

New Member Info

Welcome To The Civil Air Patrol

Introduction

The members of Bexar County Senior Squadron welcome you to the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). CAP can be tremendously rewarding and enjoyable for any person interested in search and rescue and education regardless of your background and experience. As a member of CAP you can become involved in any or all of the facets of search and rescue including Airborne Search, Ground Search, Administration, Support and Aerospace Education. The information contained in the following pages is a step-by-step description of how to get involved in the various activities CAP has to offer. We want this to be a positive, motivating and rewarding experience, and your active involvement is key to your satisfaction and our success.

The Bexar County Senior Squadron is an adult Emergency Services oriented squadron. Members must be at least 18 years of age to join.

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What is CAP

The Civil Air Patrol is a volunteer organization that is an official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. The mission of CAP as a whole is to voluntarily use its resources to:

- a) Provide emergency services,
- b) Encourage aerospace education of the general public,
- c) Motivate young men and women to ideals of leadership and service through education and training.

Membership

We suggest that you begin your CAP membership by attending a meeting or two before actually joining to learn more about the program and how you would like to be involved. When you are ready to sign up, obtain a CAP Membership Application (CAPF 12) and a fingerprint card. Fill out the application and take the fingerprint card to a local law enforcement agency to get your prints taken.

To join CAP, please provide the following items:

1. Your completed CAP Application form (CAPF 12)
2. Your completed fingerprint card
3. One check can be made out to "National HQ of CAP" to cover the annual National dues and the annual TX Wing Dues.
4. One check made out to "Bexar County Senior Squadron" to cover our annual squadron dues.

Please note that all expenditures for CAP are tax deductible.

The personnel officer will forward all of the paperwork to the National Headquarters of CAP, and you should expect to receive your membership card along with a packet of information within a month. You are not restricted from involvement in CAP before your membership card arrives. Instead this is an excellent time to complete many of the other requirements described below. You are also encouraged to come to any of our local functions of CAP to see how CAP works, meet people, and become involved. You will not be permitted in any CAP vehicle (air or ground) until you have a membership card and uniform.

Level One Training

There are four parts to Level One Training: CAP Orientation, Foundations, Cadet Protection, and Equal Opportunity. Level One should be completed as soon as you can get it scheduled since it is a prerequisite for almost everything that follows.

CAP Orientation

The goal of CAP Orientation is to introduce you to CAP's history, organization and programs. The course is about four hours long and consists of a videotape presentation and a facilitated discussion. The videotape will inform you of all aspects of CAP. There is a test at the end to determine how effective the training was. This test will then be graded and any discrepancies will be corrected in an informal discussion with the testing officer. It really is that simple.

Cadet Protection

Being an organization that works directly with young individuals, their safety is our foremost concern. CAP has developed a 1 to 2 hour program designed to raise the awareness of issues associated with the safety and protection of the Cadets. The program consists of a pre-test, videotape and facilitated discussion. All senior members in CAP must complete this short program as part of the Level One training.

CAP Uniform

The CAP Golf Shirt is worn with your medium gray dress slacks and black shoes. This is the minimum required dress for flight activities.

After you have received your Membership Card and completed Level One Training the last remaining item before you begin is the acquisition of a CAP uniform. A CAP uniform must be worn by every person in any CAP vehicle (including aircraft), and should be worn while involved in any CAP activities. The most comfortable and functional uniform is the Golf Shirt. Other air crew members choose the green Air Force style nomex flight suit. Ground crew members typically purchase the Air Force style Battle Dress Uniform (BDU). They are available through the CAP Bookstore in Alabama or via other means. The CAP bookstore phone number to place credit card orders is 1-800-221-1264. Their URL is:

www.civilairpatrolstore.com

Another popular place to buy CAP items is a private store called The Hock Shop. They have several package deals that make uniform buying easier. Their URL is:

www.thehock.com

Grade Insignia and the Pilots Wings cannot be put on the uniform until you have achieved these positions, but it is easier to get them with the first order instead of having to place another order in the future.

