

Chapter 4

MISSIONS OF THE CIVIL AIR PATROL



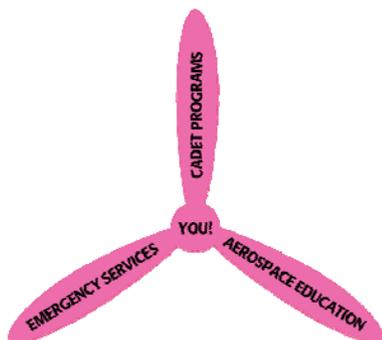
We have discussed the history and beginning of Civil Air Patrol, and its organization and relationship to the United States Air Force. Now we will examine how Civil Air Patrol actually accomplishes its mission. First though, take a moment and review the “objects and purposes” of Civil Air Patrol as they appear in Article V of the Civil Air Patrol Constitution and Bylaws.

- To provide an organization to encourage and aid American citizens in the contribution of their efforts, services, and resources in the development of aviation and in the maintenance of aerospace supremacy.
- To provide an organization to encourage and develop, by example, the voluntary contribution of private citizens to the public welfare.

- To provide aviation and aerospace education and training, especially to its senior and cadet members.
- To encourage and foster civil aviation in local communities.
- To provide an organization of private citizens with adequate facilities to assist in meeting local and national emergencies.
- To assist the Department of the Air Force in fulfilling its non-combat programs and missions.

From these “objects and purposes,” we have a broad scope. The CAP three-part mission can be stated more specifically – to provide:

- **An aerospace education program;**
- **A CAP cadet program; and,**
- **An emergency services program**



The symbol of CAP's three-bladed propeller is used to illustrate how the three-part mission works together to become the foundation and purpose of CAP. The three-faceted mission of CAP is represented by the three blades of our symbol – CAP's three bladed propeller. Its hub represents the members who make the program work. If a blade was removed from the blade – a mission facet removed from CAP's organization it would fall out of balance and be ineffective. It's important to realize that CAP's success in accomplishing the mission is dependent on the success of each of the facets.

From the National Commander, with the Board of Governors' approval, administrative responsibilities for the region, wing, group, and squadron are delegated to the respective commanders. The Executive Director, who directs the National Headquarters staff and also reports to the Board of Governors, performs this task for the day to day operations of the CAP as a corporation. Beginning at National Headquarters and extending downward to the squadron, each command element must recruit a staff of responsible people whose job is to carry out the day-to-day tasks necessary to accomplish the CAP mission. Thus, the combined skills of CAP members at the various organizational levels provide for systematic and successful administration of the organization.

Since CAP is the auxiliary of the USAF, and is organized along military lines, its administrative staffs are similar to those of the USAF. However, the conduct of CAP business may require certain adjustments in a typical staff, resulting in either larger or smaller staffs according to each unit's needs and resources.

In addition to the squadron commander and deputy(ies), a typical CAP composite squadron may perform all of the following functions and may require a staff officer for each:

- Information Technology
- Medical
- Aerospace Education
- Mission Training
- Cadet Program

- Moral Leadership and Chaplain Operations
- Communications
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Maintenance
- Emergency Services
- Safety
- Finance
- Professional Development
- Inspection
- Logistics
- Testing
- Legal Affairs and Legislative Liaison
- Transportation

By assigning a staff officer to more than one function, a squadron commander may find that they can accomplish the mission without appointing a staff officer for every function. This can be a major concern in a smaller squadron. Before doing so however, the commander must take care to not overload the staff with too much work.

As you've already learned, there are three classifications of CAP squadrons: the composite squadron, the cadet squadron, and the senior squadron. The composite squadron has two distinct subsidiaries – one for officers and one for cadets. The cadet squadron is comprised, for all practical purposes, entirely of cadets except for a minimum of officers who carry out certain command and administrative functions and mentor the cadet squadron members. The senior squadron is comprised entirely of officers. CAP Regulation 20-1, *Organization of U.S. Civil Air Patrol* has more information on the types of CAP organizations.

Civilian businesses evaluate their progress through a system of reports, audits, inventories, conferences, etc. Civil Air Patrol uses a system of inspections, annual awards, and conferences to do the same thing.

The inspection system is designed to measure activities in terms of standardization and mission accomplishment; at the same time, the inspection reports are used as a management and quality enhancement tool; providing commanders at all levels the information they need to administer their units properly.

CAP awards, specifically ones for squadron of merit and distinction, use specific performance criteria to measure unit effectiveness in areas such as recruiting, retention, and achievement.

