

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Executive Summary

A quick review of key points from NHQ/PA's R&WCC presentation

1. What's the best way – the right way – to develop a viable and effective public affairs program? *Planning – it is absolutely essential to your success.*
2. Where can you find help with planning? *Online, on the PA homepage on capmembers.com, and also in the PAO Toolkit. A template and step-by-step instructions for writing a PA and crisis plan is provided.*
3. Who can explain the four-step planning process outlined in CAPR 190-1? *1) Research and identify PR needs; 2) Set goals/objectives designed to meet those needs; 3) Brainstorm action strategies to implement the goals; and 4) Evaluate effectiveness so that you know what's working and what needs to change.*
4. How many of you have a wing PAO in place? Do all of your units have a PAO? If not, are the commanders of these units prepared to assume those duties? What does that entail? *Enrolling in the Public Affairs Officer Specialty Track. (New requirement in 190-1 ensures that someone is in place at all times, shows how important we feel this is.)*
5. What is the best approach for achieving favorable media relations? *Be proactive. It is best to follow the DoD's policy of "maximum disclosure with minimum delay." Use predetermined positive messages, those already in your plan. And remember to steer your response to your predetermined messages.*
6. How many key messages should you have for every interview? *At least three, up to five.*
7. How long should these communication points be? *No longer than 10 to 20 seconds per statement.*
8. What are the dangers of going into an interview cold or "winging" an interview? *Unprepared, unable to convey key messages. You're more likely to say something you'll regret later.*
9. How does social media affect your need for a proactive media relations program? *The compressed time frames caused by social media mean every wing needs a plan that allows for a quick and effective real-time response.*
10. Are your PAOs using social media as a communications tool? *If not, you need to join in this important global conversation to communicate your message. The proposed changes in 190-1 encourage the use of Facebook and Twitter and other forms of social media.*

11. Instead of newsletters, what tool for telling the CAP story is now preferred in the proposed CAPR 190-1? *All PAOs will create and maintain a website in accordance with 190-1 and in partnership with the information technology officer and other officers assigned by the commander.*
12. Why is crisis planning more important than ever for Civil Air Patrol? *The number of high-profile missions, aircraft accidents and cadet protection issues continues to increase. Just recently, we've dealt with Hawaiian tsunamis, tornadoes in the South and Midwest, flooding through much of Mid-America, Hurricane Irene on the East Coast.*
13. Can you name one of the three keys to success in crisis communications? *1) Make sure your crisis plan is in place and your messages are accurate and current; 2) Confirm that all people speaking to the media on behalf of your wing know the messages and can convey them; and 3) Stay strong with your communications and never waiver. (Having a consistent and strong message ensures the news media will accurately and positively represent your position on the crisis.)*
14. Can you name one of the three goals of crisis communications? *1) End the crisis quickly; 2) Limit the damage; and 3) Restore the reputation.*
15. Can you provide an example of a high-profile mission in your wing/region?
16. Can you name an instance when we should not speak to the media? *In incidents related to the FAA or NTSB. We are bound by federal regulation not to speak to the media, to direct all media inquiries to the lead investigator.*
17. If you have any questions regarding a mishap, who should you call? *The NOC and/or NHQ Safety Manager Frank Jirik.*
18. Why would you need a PIO, a public information officer? What type of mission? *One is mandatory for all emergency services missions lasting or expected to last more than 48 hours.*
19. With that in mind, what do PIOs do? *Handle media relations for emergency service missions, advises the incident commander in matters related to protecting the image of CAP and provides timely information to the PA staff of each higher headquarters.*
20. When CAP is involved in an Air Force Assigned Mission, or AFAM, who approves news releases as well as accompanying video and photos? *The Air Force, of course – no exceptions. Usually this is through 1st Air Force, or in the case of an SAR, ICs and PIOs can work directly with AFRCC.*
21. If the mission is considered high-profile, with the potential to generate considerable media attention at the wing, region or national level (as with the search for Steve Fossett or the John F. Kennedy Jr. mission, who should coordinate approvals through the Air Force? *The NOC and NHQ/PA.*

22. Who coordinates media flights? *The National Operations Center. Again, no exceptions. All flights carrying media personnel must go through the NOC.*
23. In a corporate mission, who approves news releases? *The wing commander or the commander's designees with assistance from the NOC and NHQ/PA, if needed.*
24. Who approves the use of any photos taken during corporate missions? *The customer, the agency that asked for CAP to take the photos. Remember it's best to get that beforehand, at the start of the mission, preferably in writing. Publicity photo approvals should be obtained at the same time news releases are approved.*
25. When is it appropriate for CAP members to keep customer mission photos for themselves? *Never. Ever.*