You can download the CAP Uniform Manual ([CAPM 39-1](#)) from the National website index of regulations at www.cap.gov.

Grade (Rank)

After you have completed the Level One training, and have been a member of CAP for six months, you will be recommended for the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. If you are an instrument rated pilot, you may be upgraded to 1st Lieutenant, and if you are a Certified Flight Instructor you may be upgraded to Captain. Other professional accomplishments such as Doctor, Lawyer, Chaplin, Accountant etc. may also be rewarded with a higher initial rank. Grade in CAP has little direct effect on anything; however it is an indication of a person's level of involvement within the organization. You may become a Captain but have a 1st Lieutenant as a squadron commander.

After you have received your promotion to your new grade, you may affix the grade insignias on your uniform.

Emergency Services Training

The Emergency Services manual ([CAPR 60-3](#)) describes how CAP operates during Search and Rescue Missions, and contains most of the guidelines for this phase of CAP. The Emergency Services training involves reading these manuals then taking a 50-question open book test. (General Emergency Services parts 1 & 2)

The test is taken online at the CAP National website www.cap.gov You will be instructed by a member of the squadron regarding when and how to take this test.

After successful completion of this test, you can become a trainee in other mission related areas. As a trainee you are qualified to participate in any CAP activity while under the supervision and training of a qualified trainer. To complete your training and become a mission rated member, a few short courses will

be required, as well as participation in a few actual or simulated missions. After you have completed this training, the Group Emergency Services Officer will issue you an Emergency Services card (CAPF 101 or “101 card”) that indicates you are qualified in that specialty.

Some of the mission specialties which can be obtained are Scanner, Observer, Mission Pilot, Urban Direction Finding team member, Ground team member or leader, and Communications.

CAP training is provided by other volunteer members of your Group or Squadron with the assistance of standardized training materials provided by the National Headquarters. These volunteers are spending their own personal time training you because they are truly interested in the success of the CAP program. You can greatly enhance your own progress by using all of the resources available on the National Website under the [Emergency Services Curriculum Project](#) page.

As with anything in life, the more that you invest in yourself, the richer you will become. Take the time to review the study materials prior to each training session so you will be fully prepared for the lesson. Keep in mind that the lessons you learn may someday be used to save a life.

Aircraft Checkout

If you are a pilot, you may wish to fly the CAP aircraft or even become a CAP Mission or Cadet Orientation pilot. The Bexar County Senior Squadron has been entrusted with the care, maintenance, and crewing of an excellent Cessna. We are responsible to make sure the plane is mission ready and flown in any and all practice (SAREX) missions and actual (REDCAP) missions. To obtain a checkout in this aircraft, schedule an introductory flight with one of our designated CAP pilots. The CAP pilot will explain everything involved in flying and scheduling CAP aircraft as well as the paperwork you will be responsible to complete. (the Air Force requires paperwork).



Prior to your checkout you should read the [CAPR 60-1](#) which is the regulation that covers aircraft operation.

A pilot introduction package will be provided which includes all of the paperwork and instructions for completing what is referred to as a “Form 5” check ride.

When you feel that you are ready for a checkout, you will schedule a CAP Form 5 check ride with one of the CAP check pilots. Upon passing this check ride which is similar to a BFR you may fly any of the aircraft of that make and model within Texas Wing. Along with the above listed requirements, you must also have a current FAA medical certificate and a current flight review as required by the Federal Aviation Regulations prior to taking the check ride.

We take great pride in our aircraft, and thus we keep it in the best possible condition. This includes both the physical maintenance and the cleanliness or appearance. After each flight the aircraft is wiped down and cleaned by the pilot and flight crew. When the aircraft is not being used on missions, it is available for you to rent for proficiency and training purposes. Rental rates are extremely low for an aircraft of this type as well outfitted and maintained as it is. This can only be accomplished through the hard work of everyone involved. As a pilot, you will be expected to become involved in the care and cleaning of the aircraft.

