



**WELCOME TO THE
SQUADRON SPONSORING COMMITTEE
TRAINING PACKAGE**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	PAGE 3 – 5
TEN PRINCIPLES	PAGE 6
TEAM BUILDING, Principle #1	PAGE 7 – 10
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, Principle #2	PAGE 11 -14
PRIVACY LEGISLATION, Principle #3	PAGE 15 -16
FUNDRAISING, Principle #4	PAGE 17 -20
RECOGNITION OF VOLUNTEERS, Principle#5	PAGE 21 -23
KEEPING RECORDS, Principle#6	PAGE 24 -32
PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, Principle#7	PAGE 33 -36
INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT, Principle#8	PAGE 37 -39
REGISTRATION AND SCREENING OF VOLUNTEERS, Principle #9	PAGE 40 -41
RECRUITING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS, Principle#10	PAGE 42 -53
CONCLUSION	PAGE 54

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the website for Squadron Sponsoring Committees (SSC). The information contained in this section is intended to assist with some of the key duties and responsibilities that will be entrusted to them.

The topics selected are given a high organizational value throughout the Air Cadet League. They are associated with the level of success or failure of a Squadron Sponsoring Committee's term in office. Experience has shown that if a SSC completes these activities with energy and enthusiasm they will have a successful year. And if the committee has a successful year, then the air cadets reap the benefits.

Throughout the website you will see Quick Links to relevant sections of the National Policy and Procedure Manual (PPM) or references to a specific section of a document contributed by one of our Provincial Committees. Provincial Committees have published excellent material for their jurisdiction. This will now have a wider audience as a result of the co-operation given in the development of this website. For example, you will see how the Ontario Provincial Committee describes the duties of the SSC's Treasurer, how British Columbia explains budgeting, how Saskatchewan plan and organize an Open House, and how a Quebec squadron prepares a handout for parents of new cadets.

It is important to appreciate that this website is not the National PPM, although, there are many references to it. Rather the intent is to provide you with a general introduction to a number of key topics before you have to deal with the specifics of the procedures. Procedures have to be very precise and frequently use words such as "must" and "shall" to show that compliance is mandatory. This is necessary to ensure a uniform response throughout the Air Cadet League.

Background

In June 2006 the Board of Governors reaffirmed the importance of providing Provincial Chairs, and through them the SSCs, with the necessary tools to do their jobs effectively and efficiently. National Committees were tasked to develop toolkits, i.e. handbooks, forms etc. to more clearly define related areas of responsibility.

In 2007 the Air Cadet League approved Ten Guiding Principles for Squadron Sponsoring Committees which in 2008 became the framework for this section of the League's Website. These principles highlight the areas where work is always needed and the results highly valued.

The Mission Statement was also revised and is in the General Section of the National Air Cadet League website at www.aircadetleague.com

There are very few paid positions in the Air Cadet League and these are located at the National Office in Ottawa and at some of the large Provincial Committees. Everyone else is a volunteer member of a team or a committee working at the community (squadron) level or Provincial, Territorial or National level.

The vast majority of League volunteers (members) work at the community level as part of the SSCs, which are regarded as the backbone of the Air Cadet movement. If it were not for the work of the thousands of volunteers who belong to these committees, then the Air Cadet League could not function. The extent of their involvement varies. For example, members of the squadron level SSC Executive are active throughout the training year. Another member may work only on Special Events or preparing a monthly E Mail letter, or providing transport when the air cadets have to travel. More than four hundred and fifty squadrons, each with a sponsoring committee and support teams, work on behalf of air cadets. Their collective efforts are encouraged and guided by Provincial, Territorial and National Committees, who also provide ongoing liaison with their military partners at the Department of National Defence (DND) and Canadian Forces.

A good working relationship with our DND partners at all levels is essential to the continued success of the air cadet program. Nonetheless, the fundamental business strategy of the Air Cadet League is to promote and enhance the effectiveness of the Squadron Sponsoring Committee.

National, Provincial and Territorial Committees have similar objectives, which are to enroll new squadrons, recruit cadets, officers and volunteers, maintain the fleet of glider and tow aircraft and enhance the work of SSCs. All are important to the continued success of the Air Cadet Program. One of these objectives, however, is the essential element of the League's role in its partnership with DND. Before reading the Ten Guiding Principles it is recommended you follow the Quick Link to an article on Leadership in the SSC Executive "Team. One of the responsibilities is to recruit and motivate parents, volunteers and supporters to get involved with Air Cadet League activities and then stay involved. A high level of parental involvement is a valuable resource and is the key to building a strong sponsoring committee. Parents and Volunteers are most likely to stay involved if they feel good about what they are doing and appreciated. To build that relationship requires good leadership from the SSC Executive Team which is why this article is recommended reading. The main message is, "It's not what you do, it's the way that you do it, that's what gets results". [Quick Link](#)

Guiding Principles for a Squadron Sponsoring Committee

- 1. We strive for a high level of involvement from parents, guardians and supporters in collective efforts that make our squadron strong using newsletters, E-mail and telephone committees.**
- 2. We provide awareness of the partnerships involved in the Air Cadet program by meeting the parent or guardian of a cadet at the time of enrolment.**
- 3. We comply fully with Federal and Provincial laws regarding the privacy of personal information and maintain strict confidentiality with regard to the storage and non disclosure of related records**
- 4. We develop fundraising activities separate and distinct from any requiring the participation of cadets while fully supporting them in their campaigns**
- 5. We recognize our financial supporters and volunteers who have worked to make our squadron successful.**
- 6. We maintain a record of all elections, assets and financial activities, which includes a quarterly statement of financial income and expenditures and complete all required reports in a timely manner**
- 7. We promote community awareness of national, provincial and local organizations who generate interest and opportunities in aviation for cadets and our partnership with the Department of National Defence and their support and delivery of the Air Cadet Program**
- 8. We uphold zero tolerance for any form of abusive behaviour and train everyone involved with the squadron accordingly**
- 9. We proactively recruit qualified resource people from the community for all aspects of the program and ensure candidates are screened promptly and thoroughly.**
- 10. We work to provide resources needed for optional activities to enhance the retention of serving cadets and attracting recruits to our squadron.**

PRINCIPLE #1 TEAM BUILDING

We strive for a high level of involvement from parents; guardians and supporters in collective efforts that make our squadron strong using newsletters, E-mail and telephone committees.

Planning and Organizing

A picture can say a thousand words. A chart can do much the same thing. Before moving through this website, please take a moment and look closely at the organizational chart at Figure 1.1. The message it sends to all involved with Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC) work is twofold. Firstly there are many tasks that have to be performed to make a sponsoring committee strong. Secondly, the SSC is going to need a lot of help from parents and supporters to make it all happen.

Communication

There are duties and responsibilities common to every SSC regardless of the size of the squadron. The workload is far too much for just two or three people to do. You will need help. For example, good communication is an important element for success both within the squadron and the outside community. But squadron newsletters, newspaper articles, advertisement and so on take time to prepare. So one of the key teams you need is one for getting the information out.

We look at Public Relations generally in more detail at the start of Principle #10 which deals with Recruiting. From the outset, however, it will help your work immensely if you ensure there is a good team in place to handle communications.

Good communications with parents is essential. They are keenly interested in what is going on especially where their son or daughter is involved. Parents are frequent observers of announcements being made at the end of the parade night. Some of them wonder how the cadets hear anything clearly given the acoustics of the hall or gymnasium being used. Even in the best conditions miscommunication can occur between a cadet and their parent regarding upcoming squadron activities. It is one more reason to consider additional ways of ensuring cadets and parents receive information promptly and accurately, by determining and organizing what is needed and then offer the service to the Commanding Officer.

It is teamwork and lots of it that will make your SSC strong and able to accomplish its mandate in making the squadron and its activities attractive to serving cadets and new recruits.

Tips for Recruiting Parents

Whenever you are trying to persuade parents to get involved give them multiple options. For example, "Your help would be really appreciated with; transport, special events, newsletter, public relations or every so often with a fundraising event." It is difficult to reject everything suggested without looking callous and uncaring. Don't forget to mention that getting to and from an event as a committee volunteer is no problem thanks to the teamwork of other parents who provide car-pooling. Make it hard for someone to say "No" by giving them more opportunities to say "Yes, OK" at least once. So keep the involvement requested simple. Outline what teams do from time to time during the training year, the phone committee, transport, special events, newsletters and so on, making it clear that they will not be required every week.

Squadron Enrollment

A squadron operating close to minimum strength numbers generates proportionately fewer opportunities for its cadets than one operating in the upper range of allowable strength. There are fewer vacancies or opportunities for; Summer Camp, Scholarship courses, promotion to the higher NCO ranks and so on. The Commanding Officer also has to deliver the program with a smaller number of staff. Optional activities are easier for the Commanding Officer to schedule with more staff rather than fewer. Teams for; First Aid, Drill, Rifle and Band are dependent on

qualified people to run them. A busy program also generates a greater need for parental involvement to help out once in a while, for example with transportation to gliding or power FAM flying. However, the sheer size of a squadron is not the key element to its success but rather the extent and quality of the support and optional activities available to the air cadets.

