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25 Questions about the Iowa Wing's Re-organization.

Thank you for your interest in our reorganization. Hopefully this paper will answer some of your questions. Please call us if have any questions.

1. How is the re-organization working?

It's been fantastic. It has revitalized our Wing. Hopefully you come to visit during a WTA. You will experience a new enthusiasm and spirit of pride in the Wing. Of course there are still some who for their personal reasons cannot make the transition. Most have moved on or out. While we are sorry to see them leave and will always welcome them back, we understand and respect their decision.

2. What exactly is the WTA concept? The concept of a Wing Training Assembly is not unique to us. It is borrowed from the USAF and National Guard. Frankly, it is a concept from the business world. Look at the Wing as a company that does business throughout the state. In order to be functional it needs to meet with everyone on a regular basis. As applied to CAP, the Wing is CAP's most important unit in the State. The Commander is the only CAP corporate officer in the state. Through the CC, the Wing has the responsibility of doing business in the State. It must relate to the world outside of CAP. The squadrons are simply branches of the Wing through which the Wing does its business. We like to say that the Wing is CAP's main operational unit in the state and the squadrons are its tactical tool. In addition to forging business relationships, the Wing must develop a strategy to deliver specialized services to its customers by

responding when and where needed. It has to ensure there is a constant source of revenue, a sufficient number of trained members and can deliver in a timely manner. It's just like any other service business.

3. What happens at a WTA? Business, bonding, planning and training. Previously the business of the wing such as planning, updates, briefings, safety briefings, took place before selective groups such as commanders call or staff meeting. Some planning occurred annually at Wing Conference. Now this all takes place before the entire wing at the WTA. Our commanders call and staff meetings are all part of the "wing wide meeting" portion of the WTA. We have found that this fosters involvement and participation. Bonding occurs at the WTA. This is the monthly opportunity for people from across the state to get together and get to know one another. We need to know one another. Training occurs at the WTA. Training takes many forms. On the basic level, training consists of the Officers Training School, the Iowa Civil Air Patrol Academy for cadets, our Emergency Services Academy, the Safety Officers Academy and a host of other specialty track training and emergency services 101 qualifications based training.

4. *Is attendance mandatory?* No but it is highly recommended. The “action” is at the WTA.

5. *Do squadrons sponsor their own training?* No, but note there is a difference between training and practice. It is the Wing’s responsibility to provide all training, at a high level of quality, which is available to everyone without cost. This ensures that everyone will be provided the same standard of training. Squadrons are responsible for scheduling and performing practice sessions. Training without frequent practice is a waste of effort. By relieving the squadrons of the burden of training they have more time to practice what they have learned.

6. *Where is the WTA located?* Everyone wants WTA to be in their own back yard. However what is convenient for one will undoubtedly be inconvenient for another. Fortunately the Wing HQ is located at the HQ of the Iowa National Guard at Camp Dodge, Johnston, Iowa right in the middle of the state. Some would say that the location is mutually inconvenient to everyone...but the emphasis is on mutual.

7. *What facilities are needed for a WTA?* We have the training, meeting, dining, and lodging facilities of the National Guard available to us without cost. If we were to attempt to replicate the facilities in the commercial world at market rates we could not afford the WTA concept or would have to charge officers and cadets to attend. We feel that because officers and cadets sacrifice their weekend they shouldn’t have to pay.. We pay for everything. We provide the food and the cooks through our kitchen corps. Transportation is provided via their squadron’s motor pool. If POV travel is authorized we reimburse for the gasoline cost.

8. *Is there an annual WTA schedule?* Yes. Note the subject matter rotation. It is based upon readiness and preparedness. January focuses on our PLANNING for readiness and preparedness. February and March consist of the first section of the Wing’s ES ACADEMY. April we do our PLANNING for anticipated missions in the coming spring and summer. May we focus on SPECIALITY TRACK training. In June we go back to CAP BASICS with a refresher on drill and ceremonies, general education, etc. The July and August meeting consists of the second section of the Wing’s ES ACADEMY. September we return to PLANNING for the anticipated missions in the upcoming winter months. October consists of our general CAP BASICS education meeting. November finds the WTA in the form of the annual WING CONFERENCE where we meet in joint session with the National Guard and Homeland Security Emergency Management people. We end the year in December with the WTA focusing on SPECIALITY TRACK matters. Keep in mind that the OTS and ICAPA meet at the same time and place as the WTA. Consequently all training, for new and old and cadets is undertaken at the same place at the same time. This greatly reduces the time and effort we have to expend.

