for its Public Affairs Program. This includes regular marketing, mission, and crisis communications.

II. Situation Analysis

The Southeast Region of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is composed of five states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The commonwealths of Puerto Rico and the U. S. Virgin Islands are also in the Region. While socio-cultural influences tend to be somewhat more conservative, there is a wide range of cultural and linguistic diversity within the Region with some areas steeped in longstanding cultural traditions.

There are approximately 9,500 members. About half are cadets. In terms of membership, the Region is one of the largest in CAP. Currently, 290 members fill 303 Public Affairs Officers (PAO) duty assignments for the 249 units in the Region.

- **Major Events:** Annually, SER conducts a Regional Conference; Cadet Leadership School; Staff College; Chaplain Corps Staff College; Cadet Competition, Cadet Honor Academy and other training opportunities. In addition, each Wing conducts many similar activities in addition to emergency services training/operations and flight encampments. There are multi-wing exercises. There is always potential for actual multi-wing contingency responses.
- **Strengths:** SER has adapted well to the maturing relationship with the United States Air Force and Department of Homeland Security. Wings in SER regularly have Search and Rescue or Disaster Response missions. The SER Public Affairs staff includes a Director holding a senior rating in the Public Affairs Specialty Track. He also serves on the National PA staff. There is also a Deputy Director who holds a Technician rating in the PA Specialty Track. Both are Public Information Officer Trainees. The SER Commander is a strong supporter of the Public Affairs program and members of the SER command staff have a significant background in Public Affairs activities.

- **Weaknesses:** The experience and training levels of PAOs in squadrons across the region is low. Almost 37% have one year or less as assigned PAOs and almost 21% have six months or less experience. Only 16% of PAOs hold a technician rating in the PA Specialty Track. Only 32% have PA specialty track rating of any level. There are 13% of PAOs who are not enrolled in the PA specialty track. Unit commanders hold 11% of PAO duty assignments. There is a small number of current Emergency Services-rated Public Information Officers in SER.
- **Opportunities:** The Region PA staff has access to an electronic meeting platform allowing real-time, nearly face-to-face training and interaction for all PAOs. This has potential to significantly improve the development of PAOs at all levels within the Region. With social media as a primary source of information for many internet users and the growing use of mobile electronic devices, PAOs have the potential for exploiting new vehicles for direct contact with our audience. The technology necessary to produce multimedia content is inexpensive and readily available.
- **Areas for Improvement:** Careful candidate selection and increased engagement of currently assigned PAOs is critical to improving the quantity and quality of the PAO corps in the Region. In addition, management and team building skills should be stressed in developing PAOs. Basic PAO training needs improvement.

III. Public Affairs Objectives

- a. Support and mentor the Wing PAOs in SER.
- b. Support the initiatives established by SER Command.
- c. Promote cooperation between CAP and other organizations, the military, business, industry, and civic groups within the Region.
- d. Increase public awareness of CAP and its missions.
- e. Support the National Headquarters PA Marketing Plan, Strategies and Goals.

IV. Public Affairs Goals and Strategies

The Region-level Public Affairs effort is program management and support. Most external media and public contacts in CAP occur at the National, Wing, and local unit levels. The Region Staff monitors program implementation in subordinate units, and provides Public Affairs services to support Wings and the Region headquarters. SER has the following five goals for its Public Affairs Program. Appropriate strategies and measures of success are included below.

GOAL # 1 – SUPPORT SUBORDINATE UNIT EFFORTS TO COMPLY WITH CAPR 190-1.

Description: Higher echelons have the responsibility to support subordinate unit's efforts to achieve compliance with CAP guidelines and requirements for the public affairs program.

Strategy #1.1 – SER/PA will access and review Wing Public Affairs Plan and Crisis Communication Plans stored in the PA module of eServices. We will encourage subordinate

units, through Wing PAOs, to review their annual PA Plan at least quarterly and update their immediate commanders with progress in meeting annual goals.

Strategy #1.2.1 – SER/PA will use the reports module in eServices to monitor PAO qualifications on a monthly basis to identify trends.