Targeted Recruiting

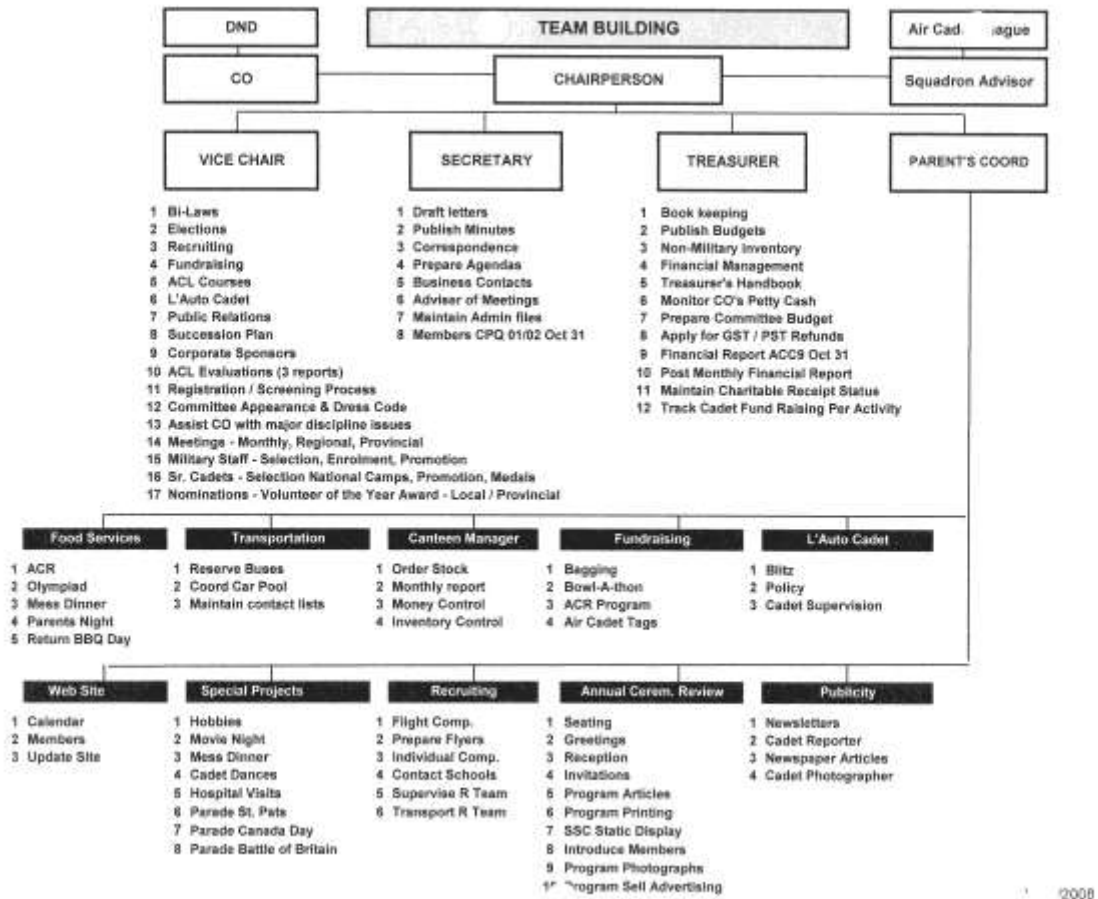
Parents are a marvellous resource but cannot always deliver the skill sets needed, making it necessary to search further afield. (See Principle #10 on Making a Presentation and Business Letter Writing for a Squadron). If you need the skills of a specialist, for example, a Treasurer, then consider recruiting from the community. There could well be people who would get involved and help out but have no idea help is needed. The position of Treasurer is looked at in more detail at Principle #6.

Teams and Functions

You might want to consider keeping a copy of Fig 1.1 in your working file as a reminder to keep informed about the number and strength of your committees and teams. Perhaps you can think of additional responsibilities not included on the list that you may want to add.

February 24th 2009

Figure 1.1
ORGANIZATION CHART



PRINCIPLE #2 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We provide awareness of the partnerships involved in the Air Cadet Program by meeting the parents or guardians of a cadet at the time of enrolment.

First Contact

When a new cadet has been enrolled it is important that a representative of the Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC) meets with the parent as soon as possible. Due to personal family details or health information being disclosed, the cadet and parent meet in private with the CIC member completing the documentation. Ideally, as soon as this had been completed the CIC member directs the parent to wherever the SSC representative is waiting. If there are lots of parents to meet make sure there are enough SSC members to deal with the parent(s) smoothly and efficiently, for example, if an Open House has been held.

Parents are a vitally important resource for the Squadron Sponsoring Committee. They must be made to feel welcome and that they are now part of the squadron.

Objectives

The objectives for the meeting with the SSC member are that the new parent be informed about the Air Cadet League partnership with Department of National Defence (DND) in general and at the squadron level in particular.

There is a lot of information to give out so much so, that some parents could find it overwhelming.

Parents Handbook

At the first meeting with your SSC member, distribution of a Parents Information Handbook with information about your squadron is recommended. A lot of SSCs do this. It helps answer a lot of this parent's questions. Produced in house it is an inexpensive and effective method of communication.

The handbook format is straightforward. First the welcome together with a brief outline of Air Cadet Program, the number of cadets and squadrons in Canada, the number of squadrons in the province or Territory and then the details about the home squadron.

The aims of the program are then listed together with the motto "To Learn, To Serve, To Advance" before the partnership is explained. This portion is usually a direct quote from existing provincial or national material.

The expectations the program has for all air cadets is outlined. These include attendance, participation in squadron events, taking care of the uniform and the prompt return of parental comment forms and application forms for activities such as Summer Camp.

The handbook then appeals directly to the parent to get involved. 690 Lakeshore Squadron (Quebec and Ottawa Valley) make their case as follows.

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

You can do a great deal to help your son/daughter become successful in the Air Cadet Program. The most important thing is to show an interest in their success and training and to support them during the year.

There are many other ways that you can help your son/daughter be successful. These include:

- Helping them organize their after school time so that there will be time for Air Cadets and schoolwork
- Reminding them to look after their uniform (washing, drying, pressing, shining etc)
- Including Air Cadet activities such as weekend training on the family calendar

- Try to avoid conflicts with major activities such as Annual Review
- Transporting your son/daughter (and maybe their friends) to parade nights and picking them up at the end of the night
- Encouraging them to participate in squadron teams and activities. The more they put into the squadron the more they will get out of the program.

GETTING INVOLVED

There are many ways that adults can get involved with the Air Cadet Program.

- ***Become a Volunteer.*** There is always a need for volunteers. Adult volunteers are needed for driving on weekend activities, to operate the canteen during training nights or for special activities
- ***Become a Civilian Instructor.*** If you can devote time on a regular basis to the squadron, or if you have special skills (flying, first aid, photography etc) you could become a Civilian Instructor. Civilian Instructors are considered part of the staff complement of a squadron and may receive some pay for their efforts.
- ***Become a CIC Officer.*** The Cadet Instructor Officers (CIC) are members of the Canadian Forces whose duties are to instruct cadets. Officers must be able to attend regularly (both regular parade nights and weekend activities) as well as take training courses offered through the military. CIC Officers receive pay, uniforms and training through the Canadian Forces and are eligible for promotion after meeting DND standards.
- ***Join the Squadron Sponsoring Committee.*** Each Squadron has a Sponsoring Committee. The Sponsoring Committee provides the support for the squadron and is involved with fundraising, providing facilities and promoting the squadron activities. The committee usually meets monthly although some committees meet more often. If you have skills you think might be useful to the Sponsoring Committee (for instance; accounting, fundraising, public relations, administrative or secretarial), please contact the Sponsoring Committee Chairperson. Any adult who wishes to work with Air Cadets must be registered and screened by the Sponsoring Committee or the Canadian Forces. This process includes a reference check and a criminal record check.

FUNDRAISING

*Fundraising activities are the most important source of revenues BY FAR. If our cadet/family fundraising activities are not successful, the squadron suffers. If cadet/families do not participate in fundraising activities, **other cadets/families have to work twice as hard to make up the difference.***

CONCLUSION

Joining Air Cadets is a big step for a young person. As parents, you can do a lot to support your son/daughter as they proceed through the Air Cadet Program. If you have any questions about the information included in this publication, please contact the Commanding Officer or the Chair of the Squadron Sponsoring Committee. He/she will be able to answer your questions and provide you with additional information about squadron procedures, the Air Cadet program and the Air Cadet League.

