

California Wing Public Affairs Plan



Prepared by:

CHRIS R. STOREY, Major, CAP
Director of Public Affairs, CAWG
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Approved by:

JON STOKES, Colonel, CAP
Commander, CAWG
14 January 2012

Reviewed by:

FRED MAHADOCON, Lieutenant Colonel, CAP
Director of Public Affairs, PACR
15 January 2012

CALIFORNIA WING
CIVIL AIR PATROL
P.O. Box 7688, VAN NUYS, CA 91409-7688
(818) 989-8100

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CIVIL AIR PATROL
California Wing
P.O. Box 7688, Van Nuys, CA 91409-7688
(818) 989-8100
(818) 989-8108 FAX



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2012 California Wing Public Affairs Plan

1.) INTRODUCTION

This Public Affairs Plan applies to the California Wing and is created in accordance with Civil Air Patrol Regulation CAPR 190-1. This plan supports the national Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs plan. This plan was prepared by Maj Chris Storey (CAWG Director of Public Affairs). This Public Affairs has been approved by Col Jon Stokes (CAWG Wing Commander), and reviewed by Lt Col Fred Mahadocon (PACR Director of Public Affairs).

2.) SITUATION ANALYSIS AND BACKGROUND

a. Wing Description and Composition

California Wing consists of a Wing Headquarters located in the Southern California area (Van Nuys) with seven geographically defined groups. Each group consists of a Group Headquarters with assigned subordinate units. There are 74 subordinate units below Wing HQ, including the seven Group Headquarters units. There are 3,591 members (1,978 Senior Members and 1,613 Cadets) in California Wing as of Jan 9 2012. .

b. California Wing Public Affairs Staff Description

The California Wing Public Affairs staff consists of:

- Director of Public Affairs – Maj. Chris Storey
- Bear Facts magazine Editor – Maj. Chris Storey
- Deputy Director of Public Affairs - vacant
- Group and Unit Public Affairs staff (as assigned and managed at group and unit levels)

The Director of Public Affairs position is assigned an In Addition to Other Duties (IAOD) status. The addition of a Deputy Director of Public Affairs is identified as a Public Affairs goal for the 2012 plan year.

c. Opportunities for Public and Media Exposure

California Wing members routinely participate in Emergency Services missions having the potential to publicly highlight the unique abilities of the California Wing and its members to provide valuable service to local, state, and federal governments within California. California Wing members have participated in numerous high-profile missions over the past few years including the search for Steve Fossett, providing extensive multi-day support to the California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA) during the 2007 California wildfires, and several missing aircraft searches that reflected well on the California Wing (including two SAVES during one mission in January 2010). California Wing was tasked with tsunami related Disaster Relief missions by CalEMA after Japans March 11 earthquake and tsunami.

Recurring, non-Emergency Services, events throughout the wing provide additional opportunities to create and enhance public awareness and understanding of the Civil Air Patrol through positive news media exposure. These recurring events are viewed as a way to build and strengthen brand recognition for the Civil Air Patrol in California Wing. Units and Groups hosting local events are encouraged to assign a Public Affairs Officer for the event and attempt to obtain local news media coverage. This list is not all-inclusive, but is a sample of the type of opportunities that exist to enhance public awareness and understanding of the Civil Air Patrol in California through an active Public Affairs program.

- **Annual wing-wide SAREX:** California Wing conducts an annual, multi-day Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX). The SAREX alternates between an Air Force evaluated SAREX and an Air Force Guided Training Exercise format. These wing-wide SAREX's have internal and external public affairs components.
- **Wreaths Across America:** This nationwide event is heavily promoted and endorsed by Civil Air Patrol National Headquarters. Wreaths Across America is well supported by California Wing, with members participating at several national cemeteries. California Wing member participation in Wreaths Across America typically generates local news media interest and is a good way to highlight the civic mindedness of California Wing members.
- **Wing Conference:** California Wing conducts an annual conference with its location rotating throughout the wing and hosted by different groups each year. This type of event has multiple opportunities to generate positive media exposure.
- **Cadet Encampment:** California Wing conducts an annual cadet encampment in late summer. Cadet encampment provides an opportunity to highlight not only the Civil Air Patrol cadet program, but the California Wing cadet program specifically. Cadet encampment also demonstrates how the Civil Air Patrol helps our youth members become better citizens and leaders.
- **CAWG Integrated Leadership Program schools:** California Wing Cadet Programs conducts cadet training schools every year throughout the wing. Schools such as Basic Cadet School, Airman Training School, Non-Commissioned Officer School, and the Cadet Officer Basic Course provide another opportunity to demonstrate how Civil Air Patrol helps our youth members become better citizens and leaders.
- **Senior Member Professional Development schools:** Squadron Leadership Schools and Corporate Learning Courses conducted throughout the wing have potential to highlight the professionalism and dedication of California Wings Senior Members.
- **Miscellaneous local events:** Members of the California Wing participate in numerous community events throughout the year. These events include color guard ceremonies for local civic functions, participation in community events, assisting at airport open houses, and supporting military sponsored air shows. These events are typically well-attended by local news media and the public. Units can use these events as a way to build awareness of the Civil Air Patrol in the community by being present at these events. Units can also use these events to develop relationships with the local news media by actively sharing Civil Air Patrols story with them.

