

HEADQUARTERS  
CIVIL AIR PATROL NEW HAMPSHIRE WING  
United States Air Force Auxiliary  
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1 March 2016

**New Hampshire Public Affairs Plan**

**I. Introduction**

This annual plan, required to be prepared annually by CAPR 190-1, represents the plans of New Hampshire Wing for its Public Affairs Program, including regular marketing communications, mission communications, and crisis communications. It was prepared by Maj. Penny H. Hardy, NH Wing Public Affairs Officer in consultation with other staff officers.

**II. Situation Analysis**

The New Hampshire Wing is situated in the Northeast Region of CAP's northeast area bounded by the States of Vermont, Maine and Massachusetts as well as Canada on the North.

The state is diverse, geographically, ranging from major metropolitan areas to rural, low population counties in the Northern portion, and from mountainous areas such as the White Mountains to the Seacoast area bordering the Atlantic Ocean. The Wing was involved in sub-chasing and rescue operations during WWII.

The Wing has its headquarters in Concord, NH which is in the center of the most highly populated areas of the state. Within the wing there are nine squadrons with the northern most one located in Lebanon and the southernmost one located in Nashua. It has a large group of dedicated seniors and cadets numbering about 300 throughout the eight squadrons one of which was recently established at a public school in Nashua.

- **Strengths:** The state has a diverse, experienced staff that is committed to the highest ideals of volunteer service. The staff makes excellent use of technology to promote collaboration at a distance such as the internet and teleconferencing. The state is an acknowledged leader in all of its missions and in serving the local communities and the nation. It has been designated as a Regional Coordination Center for FEMA Regions I, II and III. In Public Affairs, the state is in a relatively strong position with a dedicated group of unit PAOs who are meeting the requirements of their position within their units.
- **Weaknesses:** The staff is decentralized, with members in every squadron of the wing, seeing their counterparts only one or two times a year. Five of the nine squadrons have a dedicated and effective PAO. The other squadrons have the commander doing the job. The wing needs to work towards certifying more Public Information Officers (PIOs) through their E/S programs as there are few qualified PIOs in the wing and one in training.
- **Areas for Improvement:** Areas for improvement include increasing the effectiveness of members of the wing, and furthering interoperability within the squadrons. For a time the squadrons were paired up so that one would assist/work with the other toward the same goals. The wing PAO has focused on the recruitment, training and retention of highly motivated members to serve as PAO's and PIO's.
- **Opportunities:** CAP in the region and NH Wing is very much involved in Emergency Services especially in the area of aerial photography, and has been involved in many missions in the last year that reflected well on the organization. The wing holds SAREX training in many areas of the state with different squadrons hosting throughout the year. Some exercises are ground team

events and some are both air and ground. Several of the SAR training weekends have been held in all types of weather from snow to sun. The NH Wing has completed its sixth year of service to the NH Fire Service flying patrols to check for forest fires and doing "bug patrol" to search for severe areas of deforestation. These patrols are ready to go seven days a week if requested. There are two routes that are covered at this time. One in the northern area of the state and another in the southern part.

- **Threats:** CAP units in the wing vary in their health, from active dynamic teams to small units that are in need of further training. One of our units had to disband due to lack of senior members willing to work to better the unit. The need for further training and professional development is constant. Many local unit PAO's are relatively new members who are inexperienced in the functions of the program and its importance to the wing's success but they are eager to learn more.
- **Major Events:** NH Wing holds monthly SAREX training, SAR school ground team training weekends, pilot training dates, aerial photography training, GIIEP training and other events as needed. The cadet program hosted two NCOAs in 2016 as well as two encampments one at Ft. Devens and the other at Norwich University. An Honor Guard academy was held in conjunction with the NCOA. A two day SAREX has been held in Whitefield, NH with media coverage in attendance for the past three or so years.
- **III. Wing Goals**

New Hampshire Wing has established the following goals for 2016:

- A. Good management and accountability of funding and resources.
- B. Coordination of training to ensure interoperability.
- C. Retention and the professional development of members.
- D. Compliance with CAP regulations, directives, and requirements of higher headquarters.
- E. Additional MOUs with state agencies.
- F. Keep wing website updated.

#### **IV. Public Affairs Objectives**

New Hampshire Wing has established the following PA Objectives for 2016:

- A. Support the PA/Marketing Plan, Strategies and Goals of CAP National Headquarters.
- B. Recruit more talented members to the PAO ranks.
- C. Support and mentor the PAO's of the wing, especially new PAOs and PIOs.
- D. Increase public awareness of CAP, its local, state, and national missions and its contributions to our nation especially our new designation as part of the Total Force. Some of this is now done through Facebook and other social media.
- E. Promote cooperation between CAP and other aviation organizations, the military, business, industry, and civic groups within the territory of the state.
- F. Submit items regularly to the Volunteer Now online.

#### **V. Public Affairs Goals and Strategies**

The NH Wing Public Affairs effort rests primarily in the role of program management and support. The NH Wing Commander and staff is always ready to assist with the PA goals. The current Wing Commander is an active participant in the promoting of CAP to any and all agencies within the state.