690's handbook ends with a Useful Information List which provides squadron phone numbers, voice mail, parade times, mailing address, E mail address, website address, Commanding Officer's name, SSC Chair's name and e mail address.

This has given you an idea of what a SSC can prepare and provide for parents. If your committee already issues something like this, well done. If not, persuade somebody to put one together. You'll need it for your recruiting activities outlined in Principle #10. Thanks again to 690 Lakeshore Squadron for sharing this information.

ORIENTATION SESSION

Another option to meet the new parents that “got away” on that first night can be an orientation meeting for a group of them. This would be more formal than a one to one session but the objectives remain the same. It is also a great opportunity to meet more members of the SSC and also the Commanding Officer.

There should be a sufficient number of orientation packages to give out. A signup sheet should be passed around to obtain details about the attendees. Ensure there is space for e mail addresses, phone numbers, mailing address, etc.

An orientation meeting can be productive in finding out about any special skills or interest the parents may have. Invite questions at any time and include a question period just before the meeting concludes.

Although this is an informal meeting have an agenda for it. That lets everyone know what is planned, who will be speaking about what, and how long it will last. For example, making sure the parents know not just the times and routine for parade night, but also times and locations for team practice sessions i.e. band, drill, first aid, and the locations for glider and FAM flying. These are just suggestions. Your provincial or territorial manual would have additional information of interest.

Remember you and your SSC only have one chance to make a first impression with the new parent, so make sure it is a good one.

PRINCIPLE #3 - PRIVACY LEGISLATION

We comply fully with Federal and Provincial Laws regarding the privacy of personal information and maintain strict confidentiality with regard to the storage and non disclosure of related records.

Legislation

The main thing to remember about legislation protecting personal privacy is this. Personal information that has been entrusted to your care for a particular purpose cannot be disclosed to another party for a different purpose without consent.

That, basically, is what the legislation, both Federal and Provincial, is all about. There can be some exceptions, for example, when an emergency occurs. But this would be a rare event. If you receive a request for personal information about someone involved with the squadron and you have any doubt as to the correct response, contact the Provincial or Territorial Committee office. When in doubt, don't give it out.

It is important to understand the legislation from two aspects. One is the obligations and restrictions placed on the Air Cadet League when recording and retaining personal information. The other aspect is the protection that is also given to you as a volunteer and member of the organization.

Security

Documents containing personal information must be treated as Confidential, stored securely (locked up), and not left open to perusal by unauthorized people. That would be anything containing details about parents, volunteers, would be volunteers, civilian instructors now volunteers, cadets and so on.

A Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC) must appoint one member to be responsible for the safekeeping of documents that are subject to Protection of Privacy legislation.

Passing information to another level of the League as required by policy is permitted, for example, the Sponsoring Committee Information Sheet due each Fall. The same (Privacy) restrictions then apply to the Provincial or Territorial Committee who receive the information.

Any person or organization requesting information about an individual must demonstrate a legitimate need to have it, as outlined in the Policy and Procedure Manuals.

Additional Information

If you wish to learn more, the Manitoba Provincial Committee's policy website at Section Three has an article on the topic (go to: www.aircadetmanitoba.com) . Similarly the British Columbia Provincial Committee's website has a detailed explanation of how an individual's privacy is to be protected complete with a useful Definitions section. Go to: www.aircadetleauge.bc.ca, or www.aircadetleague.com

PRINCIPLE #4 - FUNDRAISING

We develop fundraising activities separate and distinct from any requiring the participation of cadets while fully supporting them in their campaigns.

Fundraising is an important activity for a Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC) and likely to become even more so in the future as the cost of funding optional activities, accommodation and so on continues to increase. This segment deals with the preliminary steps to any campaign that should be considered before any fundraising event is decided upon. It will help your committee avoid problems and also enhance the results regardless of whether it is a letter writing campaign, product sales or social events or all three. Remember the SSC fundraising events are to be activities separate and distinct from those of the air cadets such as their tag days, car washes, sponsored walks and so on.

A review of the amount of money raised annually by the SSCs nationwide showed the total to be in excess of **Ten Million Dollars**.

Administrative Reports

Filing the T3010 and Annual Report with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is essential if your sponsoring committee wants to continue issuing tax receipts. Make sure this has been done. Not for profit organizations previously registered with CRA, who do not file a report annually, may be subject to a fine of \$500 or more.

If your SSC has incorporated and is now a provincial society the report of the most recent annual general meeting and the directors elected has to be filed with the Provincial Registrar under the applicable Societies Act.

Setting Controls

Controls are necessary when something is put into circulation and has to be returned -within a specified time period with the required action having been taken. For example, books of raffle tickets or entertainment books are assigned to sellers with a specific return date.

Make sure every item sent out has an identifying feature such as squadron number and sequential numbers. These are useful to avoid mix-ups. Also when briefing your sales team set the date when the items are due back and also to whom they must be returned.

Do not have returns handed in to senior cadets or squadron CIC staff. This is where control can be lost and disputes generated as to who handed what in, to whom and when. This is where unnecessary problems occur. So please consider making it very clear which member or members of your committee are handling the returns.

Organizing your team

Fundraising is like a wheelbarrow. It can do great things but it needs someone to push it. The SSC Executive are the movers for this activity so there has to be a game plan agreed to and who will lead it.

Call a Meeting

Call a meeting inviting parents and supporters outlining what needs to be funded and what targets will be set. But also make clear their input and suggestions will be welcomed. Outline possibilities for fundraising events. Give an overview of what has been tried before and the results but also invite suggestions from the participants. People like to feel they have been part of a decision making process and are better motivated to participate in related activities.

Agenda

Your agenda should include; welcome, outlining the squadron's financial needs, sharing ideas, developing a short list of fundraising events, and prioritizing the projects. The sharing of ideas will be an important part of the meeting. One strategy is to first go around the group and collect topics only, i.e. car wash, bake sales, casino night, etc. Have someone note the ideas and who suggested it. No idea is rejected at this point. When the ideas have been collected and similar suggestions combined ask the person(s) making the proposal to speak about it. Even wacky ideas can be refined into lucrative ones. For example, the original suggestion was to recruit a popular local politician to sit on a dunking stool to raise large amounts of money. The discussion refined it to the Chair of the SSC replacing the local politician to be the one sitting on a dunking stool to raise large amounts of money. Remember, people who feel they have been part of the decision are motivated to make it a success.

Keep the discussion going – good ideas will emerge. When that segment has concluded move to developing a short list, the timetable and the team leader or leaders for the activities.

SSCs Helping SSCs

In the event there is a shortage of ideas, consider getting in touch with the SSC of another squadron in your Wing/Region Area. Ask about their past experiences and successful campaigns. You will be pleasantly surprised at the willingness of other SSC members to share ideas. Workshops on fundraising held at Provincial Annual General Meetings are typically the best attended and receive the highest ratings. SSC participants drive the discussion by sharing ideas.

Strategies

Analyze your Territory

When updating or making a potential donor list get the latest membership of your local Chamber of Commerce or work through the Yellow Pages selecting local prominent businesses. Your community newspaper advertisements are also a source of companies who keep a high profile.

Any prospect list should always be current so that any recipient of a fundraising letter is correctly named.

Look for companies that are large enough to have spending discretion for supporting community activities. National franchise operations frequently have a policy of this nature. Also consider companies that market products aimed at the air cadet (teenage) age group.

Weather

If an activity is to be held outdoors, obviously the season will have to be appropriate. In addition, check the local weather history for that particular weekend. Air Shows do it. While not 100% reliable the information can be useful.

Community Calendar

Also check the Community Calendar to see what other major events are scheduled and avoid those dates.

Setting Targets

Now your committee has finalized what is going to be done and when, now is the time to set targets. Make sure they are reasonable, realistic and reachable with effort from all concerned.

To quote Charles Buxton –

- *“Experience shows that success is due less to ability than to zeal. The winner is he who gives himself to his work body and soul”.*

That might be a bit over the top but you can see the point he is making. Energy, motivation and drive to get the results are the key to success. So for every project, set out time lines for each of the teams, the targets and above all monitor the progress regularly and post the results. Promote competition between your in-house teams with a trophy for the highest achievers.

February 25, 2009

PRINCIPLE #5 - RECOGNITION OF VOLUNTEERS

We recognize our financial supporters and volunteers who have worked to make our squadron successful.

Their Essential Role

Without volunteers many activities in a squadron would not take place. Knowing their work has been appreciated can encourage them to stay longer and perhaps do even more for the air cadets. That is why it is important to say “Thank You” in a meaningful way.

An earlier edition of NOTAM (a newsletter) encouraged nominations for National and Provincial Honours and Awards and a similar message appears in the Fall 2006 issue of Cadence for the recognition of CIC (Cadet Instructor Cadre) Officers. This article, however, is about recognizing volunteers at the squadron level. It is neither policy nor a procedure, just some suggestions as to how to retain the volunteers currently helping out at your squadron.

