

Overseas Units

Lesson Objective:

Lesson Objective: Comprehend the unique responsibilities and requirements associated with command at an overseas unit

Desired Learning Outcomes:

1. Summarize the similarities and differences between stateside and overseas units
2. Explain the AF Installation Commander's role in appointing the CAP Squadron Commander
3. Summarize the limitations which may result from the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)
4. Discuss special issues/restrictions set forth in directives pertaining to Overseas Units
5. Explain the special challenges in producing a viable & successful overseas cadet program

Lesson:

Overview:

The responsibilities and duties of a Civil Air Patrol squadron commander while immensely rewarding and fulfilling, can also be expansive, demanding, and even daunting at times. Now take those same responsibilities and add the complexities of performing those duties in a foreign country.

A commander will certainly face new challenges that are unique to the country that the unit is operating in. These unique challenges cannot be ignored; they must be faced head on and up front in order to successfully operate your CAP unit overseas. That is the focus of the lesson. In this lesson we will look at the similarities and differences between stateside and overseas units, the AF Installation Commander's role, limitations which may result from the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), and special issues, restrictions, and challenges in producing a viable & successful overseas cadet program overseas.

Stateside and Overseas Squadron Similarities and Differences:

Let's start off by looking at the similarities and differences you'll face as a commander in an overseas environment.

Similarities:

- All squadrons are chartered by National Headquarters.
- All must have a minimum of 15 members.
- All members must meet eligibility requirements for membership.
- All senior members must complete Level I training, including CPPT.
- Cadets over 18 must complete CPPT to progress in program.
- All members are expected to comply with the applicable regulations governing training, promotions, and awards.
- All unit commanders are expected to maintain a high standard, set a good example, and to comply with all regulations & higher headquarters directives.
- All members must complete the *Introduction to New Member Safety* as well as monthly safety briefings.

Differences:

- Stateside charter requests may be made by anyone, and through the appropriate wing to National Headquarters (NHQ). Overseas charter requests MUST come from the Air Force Installation Commander direct to NHQ/DP.
- Stateside squadron commanders are appointed by their group/wing commander; overseas squadron commanders are appointed by the AF Installation commander.
- Stateside squadron commanders may be any active senior member; overseas squadron commanders must be either active duty military or a U.S. government employee.

Differences between Overseas & Stateside Units

- Overseas charter requests MUST come from the Air Force _____ Commander direct to NHQ/DP.
- Squadron commanders are appointed by the AF _____ commander.
- Squadron Commanders must be either active duty military or U.S. gov't employee.
- Restricted by _____ of the host country.
- Must be a _____ squadron.
- Flights may be chartered stateside, but not _____.

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- Stateside Squadron commanders report to their group/wing commander and are limited only by regulations and the wing commander's consent as to what they may or may not do; overseas commanders report to NHQ/EX and by CAPR 35-4 may perform all the actions which any wing CC may, but are restricted to some extent by regulations, and the limits which may be imposed by the AF installation CC, as well as the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) of the host country where the squadron is located.
- Stateside squadrons may be senior, composite, or cadet; and may meet anywhere; overseas squadrons may only be cadet, and must meet on an AF installation.
- Flights may be chartered stateside, but not overseas, although they may be attached to an overseas squadron and meet on another U.S. military facility.

The USAF Installation Commander's Role in Appointment of a CAP Squadron Commander:

- A. Under AFI 10-2701, *Organization and Function of the Civil Air Patrol*, as well as CAPR 35-4, *Overseas Cadet Squadrons*, the Air Force Installation Commander is the responsible party for appointing either an Active Duty individual in the rank of Tech Sergeant (E-5) or above, or a U.S. Government employee.
- B. This AF instruction and CAP regulation thus allow for a chain of command authority for supervision of overseas cadet squadrons and the commander of same.
- C. CAPR 35-4 makes available a volunteer position: "Overseas Team Leader" to liaise with NHQ/EX and the CAP National Commander, however, overseas squadrons report to NHQ.

Limitations which may result from a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA):

- A. A SOFA is a written agreement between the governments of the United States and the foreign country where the U.S. has, or uses installations, and has personnel stationed. The SOFA will differ from one foreign nation to another, but in general regulates who will have jurisdiction for various actions by U.S. personnel—active duty military, civilian government employees, and all family dependents of both. The Agreement will also limit what those individuals may or may not do as CAP squadron personnel.
- B. Squadron activities will be conducted within the confines of the military installation. Exceptions are field trips, educational tours, or recreational activities off base. Squadrons may also participate in activities with the host country, surrounding countries, or another military installation, provided there is no conflict with other CAP regulations and/or SOFA requirements. When in doubt, the installation liaison officer will ensure there are no SOFA conflicts.

Issues/restrictions set forth in AFI 10- 2701, CAPR 35-4, SOFA, AF installation requirements, and assignments of AF personnel who may be members of the Overseas Squadron:

- A. There are many safety and political considerations pertaining to the wear of military style uniforms in an overseas environment that USAF personnel are keenly aware of. AF style uniforms may be restricted to the installation at the option of the installation commander. Any approved corporate style uniform or appropriate civilian clothing may be authorized in lieu of the AF style uniform. When the AF style uniform is appropriate for an off-base activity, prior written permission from the installation commander or his designated representative will be required to ensure no SOFA conflicts.
- B. Transmitting radio frequencies will not be authorized. However, there is no objection to simulator training if the equipment and an instructor are available.
- C. There will be no emergency services mission, although ES training is allowed within the confines of the applicable Status Of Forces Agreement.
- D. There will be no CAP authorized flying activities except for cadet orientation rides on military aircraft or U.S. military aero club flights.
- E. Military personnel are subject to duty, and/or TDY assignments of varying lengths, at the discretion of their immediate commanders, as well as the Installation commander which will affect the CAP Squadron operations. There will be Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or retirements as well. Therefore, it becomes essential to constantly recruit both active duty and civilians as CAP members to provide for these recurring changes in personnel.

Special challenges in producing a viable & successful overseas cadet program:

In addition to the challenges of working within the restrictions and limits set forth in AFI 10-2701, CAPR 35-4, and SOFA, the Overseas Squadron Commander must also meet the special challenges of:

- Meeting all the duty requirements of stateside squadron commanders.
- Acquiring, and maintaining, a meeting place on the Air Force Installation.
- Providing adequate training and equipment necessary to perform the mission.
- Accessing the right AF unit on the Installation to provide activities for cadets.
- Communicating & liaising with the Installation Commander (or Deputy), Base Liaison Officer, Teachers and School Administrators, the Overseas Team Leader, and NHQ personnel.
- Recruiting members in a limited environment.
- Utilizing the Overseas Team Leader to help.

Commanding an overseas squadron, while challenging at times, can be an immensely rewarding and fulfilling experience that you'll always remember.