9. *Has WTA reduced the time devoted to CAP?* It has greatly reduced the general member’s time investment. Prior to the re-organization there were CAP activities held almost every weekend throughout the state. We were constantly gone on the weekends, which caused much stress in our families. For example, one might spend one weekend on an SLS, another for a SAREX, yet another for a COMMS meeting or another for first aid qualification, etc. Now all of the above is coordinated and handled during one

monthly meeting.

10. *How long does the WTA last?* Unless one is attending a specific training academy, the main portion of WTA is actually only SIX HOURS long on Saturday morning. Obviously specific education and training may require that one attend on Friday evening through Sunday noon. Other than these situations, all we ask is six hours a month. However the WTA's are fun and most people stay much longer.

11. *How does OTS integrate with the WTA?* Previously new officer candidates received no formal course of training or instruction. They were left to the whim of their squadrons. This produced a corps of members who trained by watching a videotape and never progressed beyond Level I. While it produced a member, it did not create a fully trained "officer." All new officers of the Iowa Wing are required to go to the Wing's Officer Training School. It is a six month course starting in November with graduation and commissioning in April or April through October. It is a real OTS. They learn and pass through CPPT and Level I, B and A Cut, GES, AEPSEM, several of the FEMS Courses (ICS 100, 200, IS 700 and 800; NASAR SARTECH III certifications (for our ground teams), technician specialty track enrollment and advancement, and a variety of 101 qualifications. Officers are also enrolled in AFIADL 13 and many pass the test on their graduation weekend. Other than for time in a specialty they will be almost Level II complete upon graduation and commissioning. Some of the training coincides with the general WTA. For example, the officer candidates attend the ES academies with the general membership; will become first aid qualified with the general membership, etc. While in WTA the officer-

candidates are members of the All Iowa Squadron squadron. Upon graduation they are assigned to squadrons that have need of their particular skills and education in their area. The squadron gets a fully trained and functioning CAP officer.

12. *How does ICAPA integrate with WTA?* In essence, the Iowa Civil Air Patrol Academy is the WTA for cadets. It is not meant to replace a squadron's cadet program but to enhance it. Cadets can attend the ES academies and become mission qualified. Likewise they can obtain their required aerospace education, PT and moral leadership training at the WTA. But best of all, ICAPA works like a monthly mini-encampment which brings cadets from across the state together to drill, train and simply have fun.

13. *Who runs ICAPA?* The board of ICAPA consists of the commanders of composite and cadet squadrons, the director of cadet programs. It is managed by a superintendent.

14. *What problems are we likely to face in implementing a WTA concept?* If your wing is squadron centric, i.e the Wing is merely a collection of semi-autonomous squadrons you will face fierce opposition. The squadrons will feel like their power is being transferred and they are being marginalized. They will fight their loss of control. Their feelings will be hurt because it will be shown that their training is inconsistent across the state. The draw back will come from your most senior field grade officers. OTS will be rejected because it will be perceived to interfere with the Squadron's recruitment. Keep in mind that success in a squadron-centric operation is measured by bulk numbers. The higher the squadron number count the better the squadron.

15. *How can we avoid these problems?* By being totally truthful with everyone. To be truthful you must obtain the facts. In a squadron with 50 officers on the books, only 10 may be active...where active is defined as regularly attending meetings, training, SAREXs, etc. Of those ten, if 8 of them have only attained Level I in the past 3 years they are not progressing. True facts regarding squadron turnover, attendance, and senior member progression can be very revealing.

16. *How are squadron standards set?* . CAP is not meant to be a membership organization like a book club. One does not simply pay the money, buy the cloths and do nothing. Everyone must progress. Failure to progress creates stagnation, which eventually will kill the spirit of a squadron. When this happens the squadron cannot be ready or prepared for an emergency tasking. Set realistic squadron readiness and preparedness standards. How quickly can a squadron field a coordinated air and ground team? How long will it take them to be out the door and wheels up? Have you measured their readiness by testing? Are they prepared? Do their members have the required qualifications? Have they practiced those skills within the past 30 days? Once acquired a skill must be practiced or it is quickly lost. What is the squadron's practice schedule?

