



Texas Wing – Civil Air Patrol

MEDIA RELEASE

Contact:

Capt. David McCollum, CAP
832-377-9255

For Immediate Release

CAP training exercise provides valuable experience

HOUSTON – Blue skies and breezy northerly winds greeted the volunteer members of the Texas Wing of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) who spent the weekend of Jan. 28-29 practicing their emergency services skills by participating in a state-wide training exercise.

Many of the more than 3,400 members of the Texas Wing honed their skills by participating in 84 air- and 18 ground-based missions. The missions required the use of skills such as aerial photography, direction finding, air and ground team coordination and the planning functions necessary to support those activities.

Overall command and control of the Area Command Exercise, or ACE, was at an Area Command Post located at David Wayne Hooks Memorial Airport in Spring, with Incident Command Posts located in Dallas, Denton, Odessa, San Antonio, Tyler, west Houston and Victoria.

“We were able to train our personnel on missions of the type that are typical when responding to natural disasters or to locate missing people or downed aircraft,” said CAP Major Risher Lewis, ACE commander. “This type of training is important so that our people have the same skill-sets as CAP members from around the country.”

If a hurricane hits the Gulf Coast, for example, CAP crews from outside of the affected area will be called upon to respond. Those crews need to be able to interface with local agencies and effectively function in the same manner as if they were at their home base. We have to be ready to respond quickly and competently when lives are on the line. Later this year, we will be participating in a large-scale event that will simulate a hurricane strike on the Texas coast. We’ll be working with federal, state and local emergency responders and CAP units from other states. That will provide us another opportunity to further hone our emergency response skills.”

During the last major storm-related incident to impact Texas, Hurricane Ike, CAP provided more than 18,700 man-hours, used 22 aircraft, 21 vans, 13 high-quality digital cameras, flew more than 350 missions and acquired more than 40,000 high-definition photographs to help local, state and federal agencies assess storm damage. We also provided assistance during last summer’s drought and subsequent grass fires.

Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with more than 61,000 members nationwide, operating a fleet of 550 aircraft. CAP, in its Air Force auxiliary role, performs 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and was credited by the AFRCC with saving 54 lives in fiscal year 2011. Its volunteers also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. The members play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to nearly 27,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet programs. CAP received the World Peace Prize in 2011 and has been performing missions for America for 70 years. CAP also participates in Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. Visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com or www.capvolunteernow.com for more information.