Range of involvement

Volunteers give their time in a variety of ways, for example:

- Web Master
- Band Master
- Photographer
- Running the canteen
- Promotion interviews
- Publishing a newsletter
- Coordinating a mess dinner
- Helping with special events
- Driving cadets to and from events
- Assist with summer course selections
- Media relations representative for the squadron
- Coordinating the Duke of Edinburgh’s Awards program, etc.

Annual Evaluation

Volunteers want the squadron to be successful and to be part of making that happen. Some Squadron Sponsoring Committees (SSC) recognize their volunteers on a regular basis, others do so occasionally and sadly, some hardly ever.

Adding “Annual Volunteer Evaluation” to a Things To Do list for a particular month can be a useful reminder. Nominations for National and Provincial recognition, such as the new 10 Year Air Cadet League Service Medal could also be considered at that time. Check the website (www.aircadetleague.com) for those procedures. For officers in the CIC there is a range of Canadian honours and awards for which they can be nominated, including the Order of Military Merit. For civilians there are Provincial Orders and Volunteer Awards. In order to make this happen, however, somebody has to take time to prepare the nomination.

Criteria

The criteria for squadron level recognition, however, is set by the SSC in consultation with the Commanding Officer. It is decided locally and usually considers such things as;

- length of service,
- special merit or
- a combination of both.

Forms of Recognition

What form it takes is also a local decision but it does not have to be expensive. Examples from squadrons across the country have included:

Crests

Certificates

Anniversary Books

Framed Letter of Appreciation

A Large card signed by the cadets

Volunteer of the Year Award

Framed picture of all the squadron members

Squadron pin

Pewter mug.

Whatever is decided the award should convey what the volunteer has contributed to the squadron.

The Occasion

It then has to be decided when and where the presentation will occur. There are a number of options;

CO's Parade

Parent's Night

Squadron Dinner

Annual Ceremonial Review

Again this is a local decision. Arranging for a photograph to be taken will provide another memento for the volunteer being recognized and also potential for an article in the community newspaper.

Additional Recipients

A SSC should also review the support received from local financial supporters and companies who also help by donating goods and services. Long-standing supporters also merit recognition.

Chairman's Annual Report

When writing the annual report at the end of the training year you should include the names of those who have been recognized, at whatever level, thereby providing a permanent record. Saying "Thank You", and we appreciate what you have done for our air cadets" can make the difference between a volunteer staying or leaving.

In the words of the song:

"You don't know what you've got 'til it's gone."

February 25, 2009

PRINCIPLE #6 - KEEPING RECORDS

We maintain a record of all elections, assets and financial activities, which includes a quarterly statement of financial income and expenditures and complete all required reports in a timely manner.

Keeping good records is not difficult if you employ a system and make sure entries are made as and when required. In this segment we look at; budgeting, documenting elections and formal meetings of the Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC) and completing required forms.

Please remember the material on the SSC Website is to provide you with a general introduction to a number of topics before having to comply with specific procedures required by your Provincial or Territorial committee.

The Budget

This section on budgeting quotes extensively from an article written by the BC Provincial Committee in 2006

A budget is a plan, a financial plan and is the essential element in running a successful small business which has a lot in common with running a squadron sponsoring committee.

A budget should be a simple financial document that is created each year to assist in the running of the squadron. It is used from month to month to determine how you are doing when compared to what had been planned. A budget should be an outline of realistic expectations and not a wish list based on unrealistic ones.

A good starting point for a budget is to use last year's information to see what could be expected for the year ahead. A key component to the budget is the squadron's proposed training plan. This is prepared by the Commanding Officer's team prior to a meeting with the SSC Executive to discuss what is proposed and reach an agreement on what the budget can pay for. Always be alert to new ideas for attracting and retaining cadets. Listen to proposals in the Training Plan that may be new territory for the squadron but could be a great activity for cadets. Keep an open mind and see what can be realistically funded. Inevitably the final list of activities will see some items dropped, but give every proposal fair consideration. . (Note: the budget must be presented and approved at a formal meeting of the SSC)

Much of the training program is mandated and funded by the Department of National Defence. Strong and successful squadrons thrive on optional activities the main funding for which is the responsibility of the SSC

Air cadets can participate in one perhaps two fundraising event each year, a tag day and a car wash for example. The Commanding Officer must approve each and every activity involving cadets which, obviously, would include fundraising events. The training schedule has to be considered before any fundraising activity involving cadets can be scheduled to avoid conflicts. However, it is the responsibility of the SSC-to plan, organize and carry out fundraising initiatives of their own.

The budget is based on an annual program of income and expenditure. Make it a prominent document in your administration and not something that is largely forgotten. Keep an income and expense statement for each month and show any variance that has developed. Monitoring these parameters will determine if you are on target.

Another important task is to keep the Commanding Officer's team informed on a regular basis as to how planned income and expenses are evolving relative to the planned budget. A representative of the SSC should be an automatic invitee to all or part of the Commanding Officer's monthly team meeting and vice

versa. The budget should be a fixed item on the respective agendas and the current situation made known to everyone. Do not keep the budget a secret.

A pleasant but all too rare situation occurs when income exceeds expectations. It does happen. The provincial lottery corporation, for example, may make a bonus payment to recipient groups. Don't be shackled by the budget document if new opportunities can now be considered. The budget is not cast in stone. If a proposal makes sense and it is now financially feasible to fund it, give it fair consideration. Do not reject it because it was not in the original document

It is important that you do not alter the budget document itself. Stick with what was planned originally and report the changes or variances in the financial statements. If changes are made midstream it will be difficult to determine where you are with respect to the original (budget) plan.

To make life easier for yourself and/or your committee's Treasurer and the Commanding Officer's team, have a clear list of what items or activities have been preapproved for expenditure. If it is in the approved budget it should be understood there is existing approval to go ahead and incur the expenses. A fresh round of re-discussion and decision making is not needed. As a matter of administrative convenience and to co-ordinate cash flow to a chequing account you may wish to arrange for prior notification to be given when expenses over, say \$500 are going to be incurred by the Commanding Officer's team.

It fosters a good working relationship between the Commanding Officer's team and the SSC when the activities that have been pre-approved and listed, proceed as planned providing the cash flow is on target.

If there is a new and unforeseen requirement to fund an activity or equipment and it is agreed to be important try and find a way to raise the extra money required. Supporters are more receptive to helping out with a specific items or event as opposed to just giving money to the squadron.

A copy of the monthly Financial Statement should be given to the SSC Executive and also the Commanding Officer who, in turn, should make sure the details are known to the Officers and Instructors. The budget figures are included on each monthly income and expense statement as an indicator of progress.

Quick Links

There are detailed procedures in place for the financial management of squadron officers. Use the Quick Link to go to the Policy and Procedure Manual, Sections 3.7 to 3.7.10 for the procedures to be followed and reporting requirements.

Treasurer

Ontario Provincial Committee has used the standard description for a Treasurer's duties but adds additional criteria to the approval process. These make good sense when considering the negative repercussions for an SSC's reputation in the community and also the Air Cadet League if a financial irregularity or worse develops.

The Air Cadet League of Canada mandates all Squadrons have a functioning Treasurer. The Treasurer must not be a department of National Defence (DND) Cadet Instructor Cadre (CIC) Officer, or a Civilian Instructor (CI). The Treasurer must have an arms-length relationship (cannot have a spousal, blood adoption, common-law, business partner or serious client/supplier relationship) with any other Squadron Sponsoring Committee member with signing authority (co-signing jointly) on any Bank documents (cheques, banking authorities, power of attorney, or similar documents).

The Squadron Sponsoring Committee elects the Treasurer for an in-determinate term of office, with the position held at the Squadron Sponsoring Committee's pleasure.

The Treasurer's appointment is subject to written concurrence from the Air Cadet League of Canada, Ontario Provincial Committee, this concurrence must be signed by the OPC Chair or OPC Executive Director on his/her behalf and held as part of the Squadron's documentation such as Articles of Incorporation/Charter documentation, etc.

Though not mandatory, it is recommended incoming SSC Treasurer obtain and provide to OPC a recent credit report. Usually Credit Reporting Agencies provide these without charges (e.g. Equifax) but any reasonable expenses incurred by the candidate in securing such a report shall be reimbursed to the candidate by the SSC. Such report will remain strictly confidential under the exclusive sole control of and for the exclusive use of the ACLC OPC office for the purpose of vetting a Treasurer role candidate. The contents thereof shall not be divulged to any other parties in any SSC or other external entity.

The main thing to remember is that your Treasurer has to be competent and credible.

Documenting Formal Meetings

Another set of records to be kept and maintained is for the conduct of meetings of the sponsoring committee. Any open meeting that is not the annual meeting is a special meeting. Voting members should be notified in the same manner as for the annual meeting.