17. *Our squadrons are stagnating. How do we fix it?* More often than not squadrons stagnate due to inattention from the Wing. The Wing has not given them proper attention or helped them set realistic readiness and preparedness goals. If all the Wing is concerned about is bulk numbers it has created the climate for stagnation. Stagnation results from two factors: membership bloat and entrenchment. Membership bloat drags a squadron down in

terms of cost and morale. It cost time and money to have a member on the books. If the member does not participate that time is wasted. Worse yet it causes a loss of morale among those who do attend. Nobody wants a ghost member yet most of our squadrons have far too many of them. Entrenchment results from having the same person in the same position for too long a time. Successful businesses require rotation. It allows newer members to fill a functioning role in the committee and bring a new and fresh approach to the position. It also allows the seasoned member to get rejuvenated by moving to another position. We suggest that non-participating members be transferred out of the squadron and put into a reserve squadron. This will solve the "bloat" problem. You can solve the entrenchment problem by rotating squadron positions. In our Wing the commander issued a field officer transition order requiring all field officers to be transferred to the Wing level. Thus only company grade officers can be a member of a squadron. The field grade officer can attend meeting and assist but they must let the company grade officer hold the position.

18. *What is the reserve squadron?* All wings have a 000 squadron. Previously we referred to this as the "ghost" squadron. This is unfair because it fails to recognize the reality that contingencies of life often occur which require a person to back away from active CAP involvement. Rather than drop membership, they can transfer into the reserves squadron until they have more time for CAP at which time they can reassign. While in the reserve squadron they are full members of CAP and can attend all WTA at their choice.

19. *Does one lose qualification by being in the reserves?* It depends upon the time. For

a short time, say six months to a year no. A longer period would require an evaluation of their qualifications and whether they are still current by the standard of the day. Time and grade continue on while in the reserve squadron.

20. Does the field officer transition disrupt the squadrons? Yes. It causes terrible disruption. Squadron commanders who are field officers with smooth running squadrons find themselves out of a job. Or field grade officers who hold essential squadron staff positions are now vacating those positions. If your Wing has not been active, they will not want to be a part of Wing operations. After all, the Wing has given them nothing but trouble for years. Now is it moving them out of their comfort zone. They will look at it as the Wing is trying to fix something that isn't broke. But it is broke, they just don't realize that they are the cause. Entrenchment dulls a squadron's creativity. New members have little incentive to take leadership positions. When they do and attempt to be innovative, they must do so under the ever watchful eye of the senior field officer who "didn't do it that way." In some situations field grade officers have held their post for nearly a decade. While they cry that no one will step forward, they refuse to step out. Meanwhile important wing staff positions are being filled by junior or inexperienced individuals. If the field grade officer component equates with experience and power, it resides at the lowest possible level within the CAP structure. We strongly recommend that all field grade officers be transferred out of the squadron level. Vacancies are quickly filled by the new officers who have been OTS trained and who are guided by their Wing staff counterparts. Once at the Wing level, the field grade officers can compose the leadership council or core of the Wing.

21. How does having all the field officers at Wing help the Wing? Until the government fully funds CAP and we are subject to the UCMJ, Civil Air Patrol is more business than military and we have to run it like a business. Look at its structure? Where's its board? Successful businesses must have input from its experienced senior members. In our situation our experienced senior members are our field grade officers. In essence they form the board, which assists the commander in developing policy, programs and integration.

22. We heard that you rely heavily on your Chaplains? The chaplains are the key to your success. They are the bi-partisan and impartial experts in core values. They monitor the fulfillment and reward level of the force. But most importantly they are critical in motivating the membership to strive for a higher quality of relationship within the organization.

23. Can't we just chose part of the plan? Unfortunately no. It's a consolidated matrix. The OTS works with the WTA and the Field Grade Officer Transition. The WTA works with ICAPA and the OTS. The Field Grade Officer transition works with the OTS and facilitates the WTA. Pull one thread and something unintended will unravel.

24. But this all costs money? Everything costs money. You will find that the overall cost of WTA, OTS and ICAPA at twelve meetings a year is more economical in terms of costs and time than planning 52 meetings a year. Further there is an economy of scale when providing a program for several hundred as compared to fifteen.

25. What would you do over? We would have started it earlier. Further our

communication to the membership and squadrons was poor which lead to misunderstandings and mistrust. While we recovered, it was not without stress which we could have avoided. Poor communication on our part set the program back several months.

We stand ready to help you in any way we can. What has worked for us may or may not work for you. You must be the judge. We hope you find this beneficial.

**THE CIVIL AIR PATROL
THE IOWA WING**

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