

Back to Basics

The basic information for any PAO is in CAPP 190-1, and this should be one of the first sources you use to help guide you. My wish for each PAO is that I can instill in you the excitement and enthusiasm that I received during my training from many sources that inspired me to be and do my best for CAP. I encourage each of you to review Chapter 1 of CAPP 190-1. This can be downloaded from National CAP publications and forms, and is an absolute must for any PAO to have their own copy.

As you see by the Mission Statement you have big shoes to fill. You cannot do this alone and will need the help of your squadron and/or group members to help get the word out to the public. Most squadrons will not have the personnel to fill the PAO team and you're going to be doing the entire task.

When you look at the functions of Public Affairs you will wonder what you should do first. One of the things you and all the squadron or group personnel need to be doing is making guest speaking appearances at schools and civic organizations to inform them of the missions of CAP. If your squadron does a holiday dinner make sure you are inviting VIP's from your community. This will be an excellent opportunity to review squadron or group activities for the year. This review can be power point presentation from the photos or a short program of squadron activities. This would also be an excellent opportunity to give out squadron awards.

Your next task should be meeting the local media in your area. This group will become your best source for you to get information out to the public. When writing articles for the local media remember that 190-1 chapter 10 gives you sample articles and how they should be formatted. By getting to know your local media they can be great source of information in helping you get the CAP story told. They will be more than happy to help you understand how to submit photos and articles. Make sure that when you are e-mailing articles that your photos are a separate attachment to the article. Never embed your photos in the articles. When writing your article never use abbreviations. Remember that you are writing to the general public and they do not know what our abbreviations mean. When writing ranks make sure to spell them out as media does not always know what the abbreviation means and can make them into anything. At the bottom of this newsletter I will include all the ranks for your convince. I always keep a copy of them in my PAO notebook.

Let's talk about your PAO notebook and what should be included. You should have a copy of 190-1, rank spelling and abbreviations, a

listing of all squadron or group personnel, media contact information and a copy of PAO specialty track either in hard copy or on CD. When you become a Mission Information Officer you will find all the information invaluable. I urge each of you if you are not in a specialty track that you get started and get your master rating. We need everyone to be energetic and enthusiastic about CAP and spreading the message of CAP.

All group PAO's have been given a task of putting together information on each squadron PAO with your contact information, media contact for each squadron and what training you have received. This information is required for the Wing Self Assessment for PAO and we never know when we will need this information for a mission.

There will be a breakout session at Wing Conference in April for all the PAO's. In this session we will be reviewing 190-1, your role in the squadron, group and/or wing, submitting articles to the media, Wings Over Texas and Volunteer and PAO specialty track. At that time I am hoping to announce training dates for PAO and Mission IO.

RANK ABBREVIATIONS

Cadet Members

C/AB - Cadet/Airman Basic
C/Amn - Cadet/Airman
C/A1C - Cadet/Airman First Class
C/SrA - Cadet/Senior Airman
C/SSgt - Cadet/Staff Sergeant
C/TSgt - Cadet/Technical Sergeant
C/MSgt - Cadet/Master Sergeant
C/SMSgt - Cadet/Senior Master Sergeant
C/CMSgt - Cadet/Chief Master Sergeant
C/2Lt - Cadet/2nd Lieutenant
C/1Lt - Cadet/1st Lieutenant
C/Capt - Cadet/Captain
C/Maj - Cadet/Major
C/LtCol - Cadet/Lieutenant Colonel
C/Col - Cadet/Colonel

Senior Members

SM - Senior Member
FO - Flight Officer
TFO - Technical Flight Officer
SFO - Senior Flight Officer
2Lt - 2nd Lieutenant
1Lt - 1st Lieutenant
Capt - Captain
Maj - Major
LtCol - Lieutenant Colonel
Col - Colonel
Brig Gen - Brigadier General