Key Players.

Members of the executive have specific duties to perform at meetings, another good reason to ensure the committee is at full strength.

The Secretary plays an important role in the conduct of meetings. For example, sending out details of the meeting to members, preparing the agenda, reading out correspondence received, taking and circulating minutes.

The Chair of the SSC normally chairs the meeting. However, in the absence of the Chair the Vice Chair can conduct the meeting.

The Treasurer provides a briefing on the finances of the Committee and tables the monthly budget and variances.

Agenda

The Air Cadet League uses a basic agenda with four subject areas:

1. Administration of meeting
2. Business arising
3. New Business and
4. Conclusion

Example:

1. Administration
 - 1.1 Chairperson's welcome and Opening Remarks
 - 1.2 Call for new agenda items
 - 1.3 Approval of Agenda
 - 1.4 Adoption of Minutes as circulated
- 2 Business Arising
 - 2.1 (Add items)
- 3 New Business
 - 3.1 (Add items)
- 4 Conclusion

- 4.1 Good and Welfare of Cadets
- 4.2 Closing Remarks
- 4.3 Next Meeting
- 4.4 Adjournment

The agenda has to be approved by a formal vote i.e. a proposer and a seconder, discussion and then the vote.

Minutes

Minutes provide a permanent record of what occurred at either the annual meeting or special meetings of the SSC. A binder to hold printed copies of the Minutes is a practical way to provide a permanent record. They are usually taken by the secretary and record the time, date and place of the meeting, the number of voting members present, the agenda and a record of the discussion and outcome of votes taken.

The wording of a motion or resolution has to be recorded verbatim together with the proposer and the seconder. A motion is a proposal that something be done or to record the opinion of the group, hence the need for accuracy. Similarly any amendment to the proposal also has to be recorded verbatim. If an amendment has been put forward the amended motion is voted on first and if it passes the debate is finished. If the amendment fails the original proposal is then voted upon.

A motion to adjourn does not have to be debated.

The minutes are to record the outcome of any vote taken but not who voted for or against. It should be shown how the vote was taken and the outcome with exact numbers For and Against if the outcome was close.

Minutes should be typewritten with a double space between paragraphs. They form part of the official records only after being circulated and adopted at the next meeting. Once adopted the Chair asks if there are any errors or omissions. If any are raised an amendment is required and only then do the corrected minutes become part of the SSC records.

Elections

Everyone entitled to vote must be made aware of the details of the proposed meeting. Having it read out on parade for the cadets to tell their parents, or giving out a written announcement for them to take home is not sufficient. Here the value of a communications team becomes very apparent. If e mail letters to parents, for example, are a regular feature of the committee's activities getting the word out is less of a problem. For parents or supporters not on your e mail letter list, send a notification by regular mail or use the parent liaison/telephone team.

If it is the annual meeting of the SSC make it clear that one of the purposes is to elect executive committee members as well as to carry out the business of the agenda. The time, date and location of the meeting must also be specified.

The election of the executive committee members is ideally handled by someone independent and not part of the membership. Your committee's Air Cadet League representative is ideal to chair that portion of the meeting.

Candidates must be nominated by another member who has to say, for the record, their name and the name of the person being nominated. The "Chair" then repeats who has been nominated and by whom for the benefit of the secretary and also for those who might not have heard what was said. This process continues until all nominations have been recorded.

The Chair then asks the same question three times. "Are there any further nomination?" If none are put forward the nominations are declared closed. If the number of candidates nominated equals the number of positions available the Chair can declare all elected by acclamation.

If there are more nominees than vacancies voting must occur and is usually by ballot. Consult your Provincial or Territorial Bylaws for further information.

Information Sheet

Don't forget the Provincial or Territorial Committee must be notified of the new appointees. This is done by forwarding a copy of the Squadron Information Sheet.

Some Provinces require additional information on who is to be the Treasurer. In addition, if your SSC is incorporated as a Society the Provincial Registrar has to be told of a change in the office holders.

Getting people to attend is always a challenge. This is where having a telephone team as part of your communications strategy pays dividends.

FORMS

Completing the Required Forms

A form is a convenient way to convey a lot of information. Obviously in order to do that the layout and design of each one is varied. The forms in use by the Air Cadet League are no exception. Fortunately the more complex ones, for example, those dealing with financial management and reporting have step by step accompanying instructions which make the process much easier.

Time Sensitive for Cadets

A number of forms are of importance to the cadets and require special attention to ensure they are completed promptly to avoid letting them down. For example, Continuation Flying Forms for the glider and power graduates from summer camps, Processing scholarship camp applications – Ordering attendance pins in time for the annual ceremonial review – and nominations for awards such as the Legion Medal of Excellence and the Strathcona Medal of Honour.

Time Sensitive for SSC

A number of the SSC forms are also time sensitive; the Squadron Information Sheet for the Training Year is due at the end of September, the ACC9 by the end of October, the Chair's midyear report is required by the end of February as is the Registered Charities Report (or within six months of the SSC's financial year end) and the issuing of tax receipts for donations received.

Frequently Used

Some forms are used regularly; Registration and Screening, Driver's Log Sheets and nomination forms for Honours and Awards Recognition at the Squadron Provincial or National level. And in house budget documents are filled in on a monthly basis.

There are about thirty forms that SSC's work with and can be located in the Provincial manual. A lot of them require action by a particular date. Here again the value of using a business diary or planning calendar to note what is due and when becomes apparent.

The Provincial and Territorial committees also publish a useful list of monthly administrative duties and include the form(s) required

PRINCIPLE #7 - PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We promote community awareness of national, provincial and local organizations who generate interest and opportunities in aviation for cadets and our partnership with the Department of National Defence and their support and delivery of the Air Cadet Program.

In Principle #5 we looked at recognizing volunteers at the squadron level. In Principle #7 we will look at a different form of recognition, the public acknowledgement of aviation organizations who support the Air Cadet program and, of course, the Department of National Defence and Canadian Forces who make the program possible.

Aviation and Aerospace Industry

When making a speech at an Annual Ceremonial Review or making a presentation about your squadron, please consider making a reference to the organizations in the Canadian Aviation and Aerospace Industry who support the Air Cadet program. If you have invited a local representative to a significant squadron event, so much the better. However, regardless of whether or not there is an invited guest or two in the audience please make an acknowledgement of the industry's support for the air cadet program.

The relationship developed as follows:

October 2005 - The Board of Governors of the Air Cadet League approved a new committee with the mandate to determine the directions and future involvement with the Canadian Aerospace Industry. Work proceeded on the development of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), the distribution and accessibility to educational materials, increased awareness of career opportunities, liaison with provincial and territorial committees of the Air Cadet League, and working to sustain and enhance a long term partnership between the League and the industry.

November 2005 - The first MOUs were signed with:

- Canadian Aerospace Human Resources Alliance
- Canadian Aviation Maintenance Council.

November 2006

- Air Transport Association of Canada
- Canadian Business Aviation Associates.

Provincial Committees are also making agreements with various branches of the industry.

- Alberta - Aviation Alberta - November 2007.
- PEI - Aerospace Human Resources Council - February 2008.
- BC - Aerospace Industry Association and Aerospace Training Institutes - June 2008
- Ontario - Aerospace Council for Ontario - November 2008.

New Opportunities

An MOU at the Provincial level describes how the Provincial Committee(s) and Industry will work together to generate new experiences for air cadets outside of the curriculum. The activities may vary from province to province. They include, but are not restricted to, Career Days, Industry Tours, Introductory Training and Orientation and intended to showcase both the Aerospace Industry and the Training Institutions. For example, in PEI there are ongoing initiatives arranged through the Aerospace Council to assist air cadets intending to pursue a career in the industry. In Ontario the Provincial Committee is planning to rebuild a vintage aircraft in a series of four week summer courses delivered by industry qualified instructors. Successful completion generates an educational credit. In Alberta through the generosity of the Board of Directors and members of Aviation Alberta, the Alberta Provincial Committee will award two post-secondary education scholarships valued at \$4000 each to a

serving Air Cadet who is entering or has already entered directly into a full program of studies in the field of Aviation.

In British Columbia air cadets have toured a major manufacturing plant, a large helicopter organization providing support worldwide and a new Aerospace Technology Centre. Additional wing areas will become involved as the program expands and new opportunities are organized such as visiting Air Canada's CAE flight simulation centre at Vancouver International Airport. Two types of tours are scheduled, one for groups of cadets who are pilots, the other for cadets who are not.

Airlines and Pilot Associations

The Air Cadet League also has partnerships within the airline industry.

- The West Jet Pilots Association gives an annual award for continued flying training for a selected cadet.
- The Airline Pilots Association provides an annual scholarship for a Private Pilot's License.
- West Jet Airline donates free travel for one cadet and one parent or escort from each Province and Territory to attend the National final of the League's Effective Speaking competition held each year at the Annual General meeting.

