

How to Work with Group, Wing and the LO

Lesson Plan

DURATION: 50 Minutes

TEACHING METHOD: Lecture/Discussion

REFERENCES: Student Guide, CAPM 20-1, *CAP Organization Manual*

TEACHING AIDS/HANDOUTS: Student Guide, slide presentation

READING ASSIGNMENT: Student Guide

Lesson Objective:	Comprehend the relationship between the squadron and group, (and/or) wing, and LO.
Behavioral Objectives: At the end of this segment students will be able to:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explain the function of groups and wings.2. Describe group and wing staff functions.3. Describe the function and authority of the group and wing commander.4. Describe the unit commander's relationship with the LO.5. Explain the importance of and different techniques for working together with group and wing.

Lesson Strategy

This segment introduces unit commanders to the group and wing structures. Though job descriptions will be offered, the focus of this segment should be on the relationships between the different players at the group and wing level and the squadron commander.

Do not allow the students to get hung up on the jobs themselves. Focus on the relationships between the different echelons. For example, explain the responsibilities of a staff officer. A wing staff officer cannot tell a squadron commander what to do, however, he or she does speak with some implicit authority from the wing commander. It is assumed when a staff officer relays information or an order about a deadline, or a compliance or special interest item from the commander, s/he is speaking with the wing commander's authority.

The teaching outline provides an introduction, outline of the main points, and a conclusion to be adapted as required to meet the needs of a particular wing. The presenter should personalize the lesson to reflect the unique characteristics of the wing.

Notes: Since this lesson is primarily a lecture format, use the questions provided to stimulate discussion.

LESSON OUTLINE

MAIN POINTS:

- I. Group/Wing
- II. The staff

- I. Your boss (the group/wing commander)
- II. The LO
- IV. Working together

Teaching Plan

Lesson Objectives:

Discuss the relationship between the squadron and group (and/or) wing.

ATTENTION:

The relationship with your group and/or wing is among the most important you will have for your squadron. You work for them, and thus your squadron must support group and wing operations at the same time your squadron helps its local community.

MOTIVATION:

Not only do you need to know about the command relationship the group or wing has with you, but you must also know what they can do to help you. They have resources and contacts that can greatly benefit your unit, especially when it comes to training your staff. It is important for you to view the group and wing as a facilitator to help you ensure your activities are in accordance with CAP regulations and are of the quality you expect.

OVERVIEW:

Over the next 50 minutes, you'll learn a little about the functions of the wing, what the staff does, and the special responsibilities of the wing commander, your boss.

Transition:

STATE: While you are the commander of your squadron, you can't work alone. You are part of a larger organization, and your first step outside of your unit is the group or wing.

MP I. Group/Wing

A. Groups

1. Function is to oversee the operations of squadrons assigned to it and is subordinate to the wing.
2. Used when there are too many squadrons, or when the squadrons are dispersed over a wider area than the wing can manage by itself.

B. Wings

1. Function is to oversee the operations of the groups and/or squadrons assigned to it
2. First level on the "corporate ladder."
 - a. The wing commander is a corporate officer of CAP and is the sole corporate officer within the state.
 - b. Oversees all aspects of operations, training, and support for the state and is responsible to its CAP region.

MP II. The staff

- A. Purpose is to assist the group/wing commander in operating the unit.
- B. Obligated by CAP directives to be responsible for certain wing operations (wing level).
- C. Cannot order squadrons to do anything by their own authority, but can pass on orders concerning their functional area from their commander to you.
- D. Group/wing commanders will tell you how much authority they have delegated to their staffs.
- E. The unit commander's obligation is to keep the group or wing staff advised about the fitness of their unit in accordance with CAP directives.
- F. The wing staffs should keep the squadrons informed about changes in their areas and make sure the unit commanders get the information they need.

MP III. Your boss (the group/wing commander)

- A. Your commander is your immediate superior.
- B. The wing commander is particularly important to you.
 - Scope and nature of authority.
- C. Wing responsibility
 - 1. Has authority over all the units within the wing.
 - 2. Responsible for successfully accomplishing the missions within the state.
 - 3. Is accountable to the region commander.
- D. Corporate Responsibility
 - 1. Wing commander is a CAP corporate officer.
 - 2. Number one CAP representative within the state.
 - 3. Can negotiate agreements within the state.
 - 4. Is the primary person responsible for corporate assets residing within the state.
- E. Your relationship
 - 1. You assist the commander to carry out the wing's missions through your command.
 - 2. You must:
 - a. Carry out lawful orders.
 - b. Provide reliable resources.