d. Public Affairs Strengths

The California Wing has several public affairs strengths that should continue to be capitalized on during this plan year. This list is not all-inclusive, but is an example of the type of strengths that exists within the California Wing that can help build public awareness and understanding of the Civil Air Patrol through an active Public Affairs program.

- California Wing publishes Bear Facts magazine. Bear Facts is a traditional format magazine published by a contracted magazine printer/publisher and mailed three times a year to all California Wing members. The Wing PAO edits Bear Facts. Bear Facts is 100 percent funded through advertising fees, with the remaining funds returned to California Wing. The majority of articles in Bear Facts originate from subordinate unit PAO's and other members throughout the California Wing. Additional wing staff members also contribute articles within their area of expertise to educate readers about the specific duty position and its importance to Civil Air Patrol. Bear Facts also regularly contains articles written entirely by cadets that highlight specific events, activities, and experiences viewed through the unique eyes of a member of the cadet corps.
- Numerous newsworthy activities and events (including cadet and senior member awards and promotions) occur throughout the year and provide opportunities for unit Public Affairs Officers to inform the public about the Civil Air Patrol, our missions, and our members.
- The geographic diversity and size of the wing allows group and unit Public Affairs staff to reach a wide cross-section of California's news media to increase public exposure and awareness of the Civil Air Patrol and our missions.

e. Public Affairs Weaknesses

Several weaknesses have been identified that impact the overall effectiveness of the California Wing Public Affairs program. These weaknesses will be addressed wherever possible through identification and implementation of several long-term goals (described in section 3.b. of this plan). In speaking with other Wing level Public Affairs Officers, these same weaknesses exist in other wings to varying extents and are partially attributed to the Civil Air Patrol being an all-volunteer organization, with sometimes limited staffing available at smaller units.

- Public Affairs staff at wing, group, and subordinate units is widely decentralized, making it difficult for the California Wing Public Affairs staff to regularly interact in person. Telephone and e-mail are the primary methods of communication between wing and subordinate unit Public Affairs staff. This complicates the process of mentoring and supporting staff in subordinate units, or providing ongoing wing-wide training opportunities.
- The lack of a public affairs reporting requirement (eliminated in 2006 by National HQ Public Affairs) has made it difficult to monitor the progress and successes of the public affairs programs of subordinate units. This also makes identifying areas where additional support, assistance, or training is needed at subordinate units more difficult.
- Not all units have assigned Public Affairs Officers whose primary duty is Public Affairs. There are 75 units (total) in the California Wing. Of these, 59 units (79%) have an assigned Public Affairs Officer. Public Affairs duties are handled by the Unit Commander by default in the remaining units without an assigned Public Affairs Officer. This is seen as an interim

measure until the Unit Commander appoints a suitable candidate as the full-time Unit Public Affairs Officer.

	CAWG Units	PAO's Assigned	Percentage With Assigned PAO's
Wing HQ	1	1	100%
Group HQ's	7	6	86%
Subordinate Units	67	52	78%
Total Units	75	59	79%

f. Areas of Concern

Strengthening and motivating the Public Affairs staff of subordinate units remains an ongoing area of concern. This is an on-going challenge for the reasons explained in section 2.e. of this plan.

These areas of concern include:

- Finding ways to improve the flow of information, in both directions, between wing and subordinate unit Public Affairs staff. While email and phone calls are effective tools, they both have limitations. However, considering the geographic (and schedule) availability of subordinate unit Public Affairs staff, they remain the primary method of information sharing.
- Increasing the level of participation of subordinate unit Public Affairs staff remains one of the biggest challenges faced by the Wing Public Affairs Officer. Overall level of participation varies by unit with some units having a very active Public Affairs program while others have minimal programs.
- Provide and encourage subordinate unit Public Affairs staff to actively participate in Public Affairs related training and mentoring opportunities within Civil Air Patrol (with neighboring units Public Affairs Officers, and external to Civil Air Patrol (through membership/associations with Public Information, Journalism, and media relations professional trade associations). Additionally, Public Affairs Officers at subordinate units are strongly encouraged to attend the annual two-day Pacific Region Public Affairs Officer Academy. In its first two years of operation, 10 members from California Wing have attended. Having attended the inaugural PACR PAO Academy, I can say that it provides a good introduction to the essential duties of the unit Public Affairs Officer. I regularly recommend the PACR PAO Academy to the unit Public Affairs Officers, especially those recently appointed.