As a result of these initiatives Air Cadets now receive additional flying bursaries, experience in national aviation operating, aircraft ground school, safety related training, access to industry based training and career opportunities.

Increased Awareness

Increasing awareness about existing aerospace career opportunities and exposing them to aviation experiences not included in a squadron's curriculum will hopefully increase enrollment of Air Cadets in related aerospace training programs leading to subsequent employment.

This level of support and partnering for the benefit of Air Cadets is first class and growing all the time. Everyone involved with the program is truly grateful to the industry for this.

For additional information go to: www.aircadetleague.com/pdf/LI_partnership_e.doc

The Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces

History

A special mention must be made of the original and longstanding partnership with the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Forces (CF) who have worked together with the Air Cadet League of Canada since 1941 when the program began.

Prior to the formation of the Air Cadet League of Canada in 1941, air cadets in 111 Squadron began operating in January 1939. Today there are 450 squadrons across the country with a combined air cadet population of approximately 24,000. Young citizens from ages 12 to 18 enjoy top quality training and personal development that focuses on, citizenship, leadership, physical fitness, general aviation subjects and volunteer work in the local community. Go to Section 1.3 of the National Policy and Procedure Manual for a detailed history. (www.aircadetleague.com).

Finances

The financial contribution of the Department of National Defence is to fund the instructional staff (officers of the Cadet Instructors Cadre (CIC) and civilian instructors), the core curriculum, cadet uniforms, summer camps and scholarship courses which include gliding and power pilot licences and foreign exchanges. In 2007/2008 more than \$71m was spent on the Air Cadet Program.

The Air Cadet League of Canada is responsible to ensure each squadron is supported by a local Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC). The committee undertakes to provide; accommodation, a supplementary budget, liability insurance, equipment and funds for optional activities not covered by DND. The costs vary considerably from community to community. For example, some squadrons enjoy free accommodation while others pay several thousands of dollars a year to rent part of a local school for the evening activities. Even with the variation in local costs to be borne by individual sponsoring committees, the Air Cadet program is still a marvelous opportunity for our youth.

The Air Cadet program would not be available to the community without DND making this substantial investment in our youth. Seven decades of building Canada's future leaders is but one of the accomplishments made due to the sustained support of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces and for which everyone involved with the program says a sincere "Thank You".

PRINCIPLE #8 - INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

We uphold zero tolerance for any form of abusive behaviour and train everyone involved with the squadron accordingly.

Expectations

Adult volunteers working with the Air Cadet League are in positions of trust and must behave appropriately at all times when in the presence of cadets. They are also expected to work effectively and harmoniously with other volunteers on the Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC) along with those working for the Commanding Officer's team. Harassment, bullying, discrimination or sexually suggestive behaviour or publication material is not tolerated.

Prohibitions

Harassment has been defined in Human Rights legislation as –

- “Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.”

Bullying or oppressive conduct is equally unacceptable. Those responsible for the good and welfare of an air cadet squadron must respond promptly and decisively in confronting the person or persons thought to be responsible for any incident that comes to light.

Canadian Forces Policy – League Support

The Air Cadet League of Canada fully supports the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces in their commitment to provide a safe and healthy environment for the cadet program.

The following is quoted from “Leadership through Diversity, A Guide for Civilian Institutions” published by the Canadian Forces (CF).

“The Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Forces are committed to providing a safe, respectful environment that promotes fair and equal treatment for all staff members, cadets and volunteers involved in the Canadian Cadet Organization (CCO).

An environment that fosters teamwork and encourages individuals to contribute their best effort is essential to the success of the squadron. Mutual trust, support and respect for the dignity and rights of every person are its essential characteristics. Harassment is not tolerated. It is not only against the law but also shows a lack of respect for the individual concerned and is poisonous to the working environment. Morale and cohesion of the group suffers as a result.

Racist Conduct

The Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces are committed to the principle of equality of all people and the dignity and worth of every human being without regard to, among other things; race, national or ethnic origin, color or religion.

Racist conduct means conduct that promotes, encourages, or constitutes discrimination or harassment on the basis of national or ethnic origin, color or religion.

Racist attitudes are totally incompatible with the military ethos and with effective military service and any conduct that reflects such attitudes will not be tolerated.

Canadian Human Rights Act.

The CF is required to make reasonable accommodation for the religious practices of individuals, for example, worship, dietary practices, dress and appearance and medical requirements where to do so would not cause undue hardship.

Intervention

A safe environment promotes the prevention of harassment through education and provides prompt intervention and resolution of any incident that may occur. As of Nov 2008 the Canadian Harassment Abuse Prevention (CHAP) training course was being updated and renamed. There is zero tolerance for any form of abusive behaviour. All incidents must be brought to the attention of the SSC Chairperson who in turn will notify the Commanding Officer as required.

SSC Training

Members of the Commanding Officer's team are required to take part periodically in prescribed training on this topic. It is strongly recommended that it be arranged that new members of the SSC teams be invited to the same in house training sessions.

CATO 25-05 is a reference document for this subject.

Abusive Behaviour versus Disputes.

In cases of alleged abusive behaviour the person subjected to the abuse or inappropriate conduct is regarded as a victim. When two or more parties have had a genuine disagreement which is ongoing and impairing the work of the group, there is no victim as such even if one of them is very upset. That happens. Care and attention to detail is required when sorting out what has occurred. Ensure that abusive or inappropriate conduct is identified and dealt with as required. Disagreements on the other hand are moved into a Conflict Resolution process.

Conflicts are a predictable occurrence when people are working together, however, if they are left unresolved, they can be divisive within the SSC or the squadron. It is important to get the matter resolved promptly.

References

The Cadet Conflict Management system (CCMS) covered in CATO 13-25 outlines the philosophy and steps to be followed. The BC Provincial Committee and Pacific Region Cadet Office have developed a conflict management protocol that can be found at "Sponsoring Committee Manuals - Dispute Resolution" of the BC Provincial website (www.aircadetleague.bc.ca)

PRINCIPLE #9 - REGISTRATION AND SCREENING OF VOLUNTEERS

We proactively recruit qualified resource people from the community for all aspects of the program and ensure candidates are screened promptly and thoroughly.

Objective

Why is the Registration and Screening of Volunteers so important? Why can failure to perform these duties and responsibilities promptly and diligently lead to probation or dissolution of a Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC)? The reason this policy receives such a high priority is because the objective of the Air Cadet League and the Department of National Defence is that not one air cadet is harmed, either physically or emotionally, by the negligent, abusive or criminal behaviour of someone in a position of trust or authority within the program. Just one incident is one too many.

Delivering the program to air cadets relies on attracting adult participants from the community to deliver a range of activities that are second to none. The recruitment process must do more than provide quality instructors and volunteers. In today's world it is necessary to know more about the person volunteering to get involved with youth activities.

Screening

The Air Cadet League has a special responsibility to ensure that all applicants comply with the mandatory reliable screening procedures. This must occur before any decision can be made as to their suitability to join the squadron, either as a member of the Commanding Officer's team or the SSC's team

Reliability screening means a systematic process agreed upon by DND and the Navy Cadet, Air Cadet and Army Cadet Leagues to confirm that a person can be expected to be reliable and trustworthy to participate in activities in support of cadets.

Ref: CATO 23-07

The entire registration and screening process is outlined in a League Handbook which is essential reading for a SSC and especially the member tasked with co-ordinating the process at the squadron. (See www.aircadetleague.com Volunteer Screening Pamphlet and SSC Screening Co-ordinators Handbook)

All applicants complete a criminal record check. Failure to complete any portion of the screening process results in disqualification. An applicant who does not demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills and credibility for the position applied for cannot be accepted.

Registration

Successful applicants are registered to work with Air Cadets for a maximum of five years after which recertification is required. This is a common practice and regarded as "positive vetting" where the suitability of the volunteer is expected to be reconfirmed.

The National Committee on Registration and Screening of Volunteers reports annually, or as required, on the number of applicants being processed, and the results are incorporated into a National database which is shared with the Navy and Army Cadet Leagues.

Of paramount importance is the protection of our most vulnerable asset, our youth. Assuming that volunteers have good character traits is not sufficient. Confirmation is mandatory.

February 25, 2009

PRINCIPLE #10 - RECRUITING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

We work to provide resources needed for optional activities to enhance the retention of serving cadets and attracting recruits to our squadron.

In Principle #10 we look at activities relating to recruitment; how to write to organizations to tell them you need volunteers, how to make a presentation, how to welcome new volunteers and how to plan an Open House. "Recruiting" has been left deliberately to the end in order to explain the importance of having the activities referred to in Principles One through nine clearly understood and in place. As was mentioned earlier, if a Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC) works hard at all ten they deserve to have an excellent year.

There is one important activity that covers a whole range of SSC activities and that is Public Relations. So before exploring recruiting activities we will look at the ways in which a good Public Relations strategy will help your efforts and a weak one hinder them.

