

NORTHEAST REGION

Civil Air Patrol



Public Affairs Plan 2015

Revised June 1, 2015

Citizens Serving Communities

PUBLIC AFFAIRS MISSION

“The mission of the Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs (PA) program is to inform internal and external audiences of Civil Air Patrol’s national importance, safeguard the image and assets of the corporation, and strengthen relations with key audiences and customers, which enables the organization to grow.” (CAP Regulation 190-1)

I. Introduction

This annual plan, required to be prepared annually by CAPR 190-1, represents the plans of Northeast Region (NER) for its Public Affairs Program, including regular marketing communications, mission communications, and crisis communications. It was prepared by Capt. Robert Stronach, Director of Public Affairs, and Col. Daniel Leclair, Region Commander, in consultation with other staff officers. The plan was updated in June 2015 by the new Director of Public Affairs, Capt. Jennifer Lichlyter.

II. Situation Analysis

The Northeast Region of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) encompasses the nine states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont. The region is diverse geographically ranging from major metropolitan areas to some of the most rural, low population counties in the United States; and from mountainous areas such as the Catskills with many open waterways to the Atlantic Ocean and rivers up through Canada. In fact, many areas of the NER border Canada. Many wings of the NER are also bounded by the Atlantic Ocean. Several wings were involved in sub-chasing and rescue operations during WWII.

The region’s nine wings consist of 8,150 members (3,895 cadets and 4,255 seniors). Approximately 79% of the units have a PAO assigned, not many of the PAOs are PIO qualified (10 to be specific). The region headquarters organization based out of Augusta, ME, is responsible for program management in the wings and coordination among the wings and units.

- **Strengths:** The region has a diverse, experienced staff that is committed to the highest ideals of volunteer service. The staff makes excellent use of technology to promote collaboration at a distance, such as the internet and teleconferencing. The region is an acknowledged leader in all of its missions and is serving the local communities and the nation. The Public Affairs has been stable for several years now.
- **Weaknesses:** The staff is decentralized, with members in every wing of the region, making it rare that staff members can meet and interact with each other in person using mostly conference calls and emails as the main method of communication the lone exception to this is the annual region conference. This also complicates the process of mentoring and supporting staff in subordinate units. The wings need to work towards certifying more Public Information Officers (PIOs) through their E/S programs.
- **Areas for Improvement:** Areas for improvement include increasing the effective members of the wings, attendance at routine wing PAO conference calls, furthering interoperability within the region and inter region communication. The region PAO needs to focus on the recruitment, training and retention on highly motivated members to serve as PAO’s and PIO’s. The website

has been updated to a more “modern state” which has enabled the region to better communicate information with members and the general public alike.

• **Opportunities:** CAP in the region is very much involved in Emergency Services and Homeland Security and has been involved in many missions in the last year that reflected well on the organization. The region has made strides in putting mutual support, interoperability and joint training into effect. In fact, the region continues to hold Joint Wing TRAEXs. Region wings continue to work with local and state agencies as well as the various National Guard units within their borders.

The wings within the Northeast Region have participated in many missions and performed many tasks including but not limited to Operation Fertile Keynote, the Long Island Sound Patrol, Photo Recon, Fire Patrol and Operation Pictometry.

• **Threats:** CAP units in the region vary in their health from active dynamic teams to small units that struggle to survive. The need for further training and professional development is constant. Many local unit PAO’s are relatively new members who are inexperienced at the functions of the program, this seems to be a familiar theme in other wings across the nation.

• **Major Events:** Each year the region conducts a Region Conference, Region Staff College, Chaplain Service Staff College and numerous training opportunities such as the Region wide TRAEX/COMEX and inter Region Exercises. In 2015 the region is planning a Search and Rescue Competition (SARCOMP) for the first time since 2009. In addition each wing also conducts many of these activities in addition to Emergency Services training/operations and Flight Encampments, SAR Academies and leadership and E/S Bivouacs for seniors and cadets alike.

III. Regional Goals

Northeast Region has established the following goals for 2015:

- A. Good management and accountability of funding and resources
- B. Coordination of training to ensure interoperability
- C. Identify eligible PAOs who could be groomed to assume greater responsibilities including wing and region PAO duties. Seek out members in the media business
- D. Retention and the professional development of members
- E. Compliance with CAP regulations, directives, and requirements of higher headquarters
- F. Routine conference calls with each director and their wing equivalents
- G. Publish **NINER** magazine at least once if not twice a year in hard copy format
- H. Hold region organized PAO/PIO Workshops

IV. Public Affairs Objectives

Northeast Region has established the following PA Objectives for 2015:

- A. Support the PA/Marketing Plan, Strategies and Goals of CAP National Headquarters
- B. Recruit more talented members to the PAO ranks from media and like hind business/industry
- C. Support and mentor the PAOs of the region, especially new PAO/PIOs

- D. Increase public awareness of CAP, its local, state, and national missions and its contributions to our nation
- E. Promote cooperation between CAP and other aviation organizations, the military, business, industry, and civic groups within the territory of the region
- F. Conduct more Wing-Wide PAO Workshops
- G. Increase conference call meetings with subordinate unit PAOs
- H. Foster better communication with the wings and the NER PA office

V. Public Affairs Goals and Strategies

The NER Public Affairs effort rests primarily in the role of program management and support. Most external media and public contacts in CAP occur at the wing and local level, NER's effort is one of monitoring implementation of the program in subordinate units, and providing Public Affairs services that support the wings and the region headquarters.

