

Highlights of CAP and USAF History

CAP Officer Basic Course

Introduction

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) and the US Air Force (USAF) have enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship from the inception of both organizations. While there is a significant amount of historical facts and stories about both CAP and the USAF, in this module we will focus on the historical highlights of CAP's relationship with the USAF and recent events that have impacted the organization. Like any dynamic organization, CAP has evolved over the decades in both its missions and its relationship with its primary partner, the USAF. In part one of this module, the member will learn, briefly, how CAP came into existence and became aligned with the USAF. The remainder of the module will focus on the historical events that have changed and shaped the organization and its relationship with the USAF.

1. Describe key historic events that affected the relationship between CAP and the USAF.

The birth of the CAP is officially recorded as 1 December, 1941. However, several key events prior to December 1941 laid the foundation of the organization. In the pre-World War II years, 1938-1941, several aviation advocates helped create the New Jersey Civil Defense Services made up of civilian aircraft, pilots and mechanics. Several other states followed suit over the next few years. The primary purposes of the CDS units were to protect the ability for private pilots to fly once war began and to

- o Utilize small planes to fly liaison missions
- o Fly missions over sensitive areas to guard against enemy sabotage
- o Provide flight training for civilian pilots to increase the pool of trained pilots for later military service.

The visionaries responsible for pioneering the inception of this organization included both civilian and military leaders such as Gill Rob Wilson, General Hap Arnold, General John F. Curry, and several others. These men knew that if the U.S. entered WWII, civilian aviation would be severely restricted. These determined pioneers worked together to convince President Roosevelt and Congress of the need for a National Civil Air Patrol. Under the newly created Office of Civil Defense (OCD), in May 1941, OCD Director LaGuardia established an aviation committee to draft the plans for a civilian aviation force. The results of that effort led to the birth of CAP on 1 December, 1941. CAP's mission was to partner with the military to patrol the homeland and provide various flight services to the Army, thereby freeing more active duty pilots for combat duty.

During World War II, CAP was an integral part of North American defense, patrolling the 1,200 miles of coastline from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to the Florida Keys searching for enemy submarines and other signs of enemy activity. CAP pilots logged over 500,000 flight hours and are credited with sinking two submarines. WWII CAP pilots located and directed rescue teams to numerous sinking vessels saving hundreds of American lives as a result. Cap flew border patrol along the Mexican border and was instrumental in the disruption of German spying activities. It also flew target towing, cargo and human transport for the Army, and entered into the search and rescue arena.

In 1943 CAP was transferred to the Army Air Forces. In 1946 CAP was chartered by congressional act as a nonprofit, benevolent organization devoted to humanitarian activities.

The National Security Act of 1947 established the Air Force as a separate armed service and most Air units and assets were transferred from the US Army to the new Air Force.

By another act of Congress in May 1948, shortly after the creation of the new USAF, Public Law 557, made the organization the official auxiliary of the US Air Force. This law authorized the Secretary of the Air Force to assign military and civilian personnel to liaison offices at all levels of CAP.

2. Describe recent highlights in CAP history that changed the organization.

In 1985 Congress passed what became known as the CAP Supply Bill, which authorized direct federal funding and procurement for the Civil Air Patrol through the US Air Force. It also authorized members to be reimbursed for certain mission-related expenses.

In 1995, CAP stood up a fully corporate staff to serve the organization; with the USAF drawing back to an advice, liaison, and oversight role. Where the USAF had administered the day to day operations of CAP and had developed its training regimen, this work became a corporate function.

Under Public Law 106-398, in October 2000, Congress again fundamentally modified the organization. Congress clarified auxiliary status as a conditional state dependent on CAP performing actual services for a Federal department or agency while reaffirming strong Federal budgetary support to the organization.

Also known as the National Defense Authorization Act of FY01, Congress created the CAP Board of Governors to serve as the principal governing body of the organization.

This 11-member Board of Governors (BOG) is made up of members appointed by the Secretary of the Air Force and senior CAP volunteers. The BOG provides much needed strategic direction and guidance to CAP, while delegating many day-to-day operations of CAP to the CAP National Commander and policy decisions to the National Board and National Executive Committee (see the Legal Basis for CAP lesson as well as the Organization of CAP lesson). Air Force Instruction (AFI) 10-2702 outlines the official relationship between the CAP, the USAF and the BOG.

The Board of Governors has no authority to establish, or exercise authority over, any Air Force policy, mission, or activity. The Board of Governors will report, at least annually, to the Secretary of the Air Force on the status of CAP as the auxiliary of the Air Force. Such reports will include CAP's performance in conducting Air Force programs and missions assigned during the preceding twelve month period and CAP's ability to execute Air Force assigned programs and missions.

In July 2000, a Cooperative Agreement (CA) between CAP and the USAF was executed which outlined the financial arrangements between the two organizations. The draft of the Statement of Work described below was originally an attachment to the 2000 CA.