MP IV. Wing Air Force Liaison Office (LO)

- A. Advice, Liaison, and Oversight
- B. Events and activities in which the LO plays a role.
 - 1. Tours and orientation rides.
 - 2. Spaatz exams.
 - 3. Clarifying procedures.
- C. When LO's should be informed
 - 1. Whenever a unit participates in activities with the Air Force.
 - 2. When requesting Air Force assistance.
- D. LO visits and the Civil Air Patrol-Reserve Assistance Program (CAP-RAP).

MP V. Working together

- A. Understand the functions of the group or wing.
- B. Remember the importance of effective communication.
- C. Provide and ask for feedback from your commander.
- D. Encourage communication between your staff and group/wing staffs.

Questions and answers

Use the suggested questions to facilitate the discussion, and field any questions that the students may have.

Conclusion

SUMMARY:

When you have a better understanding of exactly what your group and wing does, what it can ask of you, and what it can do for you, you can better work with each other.

CLOSURE:

You work with one other group that is extremely important to the function of your unit, and this group doesn't necessarily contain CAP members. This group represents the families of your members. You need to gain their understanding and support so they can deal with the weekend and holiday activities of your unit, along with the late-night phone calls. In the next segment, we'll talk more about how you can gain the support of CAP family members.

Suggested Questions

1. What is the function of a group? Of a wing?

Answer: The main function of a group is to oversee the operations of a number of squadrons within the wing structure. Normally, groups are formed within specific areas and are used when either there are too many squadrons, or they are dispersed in too large an area for the wing to efficiently manage on its own.

The main function of a wing is to oversee the operations of the groups or squadrons within a state. It is the first of the corporate entities, its commander is a corporate officer of Civil Air Patrol. This gives him or her an extraordinary amount of latitude when it comes to running the wing.

2. How do you interface with group and wing staff officers?

Answer: You have an obligation to keep the group and wing staff officers advised of the fitness of your unit in their areas. You report the information they need to advise the wing commander about the fitness of the wing as a whole, in accordance with CAP directives. Staff officers are obligated to keep you informed of the latest changes within their staff areas and to ensure you get timely information and resources to your unit.

Wing staff officers can't tell you what to do, nor can they direct your squadron staff. They can, however, speak with the authority their commander gives them in order to get the job done, in part because they work for the next higher echelon.

3. What is your relationship between yourself and your group or wing commander?

Answer: Your group or wing commander is your immediate superior. As well as running your own unit, you are your commander's representative to your unit.

When you perform this function, remember the wing commander is not only your boss, but also the corporate officer from your state. Because of this s/he has authority and responsibilities which far exceeds yours, and you must operate from that frame of reference. Your job is to help your commander to carry out these responsibilities as well as run your own unit.

Ideally your relationship should be professional yet cordial. It's desirable to view your commander as your mentor. However, remember your obligations are to: carry out his/her lawful orders, provide him/her with reliable resources (your squadron), and through the work of your squadron, assist him/her in carrying out their vision and goals for the group or wing.

4. What are some of the things you can do as a squadron commander to work more effectively with your group or wing?

Answer: The first thing to remember is the importance of effective communication. It is your responsibility to ensure you receive the information you need from the wing and in turn to make sure they get what they require from you. They share an obligation for effective communications, but as unit commander it is your responsibility to stay informed. If you have a question, ask. As a commander it is never an acceptable answer to say, "The wing didn't tell me."

The next thing you can do is ask your commander what s/he expects from you as a commander, and from your unit. That being established s/he should then tell you what you can expect from the commander and his/her staff. This should not be a one-time conversation. Throughout your tenure, you should give and receive feedback. It's the most effective way to see how well you and your unit are performing.

Encourage interface between your staff officers and those at the group or wing. They should talk to each other about what they expect from one another and clear up differences or problems as these arise. It also makes sure that efforts aren't being duplicated or misguided.

Encourage other answers.