

# WING DCP GUIDE

*The Handbook for Wing Directors of Cadet Programs*

CAPP 60-10

February 2021



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## **Table of Contents**

Getting Started	1
Wing Activities	2
Inclusion and Diversity	4
Compliance Inspection	4
Professional Development	5
Deadlines	7
Continuity Book	8
Quality Cadet Unit Awards	9
Orientation Flights	9
Wing Cadet Programs Web Space	9
Additional Wing Responsibilities	9
Final Thoughts	10

## **APPRECIATION**

Thanks to Col Virginia Nelson for creating this guide. One of the CAP Cadet Program's most knowledgeable and committed leaders, Col Nelson has served as a Wing Commander, Region Vice Commander, and more to the point, Region DCS/Cadet Programs and Wing Director of Cadet Programs.

## So, You are the New Wing Director of Cadet Programs

You are the new Director of Cadet Programs. Congratulations! You are in for a challenging and rewarding experience. Whether this was a planned transition, or you are stepping up due to the previous DCP leaving unexpectedly, whether you were a cadet or not, you are now running the Cadet Program in your wing. What you do will both directly and indirectly impact all the cadets in your wing and all the senior members who work with them. There is a lot to know and that needs to be done to get you started successfully. Ideally you would have a mentor who would sit with you, have a cup of coffee, and talk about your new role and responsibilities as well as your plans, but since that may not be practical, please accept the following information and advice. Your fellow CPOs, your wing commander, and the National Cadet Program Staff, want you to be successful and enjoy your time as the DCP. And, most important, your cadets need you to be successful.

### **Getting Started**

Since you are reading this, someone observed your abilities, offered you the DCP job and you accepted. The next step is to find out who you work for/ report to. This may be different from whomever offered you the job. Depending on your wing, you may report to the wing commander or chief of staff, but it is also possible that it may the vice commander. Find out, and as soon as practical, schedule an appointment with your supervisor to discuss their expectations and learn about any current cadet program problems, challenges, goals, and objectives. You also need access to the wing CP budget. If you have plans for any major changes this would be a good time to discuss what that would look like and a timeframe for implementation.

Now that you know who your boss is and his/her expectations, you should try and contact your predecessor and ask if they have a continuity book and/or other documents that would bring you up to speed on your wing's cadet program status. If they are willing to talk, listen! Ask what they consider their successes and what they feel could be made better. Ask about the calendar of upcoming events, CP section staffing, Cadet Advisory Council, and encampment. It is possible that your predecessor departed unexpectedly and left little documentation behind. If that is the case, ask your boss to help gather what you can and vow to keep good records which will be turned over to your successor someday.

Even if you have been serving as the assistant wing DCP, now would be a good time to read the latest version of CAPR 60-1, the CP pamphlets, and review CAPR 39-1, 39-2, 39-3, 30-1, and 40-1. CAP is updating regulations and pamphlets more frequently than before and you want to make sure you know what is in the latest versions. See the Cadet Library for downloads.

You should also reach out to your region's Deputy Chief of Staff for Cadet Programs (If they have not already reached out to you). The region DCP as well as the NHQ Cadet Program Staff are not your boss; they are a resource. The region DCP is your friend and is rooting for your success. The role of the region DCP is to support you and your wing. The region DCP is an experienced CPO and is available to answer questions and offer guidance. Do not be afraid to ask "dumb" questions. Consider them as mentors, sources of information and advice, as well as sounding boards. Many region DCPs have periodic conference calls with their wing counterparts. These allow for the flow of information both ways as well as build comradery amongst the wing DCPs in the region. Many have found it useful to also establish relationships with the other DCPs in your region. A friendly rapport is beneficial when exchanging ideas and may lead to some inter-wing activities and help you grow quickly as a wing DCP.

## **Wing Activities**

The Wing DCP is expected to plan and execute several activities each year. DCPs are strongly encouraged to appoint a wing cadet activity officer and project officers to assist with wing activities. You should not try to do it all yourself. That is not good for you or the cadets. If you do not have a cadet activity officer on wing staff, then pull an experienced CPO from a squadron to serve as project officer IAOD to assist with an activity.

### **1. Wing Cadet Competition**

Each Wing should have an annual cadet competition as described in CAPP 52-4. Region will advise you when their competition will be held so you can choose an appropriate date. Region will also advise how many teams you may send to their competition. While it is possible to accomplish the competition in one very long day, I encourage you to hold it over a weekend so that the cadets also have a chance to socialize with their fellow cadets. It is important for the senior members staffing the event to be perceived as fair and impartial. Publish the schedule and rules of engagement well in advance so teams know what to expect prior to arrival. Remind the senior members that this is a friendly competition for the cadets. However, remind your judges to be as strict as possible to best prepare the cadets for the next echelon of competition. You or the competition director need to be aware of the intensity level and adjust if necessary. Every team will have areas they can improve and areas they do well. Celebrate not only the winners but each team for their efforts. Not a requirement, but some wings also

recognize the top academic cadet and the top male and female athletic cadet with recognition certificates.