Public Relations

To be successful in recruiting and retaining; cadets, adult volunteers, financial supporters and "political" support from the community, a public relations strategy must be worked on year round. The Air Cadet League publishes an excellent handbook on Public Relations and is recommended reading. But for now it is appropriate to look briefly at why Public Relations is so important to the success of what you are trying to do.

Public Relations is all about persuading people. Your objective is to persuade people that 123 Squadron is rightly regarded as the best program for youth in town. We all believe that to be true, but you will not persuade the local population to think the same way unless you systematically tell them about it. Brand recognition is what it is aimed for. If a citizen is asked to name a good youth program in town, your squadron should be the one. That is good.

On the other hand, if the air cadet squadron is not even mentioned and only vaguely remembered when asked; "Oh yes, I think there is one here but it doesn't do very much". That is bad. The truth might be that the squadron is quietly doing a lot of good things but no information is being given out about it. That is sad.

In Principle #1 we looked at the importance of having a good communication team in place to get the information out. Getting information out about the volunteers and supporters you are recognizing is mentioned in Principle #5. The same message is contained in Principle #7, promoting community awareness of national, provincial and local partners from Department of National Defence (DND) and the Aerospace Industry.

Benefits

The greatest benefits of a good Public Relations strategy are realized when it is time to recruit from within the community. Regardless of whether you are recruiting cadets, adult volunteers or financial supporters, if the squadron enjoys a strong profile the task becomes much easier. Your audience will not have to be persuaded that you are inviting them to become part of the best youth program in town, they will know that already.

Recruiting

Letter Writing

The first step is to let people know what you need. In this segment we look at an outline for a letter requesting an opportunity to attend and promote the squadron at a meeting of a local organization such as a service club. Your letter should reflect the three "C"s – CLEAR, CORRECT, CONCISE

First of all consider how you will start, what you want to go into your letter, the sequence and what you want to happen. The sequences are referred to as: - The Greeting, The Body of the Letter (usually two or three paragraphs) The Request and The Closure with the appropriate signature block.

In this example a request is being made to the President of an association to come and speak about 123 Squadron. However this format can fit a variety of purposes, for example a fund raising letter. Letters should not be too lengthy. An attachment can be an effective way of conveying a large amount of information. Writing on SSC letterhead the recipient's name, title, association and address are positioned at the top left of the page.

The Greeting

Before writing to the Chair or President of any group, association or company, check on who is now the incumbent; it may have changed recently. If you address the recipient by their first name you have to close the letter in the same way with just your first name. It is not appropriate to address the recipient with their first name and close with your full name. Only if you know the recipient on a personal basis can the letter be opened and closed with first names.

Example

John Smith
President 306 Wing
Air Force Association of Canada
1000 St Charles Blvd
Montreal, Quebec, H4H 1R1

Dear President Smith

The Body of the Letter

Now you have to grab the attention of the reader. An effective way to do this is to start with a question which gets straight to the purpose of your letter.

Example

Would members of your association be interested in hearing about a great program for young people right here in Yourtown? I am referring to 123 Air Cadet Squadron. The Squadron Sponsoring Committee is seeking adult volunteers to participate in a variety of ways supporting this marvellous group of young people, our citizens and community leaders of tomorrow.

A very brief outline of the program is appropriate at this point; when it started, the partnership, how it is supported here in Yourtown and the present size of the squadron. At this point it should be shown how the young citizens of Yourtown are benefitting from the program at 123 Squadron.

The Air Cadet program encourages youth from all backgrounds to learn new skills taking on new challenges and gaining new experiences. Air Cadets work together building team spirit and new friendships, some of which last a lifetime. Cadets of 123 Squadron quickly become involved in volunteer activities that help the community such as: protection and caring for the local environment, visiting homes for senior citizens, and working to support programs such as the Christmas Baskets. They go gliding and flying as part of a syllabus that covers aircraft construction, propulsion, navigation and control. Some cadets achieve glider and power aircraft pilot licences. Camping, bush craft and survival skills are also part of the program. Band, First Aid and Drill and Rifle teams practice at weekends. It's a great program.

The next paragraph should explain how the program is funded and staffed.

The Department of National Defence (DND) pays most of the costs of the training activities and uniform expenses.

The role of the Squadron Sponsoring Committee, as the civilian volunteer partner, is to: plan and organize fundraising events for activities which are not funded by DND, maintain a bank account in the committee's name and provide suitable facilities for cadet training, among other responsibilities.

123 Squadron has eighty cadets enrolled and the numbers are increasing. We need more instructors and volunteers from our community to give some of their time and talents to help us provide this program.

There are many, many ways to become part of our squadron, help our young citizens and have a very rewarding experience as a result.

The Request

Would you be able to arrange for me to visit your association to make a thirty minute presentation on the air cadet program and 123 squadron? It can include a ten minute film if a TV and DVD or VCR player is available. Your support for the squadron will be very much appreciated and I look forward to hearing from you.

The Closure

The closure is determined by the Greeting. If it is a formal greeting, "Dear President Smith" the closure should be "Yours Truly" followed by your signature. If it is personal, i.e. on a first name basis, you would close with "Yours Sincerely" and sign it with your first name.

The Signature Block should include your name and title/position, phone numbers if different to that on the letterhead.

Where to find Volunteers

Air Force Association of Canada, Aviation Organizations, Canadian Club, Church Clubs, City Council, City Recreation/Sports departments, Curling Clubs, First Aid Organizations, Fitness Clubs, Flying/Soaring Clubs, Kinsmen Club, Kiwanis Club, Music Clubs, Optimist International, Parent/Teacher Associations, Police/Fire Departments Organizations, Public Speaking Organizations, Rifle/Gun Clubs, Rotary Club, Royal Canadian Legion, Sports Clubs, YMCA/YWCA

Give it a try. You'll be pleased at the response. A lot of people want to get involved, but they have to be asked.

Making a Presentation

You are delighted to receive a reply to your letter inviting you to attend and make your presentation. In this segment we will look at a simple game plan to follow for the occasion.

You may be there to fundraise, recruit volunteers or increase awareness of the squadron in the community. Regardless of why you are there always have a clear plan for what you are going to do with the time. The importance of the first two minutes and the last two minutes cannot be overemphasized because what happens in that short time period can make or mar your entire presentation. If you have hand out material do not distribute it until after the session has concluded. Tell your audience you will do that. But if papers are given out to attendees before or during your presentation you will lose a lot of their attention.

The first two minutes

You will be introduced by someone from the host organization and you are now front and centre.

The next sixty seconds are crucially important. As you stand there your audience is assessing: your age, appearance, whether you are relaxed or nervous and is this session likely to be interesting or boring. Do

you look as if you know what you are doing? For example, never start by saying, "I haven't done this before". Your audience will give a silent groan at this news because you are warning them this might not go too smoothly

With the clock ticking you:

Thank your host for the invitation

Say how pleased you are to be here to talk about 123 Squadron and

What you are going to do in the next twenty, thirty minutes (whatever time you have agreed to with your host).

That reassures your audience. They know what they will see and/or hear and how long it will take. That is very important especially if you are speaking or fundraising to a business luncheon where attendees usually have afternoon appointments or work commitments.

Now you have to motivate your audience to listen. You do that by telling them of the importance of an advantage, a benefit or new knowledge they will gain from having attended. For example, you may say they will learn about a most affordable activity for your children or grandchildren which is also accepted as the best youth program in Canada. Or, how they can get involved as a volunteer with the best group of young people in the community who are going to be the leaders of tomorrow and also have a very rewarding experience yourself. If you are fundraising, tell them they will see how the money is spent and how it makes the financial support from DND go much further. You are making a bargain with your audience. You are committing to deliver a positive, enlightening experience in return for them having given their time. So ensure your facial expressions, voice tone and body language match your words. If you want to convince someone that they will enjoy doing whatever it is you are selling, you have to look enthusiastic and upbeat.

This has all occurred within the first ninety seconds or so but what you have said and the manner in which you said it has set the tone for your entire presentation. If you are going to rehearse anything make sure it is your opening and closing remarks.

(a) The third minute through to the last two minutes

Now you introduce your material. If you are going to show a film of a cadet squadron at work – tell a brief history of the partnership etcetera, the organizational structure and how 123 Squadron operates here in your community. This is helpful to someone who knows nothing about the program. The references you made in your letter requesting to speak to the group can now be expanded upon.

Then show the video or make your Power Point presentation. Make sure you have checked the cassette is rewound, if applicable, and that the machine works, sound is OK, etcetera. Don't forget to show that cadets have fun with the cadet program and the adult volunteers also have a great time.

After the video/Power Point presentation has been shown ask for questions. It is often a good idea to repeat the question for the benefit of others in the audience who might not have heard it too clearly. It also gives you a chance to think about your answer.