Air Crew Training

Prior to beginning any aircrew training you should obtain a copy of the Aircrew Task Guide which is the textbook for all Air operations specialties. You can download this manual along with many other aircrew related materials from the [National Website](#).

Near the end of this manual you will find a document called a Specialty Qualifications Training Record (SQTR) which will tell you exactly what is required for each specialty.

Radio Operator's Training

CAP uses HF SSB and VHF FM radios to communicate between aircraft and ground personnel. The users of these radios must be licensed to do so. Obtaining a CAP Radio Operator's Permit is therefore a requirement for any person planning to become a Mission Pilot or Mission Observer, and helpful for Mission Scanners (to relieve the pilots workload). This training may be completed at any time, but is not a pre-requisite to becoming a mission scanner. There are three items needed to obtain a CAP Radio Operator's permit. You will need to read the CAP Communications Manual (CAPM 100-1, available by member [login only](#)), attend a communications course and take an open book test. Like many of the other tests you have taken to date, this only need be corrected to 100% with a qualified Communications officer. Once again, it's that simple.

Mission Scanner

Welcome to the airborne portion of CAP. As you read through the Air Crew task guide, you should have gotten an idea of what is involved in being a scanner. You may also have spoken with many of the members about your involvement as part of the flight crew. We have no need for mission pilots without the essential aircrew members. The pilot is simply there to put the aircraft in a position from which the scanner can be most effective. In reality, during a visual search, the Scanner is the most important member of the crew. If he or she cannot find the objective, the best pilot in the world will not be able to help because his job is to fly the plane, not look for the objective.

Our unit and the entire wing are in need for certified scanners. Flying opportunities are always there during the Air Force-funded SAREXs and "On Demand" training sorties, as well as any actual missions that arise. After you have been on a few sorties (flights) and have met the minimum training requirements, you will have completed everything you need to be a mission scanner. Refer to the SQTR for Scanner for all of the necessary qualifications.

You must become a qualified Scanner prior to moving up to any other flight crew position, even if you are already a pilot. There are two main reasons why this requirement is in place; first Mission Pilots and Observers must understand what the Scanner is there to do so they can provide the best possible support. Secondly, they will be the people that are tasked with training new Scanners.

Mission Pilot

To become a mission pilot, you must have at least 175 hours PIC. The first step in becoming a mission pilot is to get the necessary classroom training. You will also need to fly with a qualified mission pilot to learn about how searches are flown. The more time you have spent as a scanner, the less time you will need to fly in training as you will be more familiar with search operations. The mission pilot checkout will be with a CAP mission check pilot. Once you have successfully completed the mission pilot

checkout or Form 91 check ride, you are qualified to fly an aircraft on any CAP funded mission or training exercise. Refer to the SQTR for Mission Pilot for all of the necessary qualifications.

Mission Observer

The Mission Observer sits in the right seat of the aircraft and assists the pilot with navigation, communications and other mission related duties. While you do not need to be a pilot to become an Observer, prior pilot training is very helpful. This is a perfect position for new or student pilots as it allows them to become exposed to flight profiles that they would not typically be involved in without a more seasoned pilot on board.

After you have been on a few sorties (flights), met the minimum training requirements and mastered the GPS you will have completed everything you need to be a mission observer. Refer to the SQTR for Scanner for all of the necessary qualifications.

Cadet Orientation Pilot

The CAP cadets enjoy flying and look forward to any opportunity to do so. If you have at least 200 hours as pilot in command and have completed a COP checkout in the CAP aircraft you are eligible to become a cadet orientation pilot. These flights are funded by CAP and are a great boost to the interest and spirit of the cadets. Even if you are not interested in becoming an Emergency Services air crew member, you can be a very valuable member of this organization as a Cadet Orientation Pilot. You can really make a difference in a young cadet's life as you pass on your aviation knowledge.