Most external media and public contacts in CAP occur at the wing and local level. It is therefore necessary to mentor the subordinate unit PAOs to increase public awareness of CAP at the local level. As part of its routine reporting the Wing PAO will summarize these measures and report to the Wing Commander on progress and successes/failures to date.

### **GOAL # 1 Publish a Quarterly Newsletter –ABENAKI News**

**Description:** The Wing Public Affairs staff under the guidance of Major Penny Hardy will produce a quarterly newsletter telling about CAP success stories and role models across the state and previewing upcoming activities, communication of significant missions, esprit de corps, and professional development.

The newsletter will be posted on the wing, region and national websites where it can be viewed by both CAP and non-CAP members. It can also be posted on social media platforms. It is sent electronically to every unit within the wing.

It will primarily be an internal communications and retention tool, however it will be available for distribution to community partners, prospective members, and other interested parties outside of CAP.

**Measure of Success:** A quarterly newsletter is produced and distributed electronically via email to the unit commanders who post it on each unit's website. It is also posted on the wing website. Having each unit post the current issue on their website helps with distribution. A few paper copies are available at wing headquarters for visitors and the media.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B, C, D, E**

### **GOAL # 2 Insure that every squadron has an active, engaged and trained unit Public Affairs Officer.**

**Description:** The success of the CAP Public Affairs program in the wing rests with each squadron having an active and engaged PAO.

NH/PA will work with the Squadron Commanders to identify candidates for this position and will assist as desired by the wing in finding a PAO for each squadron. This will include the establishment of PAO training and locating MIO courses given by non-CAP agencies. The NH/PA attends most wing commander's call nights and encourages the unit commanders to find candidates to fill vacant PAO positions.

**Measure of Success.** The Wing PAO will provide a yearly workshop discussing best practices and giving the attendees a chance to discuss their successes and failures. The number of unit PAOs that participate in the training and the number of PIOs becoming fully trained will be one of the measuring sticks of its success. Training was held in October 2015 but was poorly attended. Further training is planned for 2016. Discussions were held during the training day with how to improve the interaction between unit PAOs. A lot of suggestions were put forth.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B, C, D, E, F**

### **GOAL# 3 Insure that each wing has a cadre of trained and active Mission Information Officers**

**Description:** NHQ letter to the wing commanders stated the importance of having only qualified spokespeople speaking for CAP during operational missions. Having qualified members working this function can mean success or failure during a mission.

#### **Measure of Success**

The Wing PAO is currently urging the subordinate PAOs and others to become a PIO. NH Wing needs to find more qualified PIOs as it only has one at present. In the event of a major event/disaster of any length the wing would be hard pressed to cover the situation without assistance from other wings. It is stressed that one does not need to be a PAO in order to become a PIO.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B, C, D, E**

### **GOAL# 4 Promote and create regular submissions to the CAP News Online news service.**

**Description:** Most news releases will originate from the wing or local levels, however, appropriate news articles and other releases will be adapted and delivered to the Civil Air Patrol Volunteer Now News Online.

NH/PA will promote the distribution of news stories and releases to CAP Online News, the Volunteer and the Abenaki News newsletter. Proper formatting and use of words will be included in appropriate training and updates sent to unit PAOs periodically.

**Measure of Success:** NH/PA will continue to encourage the unit PAOs to submit their own articles to local media and assist in writing same by requiring the unit PA to submit the news release to the wing PA prior to publication.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B, C, D, E, F**

### **GOAL# 5 Insure the NH Website is a valued source of information for CAP Members**

**Description:** The wing Public Affairs staff will collaborate, as needed, with the wing webmaster/IT Staff to ensure that the website's direct and subconscious messages for the general public all reflect positively on the unit and the organization. It will also monitor the social media sites of the units and wing to assure the appropriateness of these sites content.

**Measure of Success:** The wing has appointed several new members to the IT team and they are making great strides towards rebuilding and keeping the website up to date. No postings on social media are being done at present. Most unit's websites have links to Facebook pages.

**Supports PA Objectives A, C, D**

### **GOAL# 6 Provide PA support for Wing and Squadron-sponsored events and activities.**

**Description:** By order of the Wing Commander, every event and activity sponsored or staged by the wing or respective wing staff members on behalf of the wing shall have an appointed Public Affairs Officer who shall:

- Coordinate in advance with the Wing Public Affairs staff.
- Prepare one or more advance news releases to be delivered to the local media where the event (if appropriate) is to be held not later than one week prior to the event.
- Collect information and photographs to "tell the story" of the event.
- Prepare a timely news release (with one or more photographs) about the event reporting its results and successes, delivered to local media where the event is held (if appropriate) and also to the Abenaki News and CAP News Online.

If no separate PAO is appointed for the activity, the event project officer shall perform these functions.

