



**HEADQUARTERS, CIVIL AIR PATROL
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY
ELMENDORF AFB, Anchorage, Alaska**



14 JULY 2021

Wing Recruiting & Retention Plan
FY2022

Introduction

This plan represents the plans of the Alaska Wing and was prepared by Lt Col Bryan Emerson, Wing Director of Recruiting & Retention.

Overview

The Alaska Wing of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is geographically the largest Wing in CAP and covers a wide variety of terrain, facilities and weather presenting unique challenges. There are few roads, railways or population centers, and availability of fuel, airports and maintenance is extremely low. The winter, in particular, is challenging with icing conditions, the highest mountains in the USA and long distances between landing points. Because of these conditions, it is necessary to maintain a fleet of unique airplanes operating on wheels, skis and floats as the need dictates. Obviously this also requires special training and facilities for the aircrew and mechanics. For example, maintenance is restricted to only a couple of locations in the State, with much of the flying task being maintenance flights from the units and back.

The Wing had fifteen squadrons as of December 2020, (down one from the previous year), mostly Composite squadrons with a mix of Seniors (504 to 479, +5.2%) and Cadets (213 to 258, -17%) members. None of these units have a designated Recruiting & Retention officer.

The four step planning process

1) Determine R&R strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

• **Strengths:** The Wing enjoys much popular support from its military-friendly and can-do/hardworking culture. This includes financial support in the form of Wing Tips (Denison Publishing) advertisers, which we are in the process of converting to direct donors through our new, digital monthly magazine (see: https://issuu.com/capakwg/docs/202106_civil_air_patrol_magazine_alaska_wing_single?r=sYjMOTI5MTc0MzI). Alaskans say that “there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing.”

• **Weaknesses:** The Wing headquarters organization is based on Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson and one of its biggest challenges is to maintain good communications. Telephone communications are incomplete, with different companies supplying service to various locations and villages such that one needs several cell phones at one time if it is

necessary to make calls from them. Internet service, also provided by varying service providers, is inconsistent in reliability.

The staff is decentralized, using mostly emails as the main method of communication, the exceptions to this is the annual Wing conference, typically the first full weekend of October and, to a much lesser extent, ReadyOp, which is mainly used by emergency services operators. This complicates the process of mentoring and supporting staff in subordinate units. Many local units either have no dedicated or ineffectual Recruiting & Retention initiatives.

CAP units in the wing vary from active, dynamic squadrons to small flights that struggle to survive. The need for further training and professional development is constant. Since the Wing has no history of Recruiting & Retention Officers, potential recruits in this area are inexperienced at and not trained in the functions of the program, which is a detriment to CAP in general. This, in turn, discourages members from joining this potentially exciting and extremely relevant duty position.

Needs for improvement at the Unit level include training and recruiting motivated Recruiting & Retention Officers and assistants. At the Wing level, improvements could be made in maintaining communication between Wing and Squadrons to provide incentive for units to maintain a relevant flow of information. Region improvement would be helpful in the form of Recruiting & Retention seminars and workshops to provide the Recruiting & Retention staff with the latest and most advanced training to ensure effectiveness in job performance, especially if delivered online.

• **Opportunities:** AKWG is very involved in Emergency Services and has been active in many missions in the last year that reflected well on the organization, especially with many new missions involving the US Coast Guard. The Wing carries out SAREX and photography exercises annually. Press releases issued by partner organizations and citing CAP's involvement are used to promote CAP during and after these, and actual SAR missions, as they occur. There are many positive events associated with the Civil Air Patrol that are of interest to CAP members as well as the community at large. To successfully relay information concerning those events helps our organization in terms of recruitment and public relations.

• **Threats:** The elimination of State funding, the limited substitution of CAP with drones by our partner organizations, a depressed economy and the Covid pandemic have hindered our responsiveness, lessened our importance and depressed cadet membership respectively over the past year. These trends are expected to continue for the foreseeable future but placing more emphasis on increasing volunteer hours may partially ameliorate them.

Quantitative Diversity summary among wing members

SR / Cadet	Male	Female	DNK/No Answer	AIOAN	BOAA	HLOS	NHOOPI	DNK/No Answer
Last year								
Current								

Change #								
Change %								

2) Establish objectives designed to fulfill needs and opportunities identified in Step 1.

The Recruiting & Retention Operating Plan shall define goals to grow membership in CAP by highlighting its local, state, and national missions and its contributions to our nation; to promote cooperation between CAP and other aviation organizations, the military, business, industry, and civic groups within the territory of the region; and to comply with CAP regulations, directives, and requirements of National Headquarters and the Pacific Region.

Recruiting & Retention Objectives for FY2022:

1. Increase the awareness of the benefits of CAP membership among potential cadets residing in the Wing; and
2. Increase the retention of current members.

3) Establish goals and action strategies for each objective.

Goal 1: Increase CAP’s awareness among potential new cadet members in Alaska.
Objective: Increase CAP cadet membership by ten percent in FY 2022.
Strategy: Educate potential cadets about what CAP is and does and how CAP will benefit them.
Tactic: Develop and manage Google AdWords search, display and remarketing campaigns and enhance Wing website SEO, targeting 12-18 year olds residing in Alaska. See attached proposed keyword spreadsheet. Also, the Cadet Advisory Council (CAC), headed by C/1 st Lt Anderson, will support this goal by revamping the cadet recruitment pamphlet.
Measure of Success: An increase in cadet membership by ten percent between October 1, 2021 and September 30, 2022.

Goal 2: Increase retention of current members.
Objective: Ensure that every senior and cadet receives at least one personalized, verbal, written or visual recognition per year from some member of his or her chain of command noting at least one positive compliment or accomplishment.
Strategy: The Wing Commander will use telephone, email and the monthly digital magazine to convey at least one positive message to and about each member. This may be as simple as wishing a member a happy birthday or holiday and thanking him or her for his or her service or featuring him or her in a story with photos in the digital magazine.
Tactic: The Commander may delegate this responsibility to Command Staff, Wing Staff and/or Unit Commanders on a member-by-member basis. The responsible party shall keep a log of such outreach and shall forward a copy of said log (such as in WORD or Excel) to the Director of Recruiting & Retention no later than September 15 of each FY. The Director will ensure that every member was appropri-

ately recognized. With a membership of slightly over 700, this effort will reach an average of two members per day throughout the year, not an onerous task. Also, the CAC will develop and upload helpful videos made by cadets to the AKWG YouTube channel and make YouTube ads and will write a Recruiting and Retention tactics article to help squadrons.

Measure of Success: This goal will be considered a success of the Wing's retention rate in FY2022 increases by ten percent from that of FY2021.

The Wing Director of Recruiting & Retention will increase the visibility of the wing, its members, and its events through an online presence with its monthly digital magazines and social media, specifically Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/AlaskaCAP>).

4) State the desired impact envisioned for each goal provided in Step 3.

Impact of Goal #1: An increase in CAP's cadet recruiting effectiveness.

Impact of Goal #2: An increase in the retention of current members.

The plan will be reviewed each year.

Evaluation of the previous year's goals, 2020: Not applicable until next year.

Distribution

Upon approval of the Commander, this plan will be communicated to every Squadron and Unit Commander in the wing, as well as to the Region Director of Recruiting & Retention.

APPROVED:

**Col Kevin McClure, CAP
Commander, Alaska Wing**

DISTRIBUTION: 1 Each (Electronic)

AKWG Unit Commanders

PCR Staff

NHQ/R&R

Record of Review:

Date :