3.) PUBLIC AFFAIRS OBJECTIVES & GOALS

a. Objectives

The California Wing Public Affairs effort is primarily focused on overall program management and support to subordinate unit Public Affairs staff. The Public Affairs goals identified for the 2012 plan year to enhance the overall Public Affairs effort within California Wing meet one or more of the following Public Affairs objectives as defined by National headquarters Public Affairs.

- A. Support the Public Affairs, Marketing Plan, Strategies, Goals, and initiatives established by Civil Air Patrol National and Regional Headquarters.
- B. Increase public awareness and understanding of the Civil Air Patrol, its missions, and the activities of California Wing units and members.
- C. Support subordinate unit Public Affairs staff in implementing the Public Affairs, Marketing Plan, Strategies, Goals, and initiatives established by Civil Air Patrol National and Regional Headquarters within their units.
- D. Promote cooperation between, and increase awareness of the Civil Air Patrol and other allied aviation organizations, local military, aviation related industry, and civic groups within California.
- E. Provide, encourage, and coordinate increased training opportunities in the Professional Development Public Affairs specialty track and in the Public Information Officer Emergency Services rating for interested members.

b. Goals

California Wing Public Affairs has identified five major (long-term) goals and two minor (short-term) goals for the 2012 PA plan year. These goals are outlined in Appendix A of this plan.

4.) PLAN MAINTENANCE

This plan will be reviewed and updated during the first quarter of each year. Current Public Affairs and Marketing plans and goals established by Region and National Headquarters Public Affairs will be considered during annual plan review.



JON STOKES, Colonel, CAP
Commander, CAWG

Plan Distribution

CAWG Wing Commander
CAWG Public Affairs staff

CALIFORNIA WING MAJOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS GOALS

MAJOR GOAL #1 - California Wing will publish a printed magazine (Bear Facts)

Reason: Bear Facts magazine is the primary means by which the California Wing highlights, documents, and shares the success stories of the California Wing and its members. Bear Facts magazine is a valuable tool to foster esprit de corps within the California Wing and increase member awareness of activities and events in other parts of the wing.

Evaluation/ Measure of Success: Three printed issues per year under the existing contract.

Meets and Supports California Wing Public Affairs Objectives: A, B, D

MAJOR GOAL #2 – Reinstate the NEWS page of the California Wing website

Reason: The NEWS page of the California Wing website (www.cawg.cap.gov) was taken down due to a lack of unit PAO submissions. California Wing units and members regularly serve their communities through their ongoing participating in Emergency Services related activities (i.e., Search and Rescue missions, Disaster Relief, and providing support to state and local governments), supporting local community events, and by progressing in grade and their own professional development. All of these activities are newsworthy in and of themselves, and deserve to be publicized throughout the California Wing as a means to:

- A.) Enhance esprit de corps throughout the California Wing by publicly sharing newsworthy accomplishments of individual units and members.
- B.) Increase public awareness and understanding of the Civil Air Patrol and its missions in the local community with external audiences (members of the public, prospective members, and local news media).
- C.) Serve as a historical record of newsworthy activities and events occurring in the California Wing.

Evaluation/Measure of Success: Increased news content (news releases, articles, and photos) posted to the CAWG website over the one-year period covered by this plan. Actual number of news releases is dependent on the number of submissions received from subordinate units PAOs and cannot be assigned beforehand.

Meets and Supports California Wing Public Affairs Objectives: A, B, D

MAJOR GOAL #3 - Identify and appoint a Deputy Director of Public Affairs

Reason: Due to the geographic diversity of the California Wing, additional Wing Public Affairs staff assistance is necessary to properly manage and strengthen the California Wing Public Affairs program. This goal will be given priority for the first half of 2012.

Evaluation/Measure of Success: Appointment of a Deputy Director of Public Affairs.