Finally, regions and wings conduct conferences and commanders' calls during the year during which operational problems are analyzed and solved; progress for the previous year is reviewed, and goals are established.

Now that we've discussed how the unit's are administered to accomplish the mission, let's take a closer look at each part of the mission in more detail.

Emergency Services



Ground Team members practice carrying a litter



Members of Alaskan Wing

CAP's talents have augmented the Air Force in search and rescue and disaster relief since CAP's formation in 1941. It has always been there to assist the nation in times of disaster or in any emergency situation when its resources – people and equipment – can be used.

The Emergency Services (ES) primary mission objective is to save lives and relieve human suffering. To be effective, the lives of CAP personnel performing the mission must be safeguarded. CAP demands professionalism in organization, training, and mission execution to accomplish this service. Only members who are qualified or are in formal emergency services training are allowed to participate in actual missions. The ES mission includes search and rescue and disaster relief operations.

Search and Rescue (SAR)

The National Search and Rescue plan assigns responsibility for coordinating inland SAR operations in the United States to the Air Force. The actual coordination is performed by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, based at Langley AFB, Virginia. This coordination is performed by the U.S. Coast Guard in Puerto Rico and by the Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) in Alaska and Hawaii. CAP supports all three and is the primary resource available for inland SAR. In fact, CAP routinely performs on average over 85% of the SAR missions for inland search and rescue.

All CAP members who participate in SAR operations are volunteers who have been specially trained in a variety of emergency services skills. These operations must be carried out with speed and efficiency because victims' lives may be at stake. This speed and efficiency is attained through prior planning and practical exercises in performing the tasks required.

CAP units may not participate in a SAR mission unless they have people trained to quickly and successfully accomplish the mission. A wing may have several units which are trained and "on-call" for SAR activities, but the wing commander usually assigns the mission to the unit nearest to the area of operations. This ensures familiarity with the terrain in the search area; enhances the relationships with neighboring agencies (police, fire, etc), and ensures a quick response. Larger missions often require units from all over the wing or even neighboring wings to participate. This only increases the need for professionalism and control over operations.

As you have already gleaned, a SAR mission is always a serious and critical endeavor. Good organization, methodical procedures, and safety are essential. Therefore, each CAP mission is headed by a CAP incident commander who is experienced and highly qualified in Emergency Services. SAR missions can be quite involved with many functions and activities to be supervised and accomplished. Some of these activities include:



A Florida Wing ground team disables an ELT emitting false alarms after Hurricane Andrew strikes the South Florida area



Two ground team members survey property damage after a natural disaster

- **Incident Command** – the overall responsibility for each specific mission is invested in one CAP officer, the Incident Commander.
- **Administration** – involves mission personnel registration; flight orders; reimbursement claims (for fuel, oil, etc.); and control of required mission reports.
- **Communications** – may be radio, telephone, fax, electronic mail, or messenger service. A communications officer establishes the net and controls the activities of all communications personnel. He or she also prepares briefing materials relative to the communications procedures to be used by mission personnel.
- **Air Operations** – by the Air Operations Officer, responsible for coordinating all airborne activity under the overall supervision of the mission coordinator. This officer verifies the qualifications of air crews; supervises crew briefings; maintains the mission status board with the appropriate and timely information; and supervises the staff under his or her charge.
- **Ground Operations** – controlled by the ground operations officer. Very similar to the responsibilities of the Air Operations officer, but related those tasks to surface operations.
- **Mission Chaplain** – is assigned to both air and ground operations as needed.

Disaster Relief (DR) Operations

In 1979, several federal agencies were combined into one – the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA is the single point of contact within the federal system for disaster relief planning and management. This includes civil defense, natural disaster, and man-made emergencies.

The Civil Air Patrol has national level agreements with many government and non-government relief agencies to assist when disaster strikes. Over the years, CAP has worked closely with organizations such as FEMA, the American Red Cross, and the Salvation Army. CAP also has agreements with local agencies at the wing level and participates with various state emergency management agencies.

The U.S. Army has overall responsibility for coordinating disaster relief efforts involving Department of Defense (DoD) agencies. The Air Force supports the Army. As the volunteer auxiliary of the Air Force, the CAP may participate in the Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA) program.

The organization of CAP DR efforts is very similar to the SAR mission. The main difference is the agency that controls the mission. CAP always retains command of CAP resources, but mission control is delegated, usually at the state level, to the agency primarily responsible for a particular DR operation.