Non-flying SAR Activities

Many other essential jobs exist in the mission effort. The search requires numerous trained and experienced personnel working on the ground to support the air search units. These include ground teams, communicators, briefers, operations and flight release officers, flight line personnel, etc. We must have a pool of trained members to support our missions.

Sometimes, aircraft crash in our state when weather conditions prohibit airplanes from being used in the search. We have to conduct the search via ground vehicles with trained ground team members skilled in navigation and map reading, interrogation of locals and witnesses, locating ELT signals, rugged terrain travel, and extrication of victims. This activity can be the most fun, and an amazing number of "finds" and "saves" are by these ground teams. The members of the CAP ground teams are always interested in new persons and are eager to train anyone who has the interest and dedication to become involved.

Ground team training materials can be found at the [National Web Site](#).

As with the air crew positions, refer to the SQTR at the end of the manual for specific training requirements. Because there are many different levels of ground team training, covering each specialty in this introduction would be prohibitive.

CAP ACRONYMS

As you sit in on your first few CAP meetings you will hear many acronyms that will seem confusing to say the least. DO NOT PANIC! We all were in the same boat at the beginning. If you don't know what

we are talking about, please ask, we will be glad to help. The list below will help you to understand some of the CAP jargon.

ACRONYMS OF THE CIVIL AIR PATROL

AE — Aerospace Education
AEPSM — Aerospace Education Program for Senior Members
AFB — Air Force Base
AFNSEP — Air Force National Security Emergency Preparedness Division
AFRCC — Air Force Rescue Coordination Center
AIRBORNE REPEATER - Communications repeater installed in CAP aircraft.
AIR OPERATIONS OFFICER - Officer in charge of all flight operations.
ALNOT — Alert Notice
ANG — Air National Guard
ATA — Actual Time of Arrival
ATC — Air Traffic Control
ATD — Actual Time of Departure

BDU — Battle Dress Uniform
BX — Base Exchange

CAP — Civil Air Patrol
CAPF — CAP Form
CAP FLIGHT — Call sign for all CAP aircraft – Ours is Cap flight 3133.
CAPM — CAP Manual
CAPP — CAP Pamphlet
CAPR — CAP Regulation
CAPSN — CAP Serial Number
CC — Commander
C/CC — Cadet Commander
C/CCF — Cadet First Sergeant
CD — Counterdrug operations.
CDC — Deputy Commander for Cadets
CDS — Deputy Commander for Seniors
CLC — Corporate Learning Course
CMG — Catskill Mountain Group (Our Group).
COC — Commandant of Cadets
CONUS — Continental United States
COS — Cadet Officer School
CRM — Crew Resource Management.

DELORME — Paper topo map or computer mapping software used by CAP.
DEM — Division of Emergency Management
DEP — Department of Environmental Protection Police.
DF — Direction Finding or Direction Finder
DR — Disaster Relief

ECI — Extension Course Institute – Now AFIADL
ELT — Emergency Locator Transmitter
EOC — Emergency Operations Center
EPIRB — Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon
ES — Emergency Services
ETA — Estimated Time of Arrival
ETD — Estimated Time of Departure
ESCAT — Emergency Security Control of Air Traffic
ETE — Estimated Time En route

FAA — Federal Aviation Administration
FEMA — Federal Emergency Management Agency
FLT — Flight
FOD — Foreign Object Damage
FORM 5 — CAP aircraft checkout test with check pilot.
FORM 91 — CAP Mission Pilot flight test.
FRO — CAP Flight Release Officer.
FSS — Flight Service Station

GES — General Emergency Services – First step in becoming qualified in ES.
GPS — Global Positioning System
GROUND OPERATIONS OFFICER — CAP officer in charge of all ground search operations.
GROUND TEAM — CAP team used in ground search operations.