**Measure of Success:** Releases, news stories, photos and related media are generated and submitted to NH/PA for release and archiving for "Value Added" use later.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B, C, D**

### **GOAL# 7 Mentoring and training of wing and unit Public Affairs staff and others interested members by implementing the PA Training Plan**

**Description:** Because training, mentoring and professional development is vital for wing and local PAO's, the wing PA staff will search out resources and training materials that are available via Internet/distance technology.

These materials will include practical resources for daily use by PAOs, as well as professional development materials geared to the Public Affairs specialty training track and the Mission Information Officer function.

The primary communication conduit between the wing PA staff and subordinate units is through email.

**Measure of Success:** Plan, organize and execute PAO training around the wing, the number of participants will be the measure of success. The wing PAO forwards information to all unit PAOs about opportunities for further training and/or resources that might further enhance their position.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B, F**

**GOAL# 8 Promote and support the “Flight Plan” (Appendix A) as the basic unit Public Affairs strategy in North East Region.**

**Description:** The Wing PAO uses the “Flight Plan” to guide PAO’s and helps Unit PAO’s establish a direction for their programs. The Flight Plan outlines the Wing PAO’s goals for each squadron within the wing. It is the measure that is used to measure PA program effectiveness for the Wing PAO Recognition Program. It is also the cornerstone for developing support and training for unit PAOs.

**Measure of Success:** Buy-in is measured by the effectiveness of wing/unit programs.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B**

**GOAL# 9 Ensure each unit has a plan of action that supports this plan & CAPR 190-1.**

**Description:** As per CAPR 190-1 each wing and/or unit will develop a PA and Crisis Communication Plan. This plan will be submitted to the Region PAO (delegated region approval authority) for region level review and approval. Approved plans will be posted to [www. nhwgcap.gov](http://www.nhwgcap.gov)

**Measure of Success:** The NHWG Crisis Communication plan has been passed to the Wing IT team for posting.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B**

**GOAL# 10 Promote the recognition of PAO’s by wings and recognize outstanding wing and unit PAO’s in the region.**

**Description:** The Region PAO will establish a process to implement the PAO Recognition program as outlined in CAPR 190-1. This process will be published at [www.ner.cap.gov](http://www.ner.cap.gov). The Region PAO will submit the name(s) of wing or unit PAO(s) who based upon their performance during the previous year, will be designated as the Region PAO of the Year. This award will be presented at the Region Conference that year. The Wing will also submit names to NHQ for the annual Bud Payton Award. The Region PAO will also promote the Balsem awards in the Region and make the maximum number of nominations allowed.

**Measure of Success:** Each unit can now submit a nomination for the Wing and Unit PAO of the Year Award. NER/PA promotes nominations for the Balsem Awards. No names have been submitted in recent years except the wing PAO. Performance of unit PAOs has not been up to the required level for this recognition. However, several new PAOs may just be the right person to nominate in the future.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B**

**GOAL# 11 Ensure 2 way communications between the Region PAO and Wing/Unit PAO’s and National HQ**

**Description:** Good communications is very important between National HQ, NER, the wings and their squadrons. The Wing PA will communicate with the unit PAOs frequently and encourage their attendance at unit meetings, events and wing conferences. Wing PAO will continue to encourage unit PAOs to contact them with any concerns or questions. The Wing PAO will communicate with the NER/PA on a frequent basis.

**Measure of Success:** Having more PAOs involved in the unit day to day activities and having contact with the wing on a monthly basis. Unit PAOs should make an effort to attend their unit activities

as often as possible so that they have a good knowledge of what is happening in the unit.

**Supports PA Objectives A, B**

**VIII. Annual Review**

This plan will be reviewed each year in the month of January. This review will consist of a comprehensive review of the PA program as outlined in this plan. This review will go over successes, failures, areas for improvement and update goals/objectives for the next year.

Wing Commanders and PAO's will be asked for input prior to implementation of the revised plan of action.

**VII. Promulgation**

This plan upon approval of the wing commander will be communicated to every commander and PAO in the wing via email to all squadron commanders and unit PAOs.

**APPROVED:**

/////Signed/////

Col. Kevin N. Harbison  
NH Wing Commander

Dated:1 March 2016

**APPENDIXES:**

- A. the PAO's Flight Plan—see separate attachment
- B. PA Training Plan

**NH WING PA TRAINING PLAN**

In years prior to 2011 the wing PA had conducted a seminar at its annual wing conference for all subordinate PAOs. As there was no wing conference in 2011 a different method of training was instituted.

The wing PA devised some questions/requests for the unit PAs to complete online so that the training would reach all subordinate PAOs. The plan was to have each PAO answer the questions or write the requested simulated news release and after all had done so the results would be shared among all as a learning tool. Only two of the four PAs and one unit commander completed the requested training. A new group of questions/requests was to be sent after the first ones had been completed.

Due to the lack of response to the attempt to conduct PAO training online, a one day training event was held in October of 2012, 2013 and 2014. The 2014 training day was attended by six unit PAOs and one unit commander. Maj Blais and Maj. Hardy conducted the training event. A similar event was held in 2015. An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the PA area within the wing was conducted. Interaction within units is lacking. Need to involve units in local events in their area to get CAP out into the communities where it can be seen.

