

Your Staff: What They Do For You

Lesson Objective:

Lesson Objective: Comprehend the importance of your staff.

Desired Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify the different staff offices in your squadron.
2. Describe how the different staff officers can directly assist you.
3. Explain how you can best support your staff officers in doing their jobs.

Lesson:

Overview:

Your staff is invaluable to you. They can be your eyes, ears, and hands in successfully managing your unit. There is no substitute for a competent staff.

As commander, you must be familiar with what each staff member does. While you needn't be an expert about every staff job, you must know where to turn for specific information, and you must know what information you need to run the unit. The only way you can do this is to understand what your staff does for you.

By that same token, you must know how you can best support them in doing their jobs. When they are not effective, you as commander are not effective.

This lesson will familiarize you with the different staff positions in a composite squadron though it does not show you every staff position in detail. This lesson is designed to give you the information you need to find more detailed descriptions.

The lesson uses the descriptions of the staff positions to help you understand: what the staff does for you, and how you can best support them. This lesson will show you the importance of substantive interaction between you and your staff.

The following is a list of the basic composite squadron staff positions. These positions are not all inclusive: only the positions which are common to most composite squadrons are listed. Others can be found in **CAP Regulation 20-1, *Organization of Civil Air Patrol***.

Composite Squadron Staff

Commander	Aerospace Education Officer
Deputy Commander for Seniors	Professional Development Officer
Deputy Commander for Cadets	Logistics Officer
Operations Officer	Leadership Officer
Safety Officer	Activities Officer
Administrative Officer	Special Staff Officers
Public Affairs Officer	
Finance Officer	
Chaplain	
Communications Officer	

- A. **Deputy Commander for Seniors:** Your right hand when it comes to administering the senior side of the squadron. This officer monitors all senior programs and assists you in the administration and evaluation of operational and senior member training activities.
- B. **Deputy Commander for Cadets:** Directs and evaluates the implementation of the Cadet Program for the squadron. Supervises the senior members who work directly in the Cadet Program.
- C. **Operations Officer:** Manages and directs all operations (search and rescue, disaster relief, and counter drug, if applicable) activities. Coordinates operations activities with other staff agencies and interested parties at your direction. Develops, evaluates and ensures success of all operations policies and procedures necessary to affect the success and effectiveness of squadron operational activities IAW CAP directives.

May have multiple subordinate staff positions assigned: Current Operations Officer, Standardization/Evaluation Officer, Emergency Services Officer, Search and Rescue Officer, Disaster Preparedness Officer, and Operations Training Officer. Extra positions and assistants are assigned at your discretion.

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- D. **Safety Officer:** Assists and advises the commander in all aspects of the CAP safety program and develops and administers the local program. Directs safety inspections and investigations within the unit. Manages the unit's safety awareness program.
- E. **Administrative Officer:** Implements, manages, and directs all squadron administrative services activities. Ensures administrative procedures are followed by all staff. Prepares administrative authorizations, maintains the administrative control log, and CAP forms. Sometimes doubles as the squadron personnel officer in smaller squadrons.
- F. **Public Affairs Officer:** This officer plans, implements and evaluates your public relations program. Can sometimes double as the Recruiting Officer. Publishes the unit newsletter, coordinates publicity for squadron activities and awards presentations.
- G. **Finance Officer:** Supports and advises the unit commander and finance committee in carrying out their fiscal responsibilities; insures fiscal forms, reports and records are properly and timely accomplished; reviews Wing reports for accuracy and initiates correction where required; and, keeps the unit commander and finance committee informed on the financial status of the unit.
- H. **Chaplain:** The chaplain advises the commander and staff on all matters of religion, morals, and the well-being of personnel under their command. Conducts the CAP Character Development Program. Provides counseling & encouragement at squadron and Emergency Services activities. The chaplain can be especially useful when acting as a mediator for working out personality conflicts and disciplinary problems - cadets in particular. They perform professional functions as necessary, for example, religious services, liturgies, pastoral counseling, etc.
- I. **Communications Officer:** Manages and directs all communications activities within the squadron. Establishes requirements and tracks acquisition and disposition of all communications equipment, in coordination with the logistics officer. Establishes the unit's communications training program, controls all other aspects of the communications program IAW CAP directives.
- J. **Aerospace Education Officer:** In composite squadrons, two AEOs are authorized, one for seniors and the other for cadets. In these capacities the AEOs monitor all aspects of the AE program including testing. They also prepare and execute the squadron external aerospace education program designed to inform the general public.
- K. **Professional Development Officer:** This officer manages and directs the professional development program for your members. Maintains the Unit Training Records and makes members aware of training activities throughout CAP. Ensures a timely orientation and initial training of new members. Works with staff officers to ensure timely progress of their professional development.

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L. **Logistics Officer:** The logistics officer manages and directs the logistics program to include the areas of supply, transportation, maintenance, and installation engineering. Is responsible for real property management IAW CAP directives.