Strategy #1.2.2 – SER/PA will provide an analysis of statistical trends to Wing PAOs at least on a quarterly basis.

Strategy #1.3 – SER/PA will confer with Wing PAOs to develop and share successful strategies for unit PAO engagement and skill development.

Strategy #1.4 – SER/PA will support the development of training modules to increase available training resources for basic PAO/PIO skills and understanding of CAP public affairs mission.

Measures of Success:

- Each Wing's public affairs program receives a rating of Effective or higher on Compliance Inspections.
- Ninety percent of groups and squadrons will receive a rating of Effective during Subordinate Unit Inspections.

Goal #1 supports public affairs plan objectives a, b, e.

GOAL # 2 – EFFECTIVELY USE ONLINE RESOURCES TO REACH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIENCES.

Description: The general population continues to get information from the internet at an increasing rate. Use of electronic media is a viable alternative to traditional media. Self-publishing and targeted messaging is a realistic option using online resources.

Strategy # 2.1 – Because the www.sercap.us website is a valuable source of information, SER/PA will collaborate, as needed, with the Region Director of Information Technology to ensure that the web site contains information of use to both internal and external audiences and that all materials reflects positively on CAP.

Measure of Success: The website reflects fresh and current content to meet the needs of the Region Commander, staff, membership and other stakeholders.

Strategy # 2.2 – Ensure the Region-level social media program is active. A variety of social media accounts will be incorporated into the SER social media mix. Weekly posts will be made to accounts. A topic calendar will be used to create scheduled posts that will increase awareness of a broad range of CAP initiatives. A directory of the social media assets employed by units in SER will be maintained on www.sercap.us for benefit of CAP stakeholders.

Measure of Success: Weekly blog entries pertaining to broad range of CAP initiatives posted to SER social media accounts. Published directory of social media accounts employed by SER units. SER use of social media provides an example of best practice for other units to follow.

Strategy # 2.3 – Expand creation and use of multi-media content. Increase use of audio blogs, photo essays, video blogs, and graphic content to provide effective vehicles to capture audience attention.

Measure of Success: Multi-media content produced by SER units will be increased to more than 25% of total content generated.

Goal # 2 supports public affairs plan objectives a, b, c, d, e.

GOAL # 3 – IMPROVE REPRESENTATION OF DIVERSITY IN SOUTHEAST REGION.

Description: Southeast Region is comprised of six Wings with diverse human resources who share common objectives and core values. Southeast Region Public Affairs program should reflect the diversity of operational missions, cultural background of members and shared values.

Strategy # 3.1.1 – Ensure variety of content is published that reflects a representation of each Wing in SER. The Region Online News Editor will work with Wing PA staff to identify suitable story submissions from Wing activities. The Region-level ONLINE NEWS editor will monitor all content for quality as well as producing Region-level content.

Measure of Success: ONLINE NEWS will feature a minimum of one story each calendar quarter from each Wing in SER.

Strategy # 3.1.2 – Each Wing will be encouraged to adopt the SER ONLINE NEWS system as a key part of its communication channel mix. Wings can choose the appropriate management structure to control approval of the content submitted within their respective Wings. Each Wing will be responsible for developing resources for approval and editing of Wing content.

Measure of Success: Each Wing in SER adopts regular use of ONLINE NEWS as part of communication mix and PAO mentoring strategy.

Strategy # 3.1.3 – Encourage PAOs in SER to submit content for inclusion in national publications such as Civil Air Patrol Newsroom.

Measure of Success: Civil Air Patrol Newsroom will feature content from SER unit monthly. Each quarter Civil Air Patrol Newsroom will feature content from a SER unit.

Strategy # 3.2 – SER social media will include “FROM AROUND THE REGION” category for posting information of CAP activity across the Region to increase awareness of SER diversity and promote esprit de corps among all members of SER.

Measure of Success: There will be FROM AROUND THE REGION posts on SER social media accounts on monthly basis.

Strategy #3.3 – SER/PA staff will purposefully seek stories or story angles that reflect the cultural diversity of CAP members in SER and the equal opportunity policy of the CAP organization.

Measure of Success: SER will publish a minimum of one story or social media post representing cultural diversity of CAP organization each calendar quarter.

