



OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER  
U.S. CIVIL AIR PATROL  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY  
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA 36112-6332

24 July 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR NATIONAL BOARD

SUBJECT: Cadet Participation in Emergency Services Missions

1. As we head into the next hurricane season, I have been asked several times about the role of cadets in CAP's Emergency Services Program. Let me make this absolutely clear: It is CAP policy to utilize ES qualified cadet members as much as possible during ES missions. However, that is not the end of the story.

2. The Requesting Agency Sets the Scope of CAP's Response. Our customers tell us what assistance they need. Our customers may have minimum age restrictions. CAP shall honor those restrictions. That does not mean that CAP's adult officers should discourage use of our cadets especially when discussing our capabilities with external customers. We all know how capable and mature our cadets are, and we should do whatever we reasonably can to show other agencies what they can do as well. While our cadets represent the finest among our nation's youth, adult officers must remain alert to ensure that unnecessary risks are avoided. Cadets are our organization's future.

3. Safety First

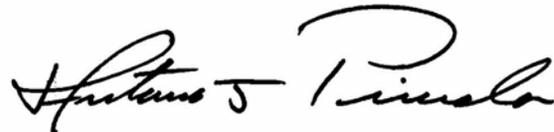
a. Potential Risks. Non-CAP ground teams working recovery after Hurricane Katrina faced the threats of armed looters and vigilantes, health risks posed by large numbers of decomposing bodies, hazardous materials in contaminated waters and more. Ground teams faced grief and personal suffering on a large scale. We shall not subject our cadets to known threats of violence. We cannot assume that parents of cadets understand and expect that their cadets will be exposed to the health risks described nor can we expect that minors (including cadets under 18) can fully appreciate those risks. Subjecting minors to widespread suffering may build their character, but it may also scar them for life.

b. Risk Management. Air crews whose tasking would include the possibility of IFR flight, do not accept the tasking unless they and their aircraft are IFR qualified. Ground teams whose tasking includes the possibility of hazards beyond the capability of their team members shall not accept the tasking. Cadets under 18 shall not be exposed to conditions in which their health is jeopardized by exposure to decomposing bodies and hazardous materials. Nor, absent parental permission, may they be exposed to widespread suffering. All team members who are exposed to a traumatic event or a distressful situation should be considered for an immediate critical incident stress debriefing or other appropriate intervention.

4. "Insurance" Protections. Protections of the Federal Employee Compensation Act (FECA) are afforded only to members 18 years and older and only on Air Force assigned missions. CAP member benefits (See CAPR 900-5 section E.) are available to members (including cadets) on all CAP missions to the extent FECA protections are not available.

5. Cadets are a vital part of CAP emergency services. These younger members can be of great value in the innumerable and crucial supporting roles, such as in radio communications, shelter management, food distribution, administration, roping off a perimeter, directing traffic, clearing vegetation for EMS, running messages, fire watch and in performing as mission staff assistants at incident command posts, emergency operation centers, staging areas or mobile command posts. A requesting agency's minimum age restriction or specific guidance may require that we utilize these younger members in supporting roles at their home units or in safe areas away from the forward operating location in order to comply with the agency's needs.

6. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lt Col Joe Abegg, my emergency services director, at [es@cap.gov](mailto:es@cap.gov).



ANTONIO J. PINEDA  
Major General, CAP  
Commander

cc:

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