

**HEADQUARTERS  
TENNESSEE WING CIVIL AIR PATROL**

United States Air Force Auxiliary

P.O. Box 250

Alcoa, TN 37701

20 July 2008

**Wing Crisis Communications Plan  
Calendar Year 2008**

The goal of this crisis communications plan is to establish guidelines for dealing with a variety of situations, and to ensure that leaders and communicators are familiar with those procedures and their roles in the event of a crisis. The plan is designed to be used in conjunction with the normal decision-making hierarchy of the wing and does not supplant that decision-making process.

**Crisis Communications Team - Attachment A**

The goal of the Crisis Communications Team is to provide a unified message in a crisis and to ensure the flow of accurate and timely information to wing leadership, staff, the media and the public. Once a decision has been made to commit TNWG personnel to respond to an emergency situation, the Wing Commander will contact the Crisis Communications Team members. The commander will provide the Wing PAO with an updated CCT List on the 1st of January each year.

The Tennessee Wing Crisis Communications Team is composed of qualified Mission Information Officers fulfilling the following roles:

Team Leader - Capt Gary Pickens, Group 4 Deputy Commander, 731-426-2647, [wxpics@yahoo.com](mailto:wxpics@yahoo.com) is responsible for making initial calls to team members and assigning additional duties and team members as needed. Team leader may also call upon those with experience working in a crisis situation, parents if cadets are involved or expert sources as needed.

Principal Spokesperson - 2nd Lt Kimberly Bennett, TN Wing Public Affairs Officer, (865)382-5130, [bennettcap@mac.com](mailto:bennettcap@mac.com) is responsible for coordination of media center, speaking to community or media.

Assistant Spokesperson - 2nd Lt Mark Landrum, Chattanooga Squadron Public Affairs Officer, (423)827-9095, [mark.landrum@chattanoogacap.info](mailto:mark.landrum@chattanoogacap.info) is responsible to assist with press release and speech writing, media coverage collection, and other duties as needed by Principal Spokesperson.

Legal Advisor - Maj Philip North, Tennessee Wing Legal Officer, (615)860-3185, (615)255-2555 Office, (615)973-6694 Cell, [pln@nprijlaw.com](mailto:pln@nprijlaw.com) is available for consultation as necessary depending on the type of crisis.

Safety/Operations Advisor - Maj Dent Young, Tennessee Wing Director of Safety, (865)483-7467, (865) 604-8621 cell, [Dent.young@mindspring.com](mailto:Dent.young@mindspring.com) is responsible for consultation regarding safety issues and concerns during the mission.

Operations and TEMA contact - Lt Col Vernon Prevatt, Director of Operations & Counterdrug, (615)662-4874 home, (615)423-9406 cell, [vprevatt@tnwg.cap.gov](mailto:vprevatt@tnwg.cap.gov) is responsible for consultation as necessary during the mission.

### **Command / Media Center**

Due to the geographic nature of the state and locations of the team, it is expected that crisis teams will work virtually utilizing e-mail, phones and conference calls. Wing Headquarters or nearest Group Headquarters could be utilized. If the need exists to set up a crisis center, commanders are expected to use their best judgement as to location, size and scope of activities. The Wing PAO will be consulted prior to setting up a crisis center.

### **Tennessee Media Contact List**

The Associated Press  
in Tennessee  
215 Centerview Drive Suite 110  
Brentwood TN 37027  
News:  
(615) 373-9988  
(800) 453-1282  
(615) 376-0947 (fax)  
[apnashville@ap.org](mailto:apnashville@ap.org)

## **Crisis Contact List - Attachment B**

CAP NHQ/PA Contacts:

(877)227-9142

Julie Debardalaben, Deputy Director: ext 250  
334.953.5463

Steve Cox, PA manager: ext 251  
Neil Probst, Staff Writer: ext 252  
Kimberly Wright, PA Specialist: ext 253  
Dan Bailey, editor, Online News: ext 255

Emergency Officials:

CAP National Operations Center – 1-888-211-1812

## **Crisis Scenarios / Action Plans**

### Flooding / Tornado / Earthquake (sudden event)

Request for our service is generally made by TEMA directly to TNWG contact. NOC is informed and upon approval CAP resources are dispatched appropriately. TEMA has PIO responsibility and primary data will be directed appropriately. If determined to be necessary, mission base to be established based on the extent and location of natural disaster.

### Missing Pilot / Aircraft or Person (sudden event)

Initial facts gathered by AFRCC and TNWG ES officer contacted. Then CAP intel works up remainder. Mission base location depends on location of search at which point PAO and Chaplain will be directed to mission base. Initial press release probably by CAP depending on what State/other stake-holders do.

CAP Leadership/MIO/PAO Talking Points: Fatalities or serious injuries sustained by CAP members during a mission or training event.

Adapt these general talking points as appropriate to the specific accident or incident. In many cases, the primary comments in bold will be all that needs to be said. Add the rest of the information only if asked.

1. "Our hearts go out to the families of the members involved, and to all of the CAP members in \_\_\_\_ (where the members are from) \_\_\_\_ who work hard to serve their state and country with a professional level of skill, even though they are volunteers."

2. "CAP has an outstanding Flying Safety Record -- about one third of the number of accidents in the general aviation community per 100,000 hours flown."

Additional information, only if asked to elaborate: When you consider that CAP's missions are typically flown only 1,000 feet above the ground, leaving little time to react in an emergency situation, CAP's low accident rate is even more significant. Though CAP flies in a high-risk environment, one of the reasons our accident rate is so low is because we have successfully used ORM or operational risk management - a technique developed by the Air Force safety community and eagerly adopted by CAP.