NER has set the following goals for its Public Affairs Program. Each goal is described, the measures of success are provided and each goal lists which objective it supports.

As part of his routine reporting the Region PAO will summarize these measures and report to the Region Commander and the Wing Commanders/PAO's on progress and successes/failures to date.

GOAL # 1 Routinely Publish a News Magazine – NINER

Description: The region Public Affairs staff under the guidance of Captain Bob Stronach (Editor) will produce a professional news magazine telling about CAP success stories and role models across the region and previewing upcoming activities, communication of significant missions, esprit de corps, and professional development.

The news magazine will be posted on the region website where it can be viewed by both CAP and non-CAP members. The magazine was published for the first time in 2010 and the PA staff has continued to produce this publication on a routine basis ever since and **NINER** has won several Balsam Awards over the years. It will primarily be an internal communications and retention tool however it will be available for distribution to community partners, prospective members, and other interested parties outside of CAP.

Measure of Success: A Newsletter is produced and distributed electronically via the web.
Supports PA Objectives A, B, C, D, E

GOAL # 2 Insure that every wing has an active, engaged and trained Wing Public Affairs Officer.

Description: The success of the CAP Public Affairs program rests with each wing having an active and Engaged PAO.

NER/PA will work with the Wing Commanders to identify candidates for this position and assist where desired by the wing in finding a Wing PAO for each NER Wing, currently there is one opening.

NER/PA will work with the wing PAOs in order to develop training goals for their programs and that of their groups and squadrons; this will include the establishment of PAO Workshops and PIO classes.

Measure of Success: Each wing has an assigned PAO that is or will be enrolled in the PAO Specialty Track. Data comes from the monthly report issued by the Region IT Officer. The number of wing PAOs that attend these workshops and the wing conference will be one of the measurements.

Supports PA Objectives A, B, C, D, E, F

GOAL# 3 Insure that each wing has a cadre of trained and active Public Information Officers

Description: Having qualified members working this function can mean success or failure during a mission.

Measure of Success: An increase in the number of PIO's assigned to each wing. This data comes from WMIRS. NER Conducts a PIO Workshop within the region and provides support materials via www.ner.cap.gov. In 2009 the NER PAO Maj. James A. Ridley, Sr. chaired a national committee for the purposes of re-defining the MIO (now PIO) requirements which was adopted in subsequent years.

Supports PA Objectives A, B, C, D, E

GOAL# 4 Promote and create regular submissions to the CAP's Volunteer NOW News Online Service.

Description: While most news releases within the region will originate from the wing or local levels, appropriate NER news articles and other releases will be adapted and delivered to the Civil Air Patrol Volunteer Now publication via eservices submissions.

NER/PA will promote the distribution of news stories and releases to Volunteer Now and the NER News Magazine. This will be included in appropriate training and conference updates.

Measure of Success: NER/PA will develop a semi-annual spreadsheet that tracks the number of releases/stories published in the National and NER News. This will be reported to each Wing Commander, Wing PAO and the Region Leadership.

Supports PA Objectives A, B, C, D, E, F

GOAL# 5 Insure the NER Website is a valued source of information for CAP Members

Description: The region Public Affairs staff will collaborate as needed with the region

webmaster/IT Officer to ensure that the website's direct and subconscious messages for the general public all reflect positively on the unit and the organization.

Measure of Success: The website is regularly updated with current content (such as the NER News Magazine) and meets the needs of the region staff and commander.

Supports PA Objectives A, C, D

GOAL# 6 Promote the recognition of PAOs by wings and recognizes outstanding wing and unit PAOs in the region.

Description: The Region PAO has established a process to implement the PAO Recognition program as outlined in CAPR 190-1. The Region PAO will submit the name(s) of a Wing PAO who based upon their performance during the previous year, will be designated as the Region PAO of the Year. This award will be presented at the Region Conference that year. Since 2010 and with the support of NHQ, NER PAOs have sent submissions to the NHQ Balsem awards program and have won in various categories ever since.

The Region PAO will also promote the Balsem awards in the Region and make the maximum number of nominations allowed in 2015.

Measure of Success: Each wing submits a nomination for the Wing and Unit PAO of the Year Award. NER/PA promotes nominations for the Balsem Awards when they are viable.

Supports PA Objectives A, B

VIII. Annual Review

This plan will be reviewed each year in the month of January. This review will consist of a comprehensive review of the PA program as outlined in this plan. This review will go over successes, failures, areas for improvement and update goals/objectives for the next year. The review will serve as the annual report of the Region PAO. Wing Commanders and PAO's will be asked for input prior to implementation of the revised plan of action.

VII. Promulgation

This plan upon approval of the region commander will be communicated to every commander and PAO in the region via www.ner.cap.gov.

APPROVED:



DANIEL LECLAIR, COLONEL, CAP
NORTHEAST REGION COMMANDER

//Signed Jenniefer Lichlyter, Capt, CAP//

JENNIFER LICHLYTER, CAPTAIN, CAP
NORTHEAST REGION PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DISTRIBUTION: 1 Each (Electronic)

NER Wing Commanders
NER Staff NER Wing and Unit PAO's
CAP NHQ/PA
NATIONAL PAO

RECORD OF REVIEW:

Review Date	Commander's Initials	Public Affairs Initials
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