## **2. Wing Encampment**

Encampments are usually the largest cadet activity a wing holds each year. Cadets look forward to encampment – it is the highlight of the year for many cadets. It is imperative that they be successful. There is a detailed guide (CAPP 60-70) that will assist you. NHQ has recently started the encampment visitor program which is designed to increase the flow of information and documenting best practices as well as give transparency and ensure compliance.

The wing commander appoints the encampment commander. Be proactive and supply one or two experienced candidates for the wing commander to consider. This should be done at least nine months prior to encampment so all the pre encampment planning and training can occur. Ideally the encampment commander will be a respected CPO and not the wing DCP. Planning and conducting an encampment is a massive undertaking. As the wing DCP you already have many responsibilities. Once the encampment commander is appointed you will be supervising them. Establish deadlines and the budget early. Make sure you thoroughly publicize encampment details. Keep region and NHQ informed regarding dates, location and point of contact so that this information can be placed on the region and national websites so cadets from outside your wing may apply.

## **3. Cadet Advisory Council**

Every group and wing need to have a Cadet Advisory Council as described in CAPR 60-1. The Council needs a senior member advisor. This may be a good position for a younger senior member who may have served on the council as a cadet. Meetings may be in person or virtual. Encourage your wing commander to give meaningful assignments to the Council for them to study and then report back. Some wings include the CAC Chair in wing staff meetings. Wings may appoint the wing CAC Chair to also represent the wing at the region CAC or the wing representative to region CAC may be a separate position filled by a different cadet. Find out how your CAC is currently structured and decide with the CAC Advisor which method will work best for your wing. CAC can be a useful tool for the commander if it is used. Advocate for its use.

## **4. Basic Cadet/NCO Schools**

Most wings have leadership schools held over a weekend that help standardize education and training for new cadets and new cadet NCOs within their wing. This is also an opportunity for cadets and CPOs to get to know members from other units. If your wing does not conduct this type of school, consider starting. Several wings have

posted their curriculum online which you can adapt and use. This is also something to talk about with the other DCPs in your region. Make sure you appoint a knowledgeable, detail-oriented member to serve as director. I encourage you to make an appearance and perhaps teach a class at the school. It is good for the membership to know who you are, and you will benefit from seeing the cadets in action.

## 5. Wing Unique Activities

In addition to the activities discussed above your wing may have additional annual activities. Some wings have a cadet conference that may be held independently or in conjunction with the annual wing conference. It may be your wing's tradition to have a cadet ball. Some wings hold an athletic competition like a modified ironman or design their own athletic events. Does your wing have any search and rescue (SAR) or communications training geared to cadets? What about flight academies, model rocketry, cyber training, or STEM weekends? Maybe your wing has a drill and ceremony school, marksmanship training or an honor guard school. All of these events (and others) enhance the cadet experience and are good in augmenting the squadron program but take time, senior member support and money. As you plan the annual calendar you will need to slot these events and find project officers. Publish your calendar and changes as they happen, as early as you can so squadrons can plan. If you announce CP events early other wing programs can try and avoid conflicts. Be sure to include these events in your budget.

## Inclusion and Diversity

Civil Air Patrol has always welcomed members from diverse backgrounds. As the wing DCP you need to embrace this and communicate it to all members working with cadets. Cadets come in all shapes, sizes, colors ad with varying abilities. Our job as Cadet Program Officers is to seek to find ways to accommodate all of our cadets. CAPP 1-10, Suggested Best Practices for Including Individuals with Special Needs, is an excellent resource. CAP is striving to have a membership that reflects our communities. Encourage squadrons to reach out to minority groups and actively recruit. See if some squadrons need help recruiting and welcoming female cadets. A good ally and resource would be your wing's Diversity Officer.

## Compliance Inspection

The wing's Compliance Inspection (CI) is conducted by an NHQ Inspector General (IG) team approximately every four years. CAP wings, in turn, are required to conduct Subordinate Unit Inspections (SUI) on their groups and squadrons every two years. The CI could be considered your wing's report card. You should download the CAP Wing Compliance Inspection. The guide

includes the inspection questions. There are no surprise questions. You should begin to prepare now and can get all your documentation in order months in advance so there is no last-minute panic. Place all the CI materials together in your continuity book (paper or electronic) and review periodically. As things change, replace obsolete documents with newer versions. If you do this consistently you will always be compliant. No need to stress or hunt down missing information just before the CI. Some wings are using a program called Continuous Compliance. With this program each wing director answers the CI questions for their department and then uploads them with the supporting documentation into the wing's CI folder. These are reviewed quarterly or semiannually and updated as needed. Your IG can tell you if your wing is doing this and how to get started.