HANDHELD — Portable CAP radio.
HLS — Homeland Security.
HQ — Headquarters
HIGH BIRD — CAP aircraft used for airborne communications relay.

IC — Incident Commander
ICS — Incident Command System
IFR — Instrument Flight Rules
IMC — Instrument Meteorological Conditions
IAW — In Accordance With

LNCO — Wing Liaison Non-Commissioned Officer
LO — Wing Liaison Officer
LPER — Direction finding equipment used in ground operations.

MC — Mission Coordinator - Now called IC (Incident Commander)
MLO — Moral Leadership Officer
MSCA — Military Support to Civil Authorities

NATIONAL — CAP National Headquarters in Alabama.
NCO — Non-Commissioned Officer
NGSAR — National Ground Search and Rescue School
NLT — No Later Than
NTAP — National Track Analysis Program

OPR — Office of Primary Responsibility
OPS — Operations
OPS NORMAL — Radio call used to indicate that all is well.
ORM — Operational Risk Management

READY ROOM — CAP office where operations are coordinated.
REDCAP — Actual CAP search mission.
REPEATER — Communications repeater installed on the ground.
RCC — Rescue Coordination Center
ROA — CAP Radio Operators class.
ROP — Radio Operator's Permit

SAR — Search and Rescue
SARDA — State and Regional Disaster Airlift
SAREX — Search and Rescue Exercise

SARSAT — Search and Rescue Satellite-Aided Tracking
SATELLITE DIGITAL IMAGING SYSTEM (SDIS) — Equipment used to email from aircraft.
SAV — Staff Assistance Visit - Air Force Inspection of Operations
SCATANA — Security Control of Air Traffic and Air Navigational Aids
SEMO — NYS Emergency Management Office in Albany.
SLO SCAN — Airborne video technology - being replaced by SDIS.
SLS — Senior Leadership Seminar
SPECIAL OPERATIONS — Flights requiring special security clearances.
SQDN — Squadron
SQTR — Specialty Qualification Training Record used to track member training.

UDF – Urban Direction Finding – Team to locate ELT’s in urban areas.
UEI — Unit Effectiveness Inspection
USAF — United States Air Force

VFR — Visual Flight Rules
VMC — Visual Meteorological Conditions

WG — Wing
WHITE PEAK – CAP Call sign for New York units. Ex: White Peak 5125

ZULU — Proword for Coordinated Universal Time

You will hear people talking about Wings, Groups, and Squadrons etc. which may also lead to some confusion. In a nutshell, here is how it all fits together:

National Headquarters CAP – Located in Alabama – The top of the chain of command.

Regional Headquarters – There are several Regions that are made up of multiple states.

Wing Headquarters – Every state is a CAP “Wing”.

Groups – Within the Wing are Groups that are made up of several Squadrons. The Group staff is an administrative body that assists with the management of its subordinate squadrons.

Squadrons – Squadrons may be chartered as Senior squadrons (adult only), Composite squadrons (both adult and cadet) or Cadet only. We currently have several squadrons in our Group.

Once Again, Welcome!

Once again we would like to welcome you to CAP. CAP is the type of organization that appreciates any skills and time you are willing to give. The more involved you become, the more you will get back, and OCSS is definitely the place to become involved. The Bexar County Senior Squadron has a reputation as one of the quickest reacting, most highly motivated Squadrons in the Texas Wing. Search and Rescue, both in the air and on the ground is demanding and unforgiving. We have to train and be involved to remain effective, even when there are long stretches of inactivity between actual missions. As was the case on 9/11, emergency situations seldom arise with prior warning. Now is the time to become proficient in the various missions we have been tasked to perform. Waiting until the call for help comes in is too late.

As you get started you may feel that things are happening at a slower pace that you had imagined. Because we are all volunteers and there are a number of Air Force and CAP requirements that tell us what we need to understand about the mission and the use of Air Force assets, you will need patience as you go through our training.