Goal # 3 supports public affairs plan objectives a, b, c, d, e.

GOAL # 4 – PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEER SKILL ENHANCEMENT.

Description: Success of SER Public Affairs efforts depends on skilled officers and quality leadership. Beyond technical skill, the ability to manage and lead resources is necessary to grow the capability and capacity of the CAP Public Affairs program.

Strategy # 4.1 – The SER/PA will utilize a variety of methods to provide information, material, and resources geared toward continuous skill development for the public affairs specialty track. SER/PA will promote adoption of crisis communication training and planning strategies training.

Measure of Success: A majority of the Wing PAOs in the Region actively participate in Region-level efforts to improve skills and confidence of Public Affairs officers.

Strategy # 4.2 – The Region PA staff will use a variety of methods to provide information, material, and resources geared toward increasing the efficacy of leadership throughout the Public Affairs community.

Measure of Success: A majority of Wing PAOs will be able to attest to an increased awareness among their subordinate PAOs as to the importance of developing managerial and leadership skills of Public Affairs officers at all levels of CAP Public Affairs program.

Description: Historically, much of CAP's PAO/PIO training has focused on single-resource incident response. CAP's expanding mission requires a better understanding of multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency incident response spread over a large geographical area. The advanced incident management structure for this type of incident, called Area Command, uses a Joint Information Center (JIC). Both PAO/PIO and Incident Command staff can benefit from a better understanding of how a JIC can improve flow of information.

Strategy # 4.3 – Focus Region-level training efforts to introduce advanced concepts while using Wing and Group level training for basic PAO and PIO skills.

Measure of Success: At least one Joint Information Center will be established during a large-scale operational exercises in SER to provide hands-on experience and develop better understanding of benefits of coordinated information structure for operational purposes.

Goal # 4 supports public affairs plan objectives a, b, c, d, e.

GOAL # 5 – SUPPORT CAP NHQ AND SER REGION STRATEGIC INITIATIVES.

Description: SER Commander establishes strategic goals each year. Additionally, CAP NHQ periodically publishes a strategic plan that typically includes several public affairs related initiatives.

Strategy # 5.1 – SER/PA will promote the Region strategic initiatives and encourage subordinate units to localize them and include them in local planning efforts. Local units will be encouraged to frame content in context of progress toward meeting strategic initiatives. These initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- Participation in all aspects of our three core missions
- Increased participation in Aerospace Excellence, Cadet Quality Unit Award, and Cyber Patriot;
- Expansion of the Aerospace Education and Cadet Programs into underserved/un-served urban and rural areas;
- Conduct joint operations within the Region and between Regions;
- Realistic, effective, and appropriate training to develop the full capability of Mission Base Staff;
- Growth in membership, improvement in retention, ensuring every member has the opportunity to grow and excel within CAP
- All assets properly controlled, maintained, and utilized;
- Each SER Wing rated Effective on all Compliance Inspections;

Measure of Success: SER/PA publishes one or more article or social media post that generates greater awareness of each strategic initiative.

Strategy # 5.2 – SER/PA will promote the CAP NHQ initiatives and encourage subordinate units to localize them and include them in local planning efforts. Local units will be encouraged to frame content in context of progress toward meeting strategic initiatives. These initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- Publish high-quality articles and photos;
- Increase unit participation in the Air Force Association's CyberPatriot program;
- Use community service projects as a source for promotional opportunities and publicity;
- Identify partners with a natural interest in CAP's missions;
- Strengthen awareness among customers and potential customers;
- Maximize exposure through grassroots partnerships;
- Increase CAP members' awareness of the role of the Board of Governors;

Measure of Success: SER/PA publishes one or more articles or social media posts that generate greater awareness of each strategic initiative.

Goal # 5 supports Public Affairs plan objectives a, b, c, d, e.

V. Annual Review

SER/PA will conduct a comprehensive review of the program described in this plan annually in January. The review will identify successes, failures, areas for improvement, and will update goals/objectives for the next year. The review will serve as the annual report for SER/PA.

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Review Date	Reviewer's Initials