

Law CAP's Profile Raised at Air Force JAG Homeland Security Course Bringers

By Kimberly L. Wright

Familiarity breeds affinity. That is the idea behind a Civil Air Patrol trio's recent participation in an Air Force judge advocate general course at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

CAP-U.S. Air Force Staff Judge Advocate Maj. Paul Maraian, CAP National Headquarters General Counsel Rafael Robles and CAP National Chief of Staff Col. Russ Chazell hope taking the course will open the door to similar training opportunities for CAP legal officers and ultimately provide them with greater understanding of Air Force perspectives on legal issues while also familiarizing Air Force legal officers with their CAP counterparts.



Photos by Susan Robertson, CAP National Headquarters

CAP-U.S. Air Force Staff Judge Advocate Maj. Paul Maraian, left, CAP National Chief of Staff Col. Russ Chazell and CAP National Headquarters General Counsel Rafael Robles attended a recent U.S. Air Force judge advocate general course on homeland security. The school introduced the homeland security community to the capabilities of CAP and provided participants greater insight into the Air Force's homeland security mindset.

New Perspectives

The Air Force JAG's weeklong homeland security course provided an in-depth introduction to the complex legal problems encountered during homeland defense missions. It also prepared students to navigate a variety of different legal issues generated by homeland security, including defense support to civilian law enforcement authorities, the Posse Comitatus Act, the status of Air National Guard personnel and response to natural disasters, as well as intelligence operations and oversight.

Although some CAP members have likely attended JAG school courses in their Air Force careers, "this is the first time a CAP member has attended the Air Force JAG School in a CAP capacity," said Maraian.

For the CAP cadre in attendance, the course provided insight into Air Force thought processes while raising CAP's profile in the homeland security community.

"It's giving us at CAP a better perspective on what the Air Force is thinking and some of the things they have to consider when they're deciding whether or not to use CAP," said Chazell, a lawyer.

"It's an opportunity to see how our counterparts on the other side of the house think on similar issues, and I think it affords us the opportunity to spread the word as to what we do to the rest of the military community," said Robles.

Not only did the CAP trio attend the course, they also became part of curriculum. Maraian and CAP Air Force senior adviser Col. Russ Hodgkins, who recently retired, presented an overview of CAP capabilities to class participants who included Air Force JAGs, Air National Guard personnel, other branches of the military and state emergency services personnel.

The CAP-USAF presentation generated a lot of interest and several questions, which pushed the presentation over the allotted time. "The presentation that Col. Hodgkins and I made ... showed we believe that CAP's one of the team and we introduced them as such," said

Maraian. He hopes to make similar presentations for the Army JAG School to help spread the word about Civil Air Patrol's capabilities.

Strengthening Relationships and Providing Support

Though his workload prevented him from attending the homeland security course, CAP National Legal Officer Col. Barry Herrin sees it as more than a one-time opportunity for legal education. He envisions the JAG school course as the first step in CAP's legal track, knitting a greater kinship with its counterparts in the Air Force.

He plans to have CAP legal officers attend future JAG school courses on topics applicable to CAP life, including safety, operational security and the inspector general process. CAP's legal officers would benefit from both the increased knowledge and the Air Force's increased awareness of the many skilled men and women serving as legal officers for CAP, he said. ▲



Col. Barry Herrin

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