In October 2001, a Statement of Work (SOW) was finalized. The purpose of the SOW is to specify Air Force requirements for services that CAP is to perform in furtherance of the noncombat missions of the Air Force. In accordance with the SOW, CAP shall develop regulations, policies, plans, and programs to govern the safety, training, qualification, conduct, and performance of all CAP personnel in the accomplishment of Air Force-assigned missions. These documents and waivers to same are subject to approval by the Air Force.

Several Air Force Instructions provide guidance to the Civil Air Patrol and the Air Force units directly responsible for oversight.

AFPD 10-27, *Civil Air Patrol* explains the organization and function of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). This policy document details the procedures, standards, and responsibilities of Air Force organizations that support and employ CAP. It applies to all Air Force personnel and organizations, including the Air Force Reserve and the Air Force National Guard.

AFI 10-2701, *Organization and Function of the Civil Air Patrol*, details the responsibilities and procedures of the Civil Air Patrol - United States Air Force (CAP-USAF) in supporting and employing the Civil Air Patrol. This AFI describes the Air Force CAP-USAF program and the active duty personnel assigned to it as well as the Reserve Assistance Program, CAP-RAP, and the AF reservist volunteer members assigned therein that provide countless hours of liaison assistance to the CAP.

AFI 10-2702, *Board of Governors of the Civil Air Patrol*, **Public Law 106-398** and further guidance by the President of the United States regarding the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Board of Governors describes the role, functions, and structure of the Board of Governors for Air Force personnel. It describes the relationship and responsibility of the Board to the Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF) and its relationship to other Air Force activities. It also prescribes general procedures for selecting Board members and Air Force Support to the Board.

In 2009, the Air Force announced a restructuring of USAF Air University. The changes include moving CAP-USAF under the Major General Jeanne Holm Center for Officer Training and Accessions. This will generate synergies for Cap and programs such as Air Force Junior ROTC, as well as provide CAP with an Air Force general officer as CAP's advocate to the Air University Commander.

3. Outline highlights of CAP's recent service history.

Events in the last two decades have kept CAP busy. From notable firsts, high profile Emergency Service missions, to new programs, every quarter's Volunteer magazine highlights just a few of the many dynamic achievements of this very active organization.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

CAP members from every Wing are achieving great things every month. Just a few of the most notable recent ones are listed here.

In 1993, Richard Anderson became the first CAP cadet to rise to the rank of Brigadier General as the CAP's National Commander. Anderson also served in the USAF, retiring in 2009 at the grade of Colonel.

In 2003, former CAP cadet and then Air Force Captain Nichole Malakowski became the first woman to be assigned as a demonstration pilot with the USAF Thunderbirds.

2006 ushered in CAP's first woman National vice-commander with Brig. Gen Amy S. Courter. Two years later, in 2008, she took the lead position as the first female National Commander as a Major General.

In 2008, Puerto Rico Wing's Hila Levy, 2004 Cadet of the Year and recipient of CAP's highest cadet award, the Spaatz Award, graduated from the USAF Academy. While a notable achievement in itself, she was not the first CAP cadet to do so. She was, however, the first to earn top of her class honors and then went on to be CAP's first Rhodes Scholar. Levy

aspires to be a NASA astronaut. (Note: Approximately ten percent of the incoming freshmen each year at the USAF Academy are CAP cadets.)

In 2008 Air Force Lt Colonel Eric Boe became the first CAP Spaatz cadet to pilot the Space Shuttle. (Frank Borman, commander of Apollo 8 was the first former CAP cadet to become a NASA astronaut.)

HIGH PROFILE EMERGENCY SERVICES MISSIONS

Responding to disasters and performing Search and Rescue missions watched by the nation, CAP demonstrates one of its core competencies: Emergency Services.

Aerial reconnaissance and photography of disaster areas is one of the high tech services CAP provides to the nation. In 1993 CAP covered the Missouri floods, in 2001, Civil Air Patrol documented the devastation following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In 2002, CAP provided aerial security over the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina tested the abilities of numerous agencies. CAP pilots flew over 670 missions in support of the relief efforts. CAP ground team members spent countless hours locating ELTs on boats and going door-to-door searching for stranded citizens. The California Wildfires in 2007 brought CAP members out again as they searched for stranded residents, staffed command centers, and provided aerial documentation of the aftermath.

Every year, CAP performs approximately 95% of inland aerial search and rescue missions as directed by the USAF. Searching for missing airplanes and lost hikers, CAP saves roughly 100 lives every year. Three of the most covered searches in the last decade profiled CAP's capability to conduct searches over an extensive area while coordinating with multiple other agencies. In 1999, CAP assisted with the search for John F. Kennedy Jr.'s airplane, which crashed at sea off the Massachusetts coast. In February 2003, the nation watched while CAP, the USAF, and several other agencies searched for wreckage from the space shuttle Columbia. The disappearance of famous aviation pioneer and millionaire Steve Fossett in September 2007 led to the largest search in CAP history involving several CAP wings and lasting nearly a month.

CAP Emergency Services pilots continually assist the Air Force in another special role of cat and mouse as they help test AF pilot interceptor skills.