Meets and Supports California Wing Public Affairs Objectives: A, C, E

MAJOR GOAL #4 – Evaluate the use of Facebook as a Public Affairs tool for the California Wing

Reason: Social Media in general and Facebook in particular, is on the rise as a successful tool to promote organizations, increase brand and image identity, and increase public understanding and awareness of organizations. The use of Facebook within Civil Air Patrol is increasing. California Wing Public Affairs recognizes the value of Social Media (Facebook) as a viable Public Affairs tool to reach out to current members, their friends and families, and to prospective members, and the community. However, full embracement of Social Media (Facebook) at the Wing level as an official California Wing Facebook presence needs to be done in a controlled and monitored manner to ensure that:

- A.) The use of Social Media (Facebook) conforms to guidelines and standards adopted by the Civil Air Patrol (CAP National Social Media guidelines) and the U.S. Air Force guidelines on Social Media.
- B.) The use of Social Media (Facebook) within the California Wing provides value to the California Wing and its members by providing a means to rapidly disseminate information about, and our “success stories,” to current members.
- C.) The use of Social Media (Facebook) within the California Wing enhances public awareness and understanding of the Civil Air patrol, and its activities and missions.
- D.) Prevent inappropriate use of Social Media (Facebook) that carries a risk of damaging the image and reputation of the Civil Air Patrol, its members, and the U.S. Air Force.

Evaluation/Measure of Success:

- A.) Identification and creation of a single official Facebook presence for the California Wing. This may be complicated as an “official” California Wing identity has already been created by an individual California Wing member operating outside of the Public Affairs directorate.
- B.) Creation/dissemination of a Social Media policy derived from National Public Affairs guidelines on Social Media use and identification of best practices to ensure any California Wing Facebook presence does not become a liability or bring discredit to California Wing, The Civil Air Patrol, or its members.

Meets and Supports California Wing Public Affairs Objectives: A, B, C, D

MAJOR GOAL# 5 – Assist groups with identification and training of Public Information Officers

Reason: In a March 2008 letter to all Wing Commanders, the National Commander addressed the importance of having only qualified spokespersons speaking on behalf of the Civil Air Patrol during operational missions. The Steve Fossett search demonstrated the importance of having qualified Public Information Officers during operational missions. The majority of Public Information Officers in the California Wing hold this emergency services rating by way of certification as an Incident Commander. A cadre of trained, qualified, and active PIO’s will allow Incident Commander to remain focused on overall incident management, while allowing the qualified and trained Public Information Officers to represent the Civil Air Patrol to the local media as required by Civil Air Patrol Emergency Services regulations (CAPR 60-3). Having a cadre of trained and qualified Public Information Officers will help enhance the credibility of the Civil Air Patrol with the news media, and improve our relationship with the agencies we routinely work with during emergency services operations.

Evaluation/Measure of Success: Fifty percent of Groups in the California Wing will have at least one qualified Public Information Officer (PIO) by the end of this plan year. The PIO's for each Group may be from any unit in each of California Wings seven groups.

Meets and Supports California Wing Public Affairs Objectives: A, B, C, D, E

CALIFORNIA WING MINOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS GOALS

MINOR GOAL# 1 – Publish a roster of Emergency Services rated Public Information Officers (PIOs)

Reason: Civil Air Patrol Regulations CAPR 190-1 and 60-3 require assignment of a qualified Public Information Officer on all high-profile Emergency Services missions, or mission expecting to last more than 48 hours. An up-to-date roster of qualified Public Information Officers will help Incident Commanders identify and locate qualified Public Information Officers in a timely manner during high-profile Emergency Services missions. This roster will identify those members whose sole focus, and required training has focused primarily on Public Information vs. those members who hold a Public Information officer rating by way of holding an Incident Commander Emergency Services rating. This goal is an integral part of Major Goal #5 (Assist groups with identification and training of Public Information Officers).

Evaluation/Measure of Success: Publication of a Public Information Officer roster (available to California Wing Incident Commanders and Emergency Services command staff) current for 2012.

Meets and Supports California Wing Public Affairs Objectives: A, B, C, E

MINOR GOAL# 2 – Create/distribute an updated news media list for unit level Public Affairs and Public Information Officers.

Reason: Identification of local news media outlets (print and broadcast) is critical to ensure subordinate level unit Public Affairs Officers can target news media outlets at the local unit level, where the majority of Civil Air patrol's activities occur, to help increase public awareness and understanding of the Civil Air Patrol, its missions, and its members in those communities.

Evaluation/Measure of Success: Publication and dissemination of an updated media list of print and broadcast news media within California.

NOTE: This Minor Goal has been completed in mid-January with the distribution of a statewide media list.

Meets and Supports California Wing Public Affairs Objectives: B, C, D