The National Transportation Safety Board's accident rates for general aviation over the past three years as compared to CAP's are as follows:

	NTS	CAP
2004	6.49	5.23
2005	7.20	2.8
2006	6.64	1.84

- Every one of our pilots takes a flight safety check at least annually, and they are evaluated on their ability to fly mission profiles biennially.
- We have a safety education program whereby both aircrew and non-aircrew are briefed on safety issues during monthly safety meetings.
- Also, every CAP wing is given an evaluation on its ability to perform search and rescue/disaster relief missions biennially.

3. CAP aircrews are absolute professionals and highly trained in all aspects of aerial search and rescue [including mountain flying techniques].

Additional information, only if asked to elaborate: Aerial search and rescue is clearly a demanding mission, given the requirement to fly typically only 1,000 feet above the ground,. However, our aircrew members fully understand the dangers associated with SAR missions and train hard to minimize them, but they consider their duties to be critical. Over the years, CAP has been credited with saving on average about 75 lives annually.

4. Civil Air Patrol maintains its aircraft rigorously to standards that meet or exceed FAA standards. The maintenance is timely, thorough and carried out by FAA-certified mechanics CAP-wide. Bottom line -- CAP maintenance policies are stricter or as strict as general aviation standards in America, with greater emphasis placed on regular aircraft inspections throughout the fleet.

5. There is no way I could speculate on what may have caused this to happen. I am sure it will be the subject of an official investigation.

Additional information, if asked to elaborate: Do NOT be trapped into discussing possible or hypothetical causes or explanations for what happened. Rather, go back to point #1 -- the investigation WILL happen, and meanwhile, our big concern is for the families and fellow members of the people killed/injured.

Note:

Do not feel that you must rush an answer. If you have to pause 10 seconds after the question is asked to formulate your answer, no problem. Remember that TV stations, in particular, will probably only use 10 or 15 seconds worth of your actual words, anyway.

#### Actions by CAP Members or Staff (ongoing crisis)

Wg/CC and Wg/LO get together in concert with the Wg/PAO and plan out appropriate response ( if any is deemed necessary). Wing HQ will be the central point. Wg/CC, Wg/LO and Wg/PAO should/must be on hand if law enforcement arrives to take person into custody.

CAP Leadership/MIO/PAO Talking Points: CAP members accused of misconduct

Adapt these general talking points as appropriate to the specific situation.

1. The status of the accused is (pick one):

- No longer a member
- Suspended
- Other

2. No complaint has been filed with CAP adult or child or any family member (assuming this is true).

3. The CAP Cadet Protection Program ensures that more than one adult member is always present on activities with our youth members, and in particular our rules prohibit private "one-on-one" interaction between individual youth and adult members.

### **Notes:**

In a media interview.

Always find ways to come back to these points.

If the reporter asks you about your feelings or emotions, dodge the question. "My feelings and emotions are that I am glad that CAP has procedures in place to prevent inappropriate contact from taking place."

Avoid repeating back the words the reporter uses in asking the question. For example a reporter might ask "would you say that CAP was lucky that there were no problems with this person?" If you repeat "was lucky" either to say CAP WAS lucky, or to say , "No, I wouldn't say CAP was lucky," you are allowing the reporter to put words in your mouth that may then be quoted.

Avoid answering hypothetical questions.

Do not feel that you must rush an answer. If you have to pause 10 seconds after the question is asked to formulate your answer, no problem. Remember that they will probably only use 10 or 15 seconds worth of your actual words, anyway.

### **Crisis Materials**

The Wing PAO is assigned the tasks of maintaining materials to assist in the management of a crisis. As a minimum the PAO will maintain the following materials:

Wing Crisis Communications Plan including attachments A and B along with the media contact information. Also have available CAP fact sheets, pre-written press releases and list of talking points.

**APPROVED:**

2nd Lt Kimberly Bennett, CAP  
PAO, Tennessee Wing

Col Barry Melton, CAP  
Commander, Tennessee Wing

**DISTRIBUTION: 1 Each (Electronic)**

Wing PAO  
Wing Staff  
Unit Commanders  
Unit PAO's

**RECORD OF REVIEW:**

Review Date	Commander's Initials

**Appendix A: Crisis Communications Team (To be completed by the Wing)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Duty Assignment/Team Role</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Capt Gary Pickens	Group 4 Dep Commander Team Leader	(731)426-2647 <a href="mailto:wxpick@yahoo.com">wxpick@yahoo.com</a>
2nd Lt Kimberly Bennett	Wing Public Affairs Officer Principal Spokesman	(865)382-5130 <a href="mailto:bennettcap@mac.com">bennettcap@mac.com</a>
Maj Phillip North	Wing Legal Officer Legal Advisor	(615)255-2555 Office, (615)973-6694 Cell, <a href="mailto:pln@nprijlaw.com">pln@nprijlaw.com</a>
Lt Col Vernon Prevatt	Director of Operations & Counter Drug Operations Advisor / TEMA Contact	(615)662-4874 home, (615)423-9406 cell, <a href="mailto:vprevatt@tnwg.cap.gov">vprevatt@tnwg.cap.gov</a>
Maj Dent Young	Wing Director of Safety Safety /Operations Advisor	(865)483-7467 (865) 604-8621 cell, <a href="mailto:Dent.young@mindspring.com">Dent.young@mindspring.com</a>
<b>Experts and Consultants</b>		
Lt Col Montielle Warren	Wing Cadet Programs Cadet Program Advisor and SME	(731)333-3333 <a href="mailto:hardincountyairport@ainweb.net">hardincountyairport@ainweb.net</a>
John Carnduff	CAP-USAF State Director USAF Policy SME	