



OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS  
**CIVIL AIR PATROL**  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY

18 March 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL UNIT COMMANDERS

SUBJECT: Cadet Life & The Drug Free Ethic

**1. Command Intent.** Mr. Don Rowland, CAP's Executive Director, and I believe there's a need to better articulate the Cadet Program's relationship to the Drug Demand Reduction effort. Over the years, a divide has needlessly separated Cadet Programs and DDR in many units. When DDR is seen as a stand-alone program cut-off from the larger cadet community, both the DDR effort and our cadet mission suffer. "Character Development" is one of the four major pillars of cadet life and we see DDR as an essential feature of character education. Like any youth organization, CAP's Cadet Program has included and always will include an anti-drug message. It is now time to create a stronger partnership between Cadet Programs and DDR so we can have an even greater effect upon cadets' lives.

**2. New Initiatives.** To accomplish my overall command intent, Mr. Rowland and I have initiated the structural and programmatic changes described below. These new initiatives are not policy changes, but we believe they will clarify and strengthen our existing anti-drug education policy.

**a. Organizational Structure.** At National Headquarters, Mr. Rowland has placed the DDR office under the Cadet Team, which mirrors how my own advisory staff is organized. Likewise, I ask all commanders, at all levels, to assign DDR personnel to their Director of Cadet Programs (or that echelon's equivalent) and to actively nurture that partnership. At first glance, some may see this move as a step backward for DDR, but we disagree. Imagine a wing's cadet directorate is meeting around a conference table, discussing ways to improve cadet life. It makes sense to invite the DDRA or DDRC to join that conversation; indeed, the DDRA or DDRC deserves a seat at the table. Full inclusion in the cadet department at each echelon means DDR will have more opportunities to weave its message into cadet life plus gain better access to the people and resources needed to realize DDR's full potential. Likewise, the DCP (or equivalent) gains by having more visibility into a program that can greatly impact the cadets. It's worth noting that right now, the Wing Compliance Inspection Guide evaluates DDR when examining the Cadet Program, but the Wing DCP is not officially tasked with being a steward of or champion for DDR. Mr. Rowland and I believe that modifying the organizational structure is common sense.


**b. National Character Development Day.** To showcase the Cadet Program's character element, I ask each wing to host a National Character Development Day annually. This activity should include a noteworthy guest speaker (e.g.: astronaut, fighter pilot, or pro athlete) to talk about his or her successes while emphasizing moral and drug-free challenges encountered along the way. Second, during National Character Development Day, I envision cadets participating in an exciting, hands-on challenge that takes them out of their comfort zone – something that requires courage and total sobriety (e.g.: obstacle courses, ropes courses, etc.). National Character Development Day will be a great way to motivate our cadets to become ambassadors of the drug-free ethic.

**c. The CAP Red Ribbon Leadership Academy.** To spread the drug free ethic in our communities during the National Red Ribbon Week, I ask each wing to host a 1-day annual leadership academy for middle school student leaders who are not cadets (e.g.: team captains, club presidents, class officers, and/or youth leaders in church-related groups). The Red Ribbon Leadership Academy will use our cadets as ambassadors of the drug-free ethic, and the curriculum will introduce the student leaders to the fundamentals of leadership that our cadets have mastered so well. Think of it as a leadership school run by our top cadets for an external audience. Of course, this initiative also presents us with fabulous opportunities for recruiting.

**3. Support for CAP Wings.** For the two new activities above, National Headquarters will provide curriculum guides that give local leaders ideas on how to carry out the activity's main intent while allowing ample flexibility to react to the local environment. Further, DDR funds should be available to support these activities, in accordance with the usual rules that govern DDR funds (e.g. the 80/20 ratio of DDR funds to local funds, and the requirement to center the activity around military installations). The NHQ staff will provide more information this summer via the Cadet Blog ([capmembers.com/cadets](http://capmembers.com/cadets)).

**4. Points of Contact.** Wing and Region leaders from the DDR and cadet communities who have questions about this memo should contact my National DDR Advisor, Lt Col Jett Mayhew ([JettM14@aol.com](mailto:JettM14@aol.com)), or the NHQ Deputy Director for Cadet Programs, Mr. Curt LaFond ([clafond@capnhq.gov](mailto:clafond@capnhq.gov)).

**5. Conclusion.** I am excited about our opportunities to do a better job of weaving the drug-free message into cadet life. The structural changes at National Headquarters and in CAP's field organizations, coupled with the National Character Development Day and Red Ribbon Leadership Academy will go a long way toward that end. I ask all commanders to join me and Mr. Rowland in supporting these efforts.

  
AMY S. COURTER  
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National Commander

  
DON ROWLAND  
Executive Director