(b) The last two minutes

After the questions are over it is time to conclude the session. Here you begin the second crucially important segment of your presentation. Never end with "I guess that's about it then". You have wasted much of your effort if you have a weak conclusion. Always ask your audience to do something – take a brochure, come to the CO's

parade night, and see what goes on, come and visit you at the squadron, visit the web site, all of the above. Just don't let them drift away.

Thank them once again for their time and then step aside.

You'll probably get an additional question or two from people after the session so be ready with a business card, invite them to call you, or get their phone number and call them. The post presentation session is often the most productive because you get to meet those who were really interested, so be prepared.

Later that week send a brief thank you note to whoever invited you to speak. Add their name to the file of people to invite to the Annual Ceremonial Review. Keep a record of how many presentations you and your SSC make during the year whether it is recruiting or fundraising. Make reference to these activities in your annual report to the Provincial Committee

And that's it. You are ready and eager to go out and do it again.

Orientation of New Volunteers

Your presentations were very successful, new volunteers came forward for interviews and screening which has now been completed. In preparation for their first "official" evening as a sponsoring committee volunteer what follows are suggestions for making them feel welcome and comfortable with the new role.

Strong and successful SSC's are distinguished by common characteristics: a productive relationship with the Commanding Officer's team, pride in the cadets, dedication to the role of the SCC, and excellent communication with parents, supporters and the local community

Making new members of a sponsoring committee feel welcome and comfortable in their new surroundings is neither difficult nor time consuming. It should start on the first day and include an outline of the routine on parade night together with a tour of the building.

Introductions to other members of the SSC team and also to the Commanding Officer, if possible, will go a long way to build confidence and a feeling of inclusiveness.

Welcoming Document

It is recommended the SSC Executive consider creating a document of welcome that includes a Who's Who of the Executive, Directors and Committee Chairs, and other important details for new volunteers, including contact telephone numbers, SSC meeting frequency, parade night routine, key events in the training year, where to park, and any others you can think of. A folder of information should include a general history of the Air Cadet program, the nature of the partnership, and the nature of the national, provincial and local structure. The history of the Squadron could also be included. The objective is to make a new volunteer feel comfortable and part of the SSC from the very beginning. Assigning a mentor to a new volunteer is another option worth considering.

If the work of any of the new volunteers is shaped by national and/or provincial policy and procedures, for example, the Treasurer's position, print off copies of the relevant sections from the Manual to include reference material, and allow them time to become familiar with this information. Make a note to discuss it with them the following week to answer any questions. New volunteers should not feel inadequate to the task or unclear as to what the SSC Executive expects.

Ideally, volunteers will stay and enjoy years of productive work for the Squadron, receiving periodic recognition for services rendered. Guidelines for recognition are to be found at Section 2.174 of the Regulation and Procedure Manual. High turnover on an SSC depletes it of experience and expertise, and reduces its momentum and overall

ability to get things done on behalf of the cadets. Taking time to make the new volunteer feel welcome and at ease from the beginning is time well spent.

Conducting an Open House

The big event in the recruiting year would be to conduct an Open House. As well as recruiting cadets it can also be aimed at parents to get them involved if a son or daughter enrolls. Pre-planning the entire event is the key to success in the short and long term. Recruiting and also retention is achieved by enabling the Commanding Officer to deliver a strong and varied program which is the primary objective of your committee's work. Here are some thoughts on maximizing the results from an Open House which are based on the model used by the Saskatchewan Provincial Committee.

PRE-PLANNING

Before outlining a sequence of activities for a successful Open House, there are two important factors to consider.

First, it is recommended that a realistic assessment be made at the start of each training year to determine the maximum number of new cadets that the premises, the CIC Instructional team and the sponsoring committee's budget can support. This is an important calculation to make because, as the number of cadets increases, so does the need for more adult volunteers to work with the CIC component or the SSC. A shortage of classrooms is also a major problem, as is a lack of funds for optional activities. New cadets will lose interest and drift away if not challenged fully. It is possible to recruit too many new cadets.

Second, in order to maximize word-of-mouth advertising within the community, it is suggested that a Squadron activity to be publicized in the local newspaper or on the community cable channel prior to the Open House. For example, a weekend bush camp, gliding or FAM flying, or visiting a place of interest can be featured. Publicity generated in advance of the Open House about exciting squadron activities will draw attention to the Air Cadet program in the community and link to the related announcements that follow.

The Air Cadet recruiting concept that has been referred to as "The Open House" consists of three stages: promoting the event, staging the event, and enrolling and training the new recruits.

STAGE ONE

PROMOTING THE EVENT

A good working relationship with schools in the area is necessary for this next activity: distributing posters. Establish the grade six and seven student population. Solicit the support of the principal and teachers to distribute an "Open House" poster to students on a Friday afternoon early in the training year and a few days before the Open House. This process takes a lot of planning and organizing and some money to ensure a professional product is distributed. Some companies will make a donation to the squadron for services provided. Always ensure this kind of support is recognized. (See Guideline #5 for Recognition.) Printing prices vary from company to company and also on the details, format and quality of the poster.

Community Radio and TV are good channels of communication to reach parents, who are also invited. Consider using one or more of these to get the message out. Community websites are usually available and free to advertise the squadron's existence and contact information. Community newspapers often run Registration pages in several issues every August and September. Advertisements are assembled for various activities; judo clubs, brownies, cubs, cadets and so on. They are for parents who are looking to register their children for activities in the Fall. This is a good place to advertise.

A realistic attendance goal is five percent of the Grade 6 and Grade 7 population, if a combination of these publicity methods is used, as well as encouraging serving cadets to invite friends and relatives.

STAGE TWO

STAGING THE EVENT – THE OPEN HOUSE

During this phase, prospective cadets and their parents are separated at the door as they enter. Parents are met by a member of the SSC and the prospective cadets are met by a senior cadet NCO. The program is explained to parents and prospective cadets. Display booths are set up for all major cadet training and optional activities, as well as for each cadet summer training course. The process is similar to what occurs after an Annual Ceremonial Review, but continues for a longer period. At the Open House, there is a distinct purpose in mind – recruiting new cadets – so your team has to be quite large and well prepared.

After the Open House, it is recommended a debriefing be held with all involved to see what went well and what did not. This can make the next one even better. Consider developing a worksheet for future reference, including contacts for schools, printing, newspapers, community radio and TV, together with the lead times required.

STAGE THREE

ENROLLING AND TRAINING THE NEW RECRUITS; ENROLLING PARENTS

An indication of success is a line-up the following week of recruits and their parents waiting to enrol. Allow (X) minutes for each enrolment so a good size team is needed to make sure things run smoothly and waiting periods are not too lengthy. Enrolment forms have to be checked with the parent(s) by a representative of the CIC component. A representative of the SSC should then meet with the parent(s) to explain the League's role and how important it is for them to get involved. A SSC information package should be given to each new parent at this time.

After the enrolment forms are completed, the recruits are measured for their uniforms. As an interim measure, and if funds allow, consider issuing each one a Tee Shirt and Air Cadet ball cap when they are assigned to their flights. These items become an interim uniform for them and generate a feeling of being included as part of the squadron for the next two or three weeks before a weekend of intensive recruit training takes place.

At the conclusion of the weekend program, on the Sunday afternoon, uniforms are issued for the graduation parade to be held in front of parents and supporters. The recruits are now cadets. This event is also an opportunity for another article and photograph in the local newspapers, so ensure someone from the Sponsoring Committee is assigned to prepare a news release.

If a realistic assessment of the number of cadets that can be accommodated, instructed, funded and supported was made at the start of the training year, the probability of retaining new recruits is increased.

CONCLUSION

Do you remember the reference to the wheelbarrow when we looked at fundraising in Principle #4? Fundraising is like a wheelbarrow which can do great things but needs someone to push it. Well, the same philosophy applies to all the team activities you and your Squadron Sponsoring Committee (SSC) are responsible for. As a general rule, if you are on an SSC executive and you are not enjoying the experience, the probable cause is you are one of a small group trying to do too much. The SSC alone may find it too difficult to manage the league side of the squadron's affairs in an effective manner. Asking parents and community volunteers to help share the workload with the SSC, will make it a rewarding experience for everyone.

Volunteers are essential to the success of your committee because to get things accomplished you have to be able to delegate work to others. The SSC Executive needs to keep track of who is responsible for which activity and being aware of significant dates. Don't try to remember everything. Make a notation in an office diary or event planning calendar, to either expect a result or to check on the progress of an upcoming event.

Successful squadrons are supported by effective SSCs who plan, organize and deliver the activities required of them thereby enabling the Commanding Officer to provide a comprehensive year round program. But rest assured the efforts of all concerned are for the benefit of the best young adults you will ever meet; the Air Cadets of your squadron.

Thank you for being part of this great program and thank you for having taken the time to visit this website.

February 2009