Get the upcoming SUI schedule from the wing IG or Chief of Staff. Although it is not required, it is helpful to have CP personnel as part of the SUI team that inspects cadet and composite units. The IG will be grateful for your assistance and others will notice that you are a team player, helping make the wing better. The SUIs will be useful to you personally as they give you an opportunity to visit units with cadets.

NOTE: In addition to helping with SUIs, (if you choose to help) it is very important for you to get out and visit ALL your cadet units for staff assistance visits. This is difficult in a large wing, but it really makes an impact on squadrons when they get a visitor from wing. In wings with several CP staff you can devise a plan so that each squadron is visited by someone at least once a year. In wings with groups, you should encourage the group DCP to also visit the cadet units in their group. Avoid letting geographically distant wings go without visits. They may need the support and encouragement the most. Visitation programs should be helpful, worthwhile experiences that enable local leaders to ask questions and show off their squadron/flight. Units might want to complete the "Cadet Unit Self Assessment" prior to your visit so you can review the results together. Be sure you include funds for unit visits when you plan the annual CP budget. Explain to the Finance Committee how these visits will help the units and the wing.

## Professional Development

CAP has developed several different training programs that are designed to improve your knowledge and ability for working with cadets.

- 1. Cadet Program Specialty Track** - Training in the Cadet Program Specialty Track (CAPP 60-11) may begin as soon as Level 1 is completed. Specialty training involves self-study, on the job training, and performance requirements. As with the other specialty track programs, as one works through the program, technician, senior and master ratings are earned. As the wing DCP you need to set the example, and if you do not have the CP master rating, work to earn it as soon as possible. You can check on the training level of the wing CPOs in eServices. Contact each of them personally and encourage them to

continue their education and training and work their way through the program. Try to arrange training and staff assignments which will allow them to gain experience outside the squadron. For example, squadron CPOs should be encouraged to work as a Training Officer or project officer at a weekend cadet activity. The better trained the wing's CPOs are, the easier it is to have a dynamic program for the cadets. You will very quickly be expected to serve as a subject matter expert on cadet programs and CPO standards and professional development. Consider enrolling in the Professional Development Specialty Track as you will find yourself performing some of the duties for your subordinate CPOs.

- 2. Cadet Protection Program Training (CPPT)** - Civil Air Patrol is very serious about protecting our cadets from harm – physical, emotional, or sexual. All CAP members 18 and older need to take the basic course. There is also an advanced course which is designed for adult leaders who are responsible for managing the CP. If you are not current with the advanced CPPT, DO IT NOW.
- 3. Training Leaders of Cadets (TLC)** – This is the main course for senior members that support cadets. Each wing needs to have one or more TLC classes each year. These may be in person or virtual. Classes may be hosted at the wing or group level. Depending on your wing's Professional Development program, you may be responsible for arranging and managing the TLC classes for your wing. TLC graduates have tools that will help them enhance the cadet program in their units and is one of the criteria for the Quality Unit Award. There are three levels of TLC – Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced. Course descriptions, FAQ, and tips for holding virtual TLC classes are located [here](#).
- 4. Conferences** – You might not consider attendance as a training opportunity, but they are. The national conference is usually held in August. NHQ CP staff offer both preconference training and a full slate of seminars over two days on a variety of CP topics. The National Director of Cadet Programs will have a seminar on upcoming changes and discuss hot button issues. Seminars are led by NHQ CP staff and other experts. You can meet the people you have been calling and emailing at NHQ. It really helps to have a face to go with the name! Being a national conference, you will be able to meet many of your counterparts from around the nation. Often you can pick up good ideas, discuss trends, and commiserate about common problems. One of the highlights of the national conference is the national commander's brief which covers the state of CAP and update on CAP's strategic plan. These help you gain perspective.

Most regions hold a conference biannually. You should try and attend. The region DCP should have a few CP sessions. You will learn what is going on in your region and meet with the other wing DCPs.

Wing Conference is your time to share what is going on in your wing and dispense national CP news with your wing members. Make sure you get on the conference schedule to give an “update” session and additional seminars if conference time and space allow. Topics might include encampment, color guard, Cadet Wings, and Quality Cadet Unit ideas. These are only suggestions. You should know which topics would be most useful for your wing. While you are the wing CP expert, you will pick up lots of valuable information listening to the CPOs who attend your seminars. You may be asked to organize the cadet awards for the conference. Be proactive in determining which awards are appropriate and when they will be given. Consult with the conference project officer/protocol officer regarding appropriate presentation. Be prepared if a cadet arrives at the banquet with their Mitchell Award and wanting it presented there. These things happen. Be sure to personally congratulate cadets who receive awards. It will mean a lot to them that you do so.

## **Deadlines**

Cadet Programs does not have any quarterly or annual reports that need to be filed. CP does have some deadlines for certain paperwork and actions that are periodically due at region and NHQ. Keeping track of these and meeting deadlines will make your boss very happy. Some of the more important requirements are listed below.

Wing Cadet of the Year nominee due to region

Wing Cadet NCO of the Year nominee due to region

Jack Sorenson CPO nominee due to region

Flight scholarship applications

Annual CAC officer appointments

Winter NCSA applications

Summer priority NCSA applications

Cadet Invest scholarships

Cadet Wings applications

CEAP funds request

Cadet Competition

The encampment block schedule is due to region 30 days prior to the start of encampment.

## **Continuity Book**

Ideally you were given the wing's CP continuity book when you accepted the job. If not, you need to start one. A continuity book will be invaluable to whoever gets the DCP job after you. You will find it a useful reference tool also. The "book" can either be electronic or hard copy; use the method that works best for you. There are no rules about all that it should contain but here are some areas that others have found useful.

Wing staff roster

Wing CPO & subordinate unit CPO contact list

Names, charter numbers, locations and Commanders of cadet and composite squadrons

Wing Calendar

CP Calendar of events with project officer contact info

Sample event flyers from past events

CI questions, answers, and documentation

CAC roster and meeting minutes for the last 12months

Encampment After-Action Reviews (AARs) and planning documents

Wing Cadet Competition information

Other wing CP activity Ops plans and AARs

CP budget and current spending

Orientation flight information

Flight scholarship information

CSAs and NCSAs

CP information from higher HQs

Record of Quality Unit Awards

Record of wing Spaatz recipients

SM who have serve as Spaatz test proctors

You will probably include others that are useful for you. Be sure to update throughout the year.

## **Quality Cadet Unit Awards**

Established in 2010, the Quality Cadet Unit Award program recognizes units that are successful in several areas which show that it is providing a vibrant program for the unit's cadets. All cadet and composite squadrons are eligible to pursue this award. The criteria may vary from year to year. For more information This can be a great motivational tool for units. It is a good idea to download squadron statistics on the final day of competition so that when the draft list comes from NHQ you will be able to do a quick check for accuracy. Be familiar with the program and congratulate those who earn this designation.

## **Orientation Flights**

Surveys of cadets and former cadets show orientation flights (or lack thereof) are a major factor in the cadets' satisfaction with the cadet program. Most of our cadets are anxious to experience flight for themselves, not just learn about it through the Aerospace Education modules. It is your job to work with the wing Director of Operations to develop a plan that puts the wing's planes, orientation pilots and cadets together so that these flights can occur. It really is a win-win. The wing's planes gain hours while cadets and pilots get to fly! Some wings delegate O flight scheduling to the squadrons; others have a wing O ride coordinator who arranges O flight events. Check and see if O rides are being conducted regularly for ALL cadets, not just those who are near an airplane. O flights are a required part of the cadet program and help produce enthusiastic cadets.

## **Wing Cadet Programs Web Space**

Find out what your wing presence is on the Web for both the wing headquarters – but specifically for Cadet Programs. Make sure it is updated with your contact information instead of your predecessor. Evaluate if this web space is serving the needs of the cadets and CPOs in the wing. If there is a cadet programs calendar, confirm it is updated and matches the actual scheduled CP events. Find out who can update this web space for you and become close friends with this person. You will probably need to work together to bring it up to date. If there are public files such as how your wing runs an Airman Basic School or NCOS, make sure the links work and the files are current.

## **Additional Wing Responsibilities**

Serving as the wing CP is a large and time-consuming job. As stated before, it would be advantageous for you and/or some of your wing CP staff to serve on the SUI inspection team. It would also be good for you to offer to sit on the wing Finance Committee. You would be

speaking for the cadets when determining the overall budget and could ensure that the other members of the committee that it takes a lot of money to successfully operate the wing cadet program. It is also a good idea to have you or a CP staff member serve on the wing awards board and the uniform committee.

## **Final Thoughts**

Remember that while you are the Director of Cadet Programs you are still just one person and your wing has many cadets. You need help to be successful. Look for good, solid senior members and help them get the training they need. Then give them assignments where they can grow and also share the responsibility of implementing the CP in your wing. Talk to your boss frequently and discuss both your successes and challenges. Bosses would rather hear about problems early before they grow into big problems. Let your boss know if you lack the resources necessary to run the program. Be prepared to advise the commander on all cadet issues. Always be approachable. Keep your ears open to what is being discussed amongst the cadets and their adult leaders.

What you do as the wing DCP will impact many lives. You are both a role model and a mentor. You will make a difference by helping develop not only future CAP leaders but young people who will become leaders of influence in their communities, state, and nation.

Thank you for saying yes to becoming the Wing Director of Cadet Programs.