OTHER NOTABLE EVENTS

As with highly effective commercial corporations, CAP continues to evolve as an organization by continually examining and improving its programs. Three new programs initiated recently include Wreaths Across America, The Volunteer Support to the AF program, and the Organizational Excellence program.

Wreaths Across America started as one CAP squadron's community service idea and within only a few years has grown to hundreds of CAP units at National cemeteries across the nation participating in an annual remembrance ceremony of our military veterans. The event has fostered joint cooperation between the CAP and representatives from all branches of the Armed Forces as they pay tribute to our fallen servicemen and women.

In May 2008, another milestone event in CAP-USAF relationship occurred with the establishment of the Volunteer Support to the Air Force (VSAF). VSAF meshes the skills and interests of CAP volunteers with quality-of-life needs on Air Force bases. CAP volunteers participating in VSAF perform support functions that may otherwise be reduced or eliminated because of a lack of Air Force personnel to perform these tasks. VSAF may even resurrect services that have been eliminated. The specific volunteer taskings are determined on a base-by-base basis. VSAF builds on an already well-established auxiliary partnership with the Air

Force while boosting wartime and peacetime capabilities. Following 9/11, many Americans felt compelled to volunteer in defense of the nation, but the Department of Defense did not have a structure in place. VSAF provides that structure. Conceived at the highest levels of the U.S. Air Force by Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Craig W. Duehring, a former CAP cadet, the program is initially being offered by the 12th Flying Training Wing at Randolph Air Force Base in Texas and the 88th Air Base Wing at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

In 2008, Maj Gen Amy Courter, CAP National Commander, introduced the Organizational Excellence program to encourage a high level of professional development among its most dedicated members. The program will ensure CAP leadership will be both proficient and respected as they work internally within the organization and externally as they partner with other federal, state, and local agencies in support of missions and, in particular, with its primary partner, the USAF.

Lesson Summary and Closure

Civil Air Patrol history is indelibly intertwined with the history of the US Air Force. To understand CAP history, members must learn and appreciate the origins of both organizations and how each impacts the other. The partnership is a proud one that has served both organizations well.

For More Information

There are great books written on the history of Civil Air Patrol and the CAP/USAF relationship. Members that are interested in learning more about the USAF history other than in a Civil Air Patrol context are referred to the first two websites below. Several publications specific to Civil Air Patrol history are also listed below.

Reference List:

Air Force Historical Research Agency: <http://afhra.maxwell.af.mil/>

Air Force History Program Publications: <http://www.airforce.com/learn-about/history/>

CAP Website: <http://www.gocivilairpatrol.com>

CAP Fact sheet (available on the website under Other Publications)

CAP Volunteer Magazine, issued quarterly: http://www.capchannel.com/volunteer_magazine

CAPR 20-1, Organization of Civil Air Patrol

CAPP 50-5, Introduction to Civil Air Patrol

Publications available from the CAP Historical Foundation: <http://www.caphistory.org/>

Duck Club, by Col. L. E. Hopper, CAP

Air Medals, by Col. L. E. Hopper, CAP

Propwash, by Robert E. Neprud Author of Flying Minute Men

Uniform Plates, by Lt. Col. Lee Ragan, CAP

Anti-Submarine Warfare, by Lt. John R. Henningan, USN

CAP in Song and Verse, by Lt. Col. Allan F. Pogorzelski, CAP

History of CAP Coastal Patrol Base 6, by Col. John H. Batten, CAP
Civil Air Patrol 1941-1991 A Chronological Bibliography, by Lt. Col. Donald C. Bortor, CAP

Other publications on Civil Air Patrol:

[Flying Minute Men: The Story of the Civil Air Patrol](#) by Robert E. Neprud. Cartoons by Zack Mosley, 1948 [From Maine to Mexico](#) by Louis E. Keefer, September 1997

[Hero Next Door: Story of the Civilian Volunteers of the Civil Air Patrol](#) by Frank A Burnham (Hardcover - 1974)

[The All- Volunteer Force: Thirty Years of Service](#) by Curtis L. Gilroy, Barbara A. Bicksler, and John T. Warner (Paperback - Nov 29, 2004)

[Civil Air Patrol: Missions for America-- For 65 Years](#) by Drew Steketee (Hardcover - Jan 2006)

[Minutemen of the Air:: The valiant exploits of the Civil Air Patrol in peace and war](#), by Carroll V Glines (Unknown Binding - 1966)

[Aerial Search, the CAP Story](#) by Frank Burnham (Dec 1982)

Works Cited

The following references were used in the preparation of this module:

CAPR 20-1, Organization of the Civil Air Patrol, 1

AFI 2701, Organization and Function of the Civil Air Patrol, 29 July 05

[AFPD 10-27 Civil Air Patrol](#), 29 Jul 05

AFPD 10-27 includes the following two documents:

- [Cooperative Agreement between Civil Air Patrol and United States Air Force](#), 10 Jul 00
- Statement of Work, Oct 2001

[AFI 10-2701 Organization and Function of Civil Air Patrol](#), 29 Jul 05

[AFI 10-2702 Board of Governors of the Civil Air Patrol](#), 27 Feb 01