You may assign separate supply, transportation, and maintenance officers to work with logistics. Consult CAPR 20-1 for a more complete description of these individual positions.

M. **Leadership Officer:** Responsible for leadership laboratory and physical fitness training of cadets to include: proper wear of the uniform, customs and courtesies, leadership techniques & activities, physical fitness, and squadron drill team.

N. **Activities Officer:** Plans and conducts interesting and challenging activities for CAP cadets, to include but not limited to: field trips, participating in emergency services exercises, sports competitions, social functions, community betterment projects, and aerospace education activities (in coordination with aerospace education officer).

In addition, the commander has the option to assign special staff officers who perform certain tasks as needed. Special staff officers for a composite squadron include positions for *personnel, recruiting, legal, finance, medical, testing, character development and historian*. Detailed descriptions for these positions are included in CAPR 20-1. The commander may assign these officers as required.

Most squadrons do not have enough members to fill every position in a unit; special positions, such as medical, legal, - and unfortunately - chaplain are particularly hard to fill. Follow the guidelines in CAP directives and use your best judgment to fill the positions which are most important to your unit. Many times it is necessary to piggy back positions in order to cover needed areas.

For instance, squadron commanders may sometimes combine the positions of operations and emergency services, administration and personnel, recruiting and public affairs, or leadership officer and testing, etc. Some positions that may not be combined under any circumstances such as squadron commander and testing officer, as specified in CAPR 50-4. Use your best judgment combined with the advice from your boss, wing staff, and your fellow commanders to determine the mix best suited for your unit.

List three different special staff officers that the commander can assign as appropriate.

- _____
- _____
- _____

How Your Staff Helps You:

Your staff assists you in performing the missions of Civil Air Patrol. You use their expertise in their assigned areas to carry out the business of the squadron on a day to day basis. You must rely on them because as you learned in the delegating authority segment you can't do everything yourself. They really are your eyes, ears, and hands.

- A. Because these people are your experts, you must impress upon them both your need of their services and your high expectations of conduct and professional knowledge. While CAP is a volunteer job, their acceptance of a staff position indicates a willingness to provide extra, needed services to you and the squadron. It is up to you to lead them in accomplishing mission objectives.
- B. Remember that staff member's basic job descriptions are in CAPR 20-1. These job descriptions should be the foundation for the expectations you hold for them and what they are responsible for.
- C. Staff members in particular are valuable in tackling both special and ongoing projects. CAP directives, for instance, mandate several committees which the squadron must have in order to function effectively. Membership boards, for instance, require the services of a personnel officer. The finance committee of course requires the finance officer. Promotion boards require selected staff officers to be members, etc.
- D. An example of a special project would be to assign your logistics officer to work with the state director in obtaining excess property and supplies from Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office (DRMO). Another would be assigning an Aerospace Education Officer as the project officer for a wing-wide cadet aerospace project competition (popular in many wings).

The point is to use your staff to help make the squadron not only viable, but vibrant. They can trouble shoot problems and serve as a sounding board.

How You Can Support Your Staff:

There are several ways to support your staff to ensure you get the best quality work, and further, promote an efficient and enjoyable atmosphere.

- A. First, treat them as professionals. Treat them just as you would want to be treated if you were working for someone else. Just because your staff isn't paid for CAP staff work - in fact they must pay for membership - it doesn't mean you or they deserve a less professional working atmosphere. In some ways, this is even more important for volunteers.

- B. Help your staff grow professionally. Embrace the Professional Development Program, and help your Professional Development Officer make it work. When you treat training as a second priority, you reduce your readiness to perform the missions. Look at it this way: Would you rather fly with a pilot who flies 20 hours per year or 120 hours per year? You want the pilot with the most experience; training provides experience.
- C. By that same token, training programs must be applied evenly. You can have a stellar flight program, but if the Operations and Finance officers aren't fully trained in how to recover all the reimbursable funds, the flight program may suffer because you won't have the funds to support it.
- D. Give your staff the information from the top they need to do their jobs and, they will feel like they have more of a handle on the situation.
- E. Allow them to interact directly with staff members from other units and with group and wing headquarters (as practicable). Cross-talk is one of the most valuable tools for people to learn and share.
- F. Practice participative management. Involve your staff actively in the decision making process. It makes them feel needed, and it shows your trust and respect for them and their judgment. Finally, it ensures that you as commander make informed decisions. In short, utilize them.
- G. Most importantly, as we mentioned in "The Committed Volunteer" segment, remember that your staff officers have professional and family obligations. Respect that and make allowances for job and family.

How You Can Support Your Staff

- Treat them as _____.
- Give them _____ to grow professionally.
- Apply training programs evenly.
- Practice _____ management.
- Encourage _____.
- Remember _____ and _____.

For more information concerning CAP job descriptions and chains of command, refer to **CAP Regulation 20-1, *Organization of Civil Air Patrol***.