Under MSCA the Air Force Reserve coordinates and does the tasking through its Air Force National Security Emergency Preparedness (AFNSEP) office. The AFNSEP office is co-located with the Army Forces Command at Fort McPherson, GA. After receiving an Air Force mission authorization, CAP works directly with the agency that requested help



A ground team member prepares prior to field deployment

and performs the activities specifically requested, within CAP's capability.

The types of DR missions CAP supports include:

- Courier and light cargo transport.
- Mercy missions – blood, organ transplant, and patient transport (life-saving evacuations).
- Manual labor for debris removal.
- Air and ground transport for cargo and non-CAP key personnel.
- Damage surveying.
- Communications support.
- Etc.

Two good examples of the types of support CAP gives in Disaster Relief operations is illustrated by its efforts during the 1993 Missouri Flood and CAP's response to the September 11, 2001 attacks. During the summer of 1993, the Mississippi River overflowed its banks and caused the flooding in over 100 years, flooding millions of acres of land, and submerging whole towns and cities. Civil Air Patrol members from across the country came to the aid of flood victims: filling sandbags, surveying damage, flying everything from mail to emergency supplies to needed areas, establishing emergency communications links and ferrying government officials.

CAP members were also among the first to respond to the September 11th attacks on New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania, providing communications, emergency transfer of blood, supplies, and people, and rendering other types of assistance as requested by state and federal agencies.

Counterdrug Operations

In 1985, U.S. Customs Service asked CAP to support counterdrug operations. Our first large scale operation with Customs primarily involved reconnaissance and feedback on suspicious boats and ships off the East and Gulf coasts. In 1986, Congress authorized CAP to support law enforcement in the government's war on drugs. CAP began its support of the Drug Enforcement Administration and U.S. Forest Service in 1989. Originally operations were primarily for marijuana eradication support within the United States and its territories and possessions.

Today, the mission of CAP's counterdrug program is to assist federal, state and local government and law enforcement agencies involved in the fight to eliminate illicit drug use, its production and sale in the U.S., its territories and possessions. CAP is involved in combating both the demand for and supply of illegal drugs. CAP provides aircraft, aircrews and other personnel to support counterdrug activities. Many federal agencies as well as state and local law enforcement agencies and drug task forces routinely call on CAP to provide counterdrug support. It should be noted, however, that CAP has no law enforcement authority and may not participate in law enforcement operations.



The Counterdrug Operations program emblem



CAP aircraft searching fields for illegal marijuana



Since 1941, Civil Air Patrol has been keeping an eye on liberty

CAP provides three main counterdrug interdiction missions: aerial reconnaissance, communication and transportation. All Air Force assigned counterdrug missions must have a counterdrug “nexus,” that is they must involve a counterdrug case or operation. Valid operations include:

- Marijuana eradication support – flights conducted to detect suspicious vegetation or likely growing areas for marijuana.
- Airborne reconnaissance – flown to detect potential drug operations or gather intelligence on isolated areas known to be used by drug traffickers. Also flown on a recurring basis to examine border-crossing areas.
- Marine reconnaissance – routine reconnaissance to detect and report suspicious marine activity in coastal areas and to detect and identify waterborne vessels.
- Airport reconnaissance – recurring or periodic reconnaissance of airports or their surrounding access routes for evidence or likelihood of use for drug trafficking.
- Airfield photography – conducted to locate, identify, photograph, and catalog charted and uncharted airfields and landing areas.
- Airborne video/digital photography and imagery – flown to document conditions of areas or facilities to detect change, use or suspicious activity.
- Communications support – usually flown in remote locations to provide an aerial communications relay platform and/or in support of over-water operations where normal communications will be a problem.
- Radar evaluation – flown to evaluate and calibrate air defense radars and provide controller and/or interceptor training.
- Aerial familiarization of law enforcement agents – conducted to familiarize agents with aircraft and their use in conducting law enforcement operations.
- Drug demand reduction – orientation flights in conjunction with DDR program events for CAP cadets are permitted. Transportation of DDR personnel and materials to DDR events.
- Transportation mission – may be conducted under limited circumstances.

Homeland Security

Homeland security is Civil Air Patrol’s heritage. The terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001 caused the United States to reexamine its homeland security mission. No longer immune from attacks on its home soil, the United States must use all of its resources to meet an enemy that knows no national, physical or moral boundaries. The war on terrorism is a multi-front campaign that begins at home.

In order to prepare for, prevent, and respond to attacks or domestic emergencies within the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Civil Air Patrol, operating as the United States Air Force Auxiliary, increased its participation in Department of Defense Homeland Security operations by conducting Civil Support and Homeland Defense missions.



Image of a Russian freighter of the coast of Key West, FL taken by a CAP aircrew using the Satellite Digital Imaging System (SDIS)



The ARCHER program emblem



The ARCHER system in the GA-8 Airvan

CAP provides a ready capability to enhance Civil Support and Homeland Defense operations within the HLS arena. Utilizing highly-trained volunteers and its large fleet of aircraft, CAP can rapidly respond to requests for support from military, federal, state, and local agencies requiring emergency management services, integrated, multi-layered communications, low-cost, high technology reconnaissance, or transport of personnel or cargo. CAP provides support to civilian law enforcement, participates in Domestic Relief Operations (DRO), and aids domestic consequence management activities in response to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high yield explosive (CBRNE) situations. Increased CAP assistance in conducting Homeland Security operations acts as a force multiplier for the Department of Defense and other governmental and nongovernmental agencies. By providing additional personnel and critical equipment, CAP gives first responders the flexibility to conduct higher priority taskings, and frees defense personnel for more critical national security needs.

To prepare for Homeland Security operations, CAP assists military and law enforcement organizations with training of personnel to defend the nation. Activities ranging from active participation in exercises and evaluations, to transporting personnel, to training locations provide organizations with greater flexibility and reduce their own resource requirements. Prevention missions usually involve active reconnaissance or patrol of potential targets, lines of communication and critical infrastructure. Response, whether training or actual, involves virtually every aspect of the organization, but communications capabilities and trained emergency management personnel play key roles in addition to those filled by CAP air and ground teams.

By increasing the number of trained personnel and low-cost high-technology equipment available to full-time first responders, CAP leverages those organizations' abilities to provide capable, multi-level security. Specifically, to enhance detection and prevention requirements, CAP provides reconnaissance and transportation capabilities not usually available to local security forces. CAP emergency management personnel deliver much needed continuity and often round out staffs normally manned with people whose primary duties may not involve crisis or consequence management. CAP communications personnel establish critical redundancy in areas often overwhelmed with communication demands in commercial frequency spectra.

Civil Air Patrol uses advanced technologies as part of the homeland security role. One of the systems is called Satellite Digital Imaging System or SDIS. This allows aircrew to transmit reconnaissance digital photographs and messages to ground personnel while in flight. Another advanced technology is Advanced Real-Time Cueing Hyperspectral Enhanced Reconnaissance or ARCHER. This is unique to the Civil Air Patrol. It was developed through the dedication of Civil Air Patrol members who worked with private and government scientists to develop the system. Hyperspectral imaging (HSI), in an aerial application, allows an operator to program into an onboard computer the "spectral signature" of an object. A sensitive HSI camera onboard can then detect and pinpoint any object(s) on the ground that match the signature. The HSI sensor is also capable of detecting anomalies, objects significantly different from the background in which they are located.



Civil Air Patrol uses some of the best avionic systems available in general aviation aircraft today



One of Civil Air Patrol's mobile command centers equipped with multiple forms of communication

Data on possible “hits” that match the spectral signature or anomalies can be processed in real-time, stored and analyzed, and transmitted to ground teams.

CAP Aircraft and Aircrew

CAP owns over 500 single-engine, propeller driven light aircraft, such as the new Cessna 182T. In addition, CAP members also make available about 4,500 of their own private aircraft, making Civil Air Patrol the largest privately owned light aircraft fleet in the world. Combining corporate and member-owned aircraft, it has a larger fleet than the U.S. Air Force.

Pilots may hold aeronautical ratings in CAP similar to pilots in the Air Force. In addition, the CAP recognizes balloon and sailplane pilots with special ratings. Aircrews are also eligible for aircrew designations, such as mission scanner and observer. Cadets may receive primary flight training through Civil Air Patrol, while senior members may take proficiency training or upgrade the pilot's certificate they already have.

CAP Communications Network

The CAP communications network supports the entire CAP mission. Involving thousands of operators, the Civil Air Patrol communications network serves three purposes: (1) it aids in the advancement and improvement of the art and science of radio communication; (2) furthers the CAP aerospace education phases in communication; and (3) coordinates with government agencies for planning and establishing procedures to meet local and national emergencies.

CAP's radio network is comprised of a radio and computer system involving stations that are fixed-land, mobile, water, and airborne. This network embraces the entire CAP organization – the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico – and maintains a regular communications schedule. Whether it is for routine or emergency use, it provides commanders at each echelon the communications capability adequate for their control of overall activities. Also, in times of national emergency or disaster, it provides an additional or secondary means of communications if primary facilities are inoperative.

Manned by CAP personnel, the CAP communications network follows the chain of command structure. That is, the network is established at the national level, at the region level, the wing level, and the squadron level. Operating in this manner, all echelons can maintain contact with each other using the network if the need arises.

Authorized frequencies are allocated by the U.S. Air Force and Federal Communications Commission. Civil Air Patrol maintains control of the network and establishes operating procedures which comply with the requirements of the USAF and FCC.

Aerospace Education



While listed as a specific part of the CAP mission, aerospace education activities actually permeate most of CAP's functions in one way or another. There are two distinct programs within this part of the mission – the internal program and the external program. The internal program is for CAP members, for whom aerospace education follows a definite plan of participation and progression. The external program is for nonmembers of CAP – for teachers, school administrators, and other interested individuals.

Internal Program

The internal program for senior and cadet CAP members is designed to provide a general knowledge of all aerospace activities, along with an appreciation of how these activities impact society. Here, the aerospace education program is based on activities and study. Aerospace education is enriched by guest lecturers, who are specialists in a particular facet of aerospace activity, visits to aerospace installations, participation in aerospace-related activities, and practical experience with aerospace equipment, such as flights in contemporary aircraft.

External Program

All other aerospace education activities in which CAP is involved are considered external aerospace education. Participating in this category are those educational institutions wanting to provide an aerospace education program for their students. CAP provides free materials and guidance. In each region, the Civil Air Patrol employs an educator who is known as the Region Director of Aerospace Education (RDAE). One of their responsibilities is to assist educational institutions in planning aerospace education projects, generally referred to as "workshops." The assistance may come directly from the RDAE or may be come from the wing or squadron level. In any case, CAP assists in making arrangements, ideas for presentations, providing guest lecturers and other activities for aerospace education courses and workshops.



A group of cadets put together a model airplane during an Aerospace Education event

Aerospace education for the general public is given through exhibits and demonstration; cooperative programs with business, fraternal, civil and service organizations – all of which are conducted as a public service. Through these programs, aerospace education fosters our nation's commitment to the future.

One of the most notable examples of this commitment is the National Congress on Aviation and Space Education (NCASE). Sponsored by Civil Air Patrol and supported by organizations such as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), it is designed to promote an understanding of aerospace education throughout the nation. This motivational program encourages teachers to incorporate aerospace education in their curricula and leaders to speak out on the aerospace issues facing our nation today.

In an age when we are constantly striving to move faster, do more, in less time, it is the aerospace world which will develop the



An aerospace education member teaches young student about rockets

technology – in travel, in medicine, in computer sciences, to allow us to achieve those goals. In addition, current events point out the achievements of other nations in aerospace technology, which may threaten the security and prestige of America. CAP believes that the United States can only maintain its leadership only by paralleling or excelling the achievements of other countries. To do this, it is a must that general education in aerospace activities be emphasized now and in the future. Such education makes the public more aware of the necessity for progress in this area, and it can help make the public more receptive to tackling the challenges that lie ahead. Too, the education of our youth in the wide spectrum of aerospace related sciences ensures our nation's future supply of trained scientists dedicated to preserving America's place as the preeminent developer of aerospace technology in the world.

Cadet Programs



The cadet program is designed to foster leadership and good citizenship in America's youth, using aerospace education, Air Force role models and emphasis on public service. Cadets may participate in a variety of activities, gain rank and increased recognition in the program and receive benefits for participation in the program should they choose to enter military service. Most of all, it challenges them to learn and grow in ways they may not have had the opportunity to were it not for the program.

Cadet Program Structure

The Cadet Program itself is divided into five phases – the Motivation Phase, and four primary phases (the Learning Phase, the Leadership Phase, the Command Phase, and the Executive Phase) – dedicated phases for learning and growth. The Motivation Phase introduces the prospective cadet to the requirements, procedures and goals of CAP.

After the Motivation Phase, the next four phases use aerospace education, leadership, physical fitness, and moral leadership to instill and develop qualities of leadership and responsibilities in the cadet members. The entire cadet program is oriented toward an activities program held within the individual squadron setting. Activities selected by a squadron for its program are designed to meet the individual member's need.

Throughout the cadet program, from the first achievement through to the completion of the program; emphasis is placed on individual and group study, instruction and attainment. Each of the four phases emphasizes the four program areas mentioned above as well as individual unit activities, such as drill team, color guard, model rocketry, and emergency services training. As cadets progress, they earn ribbons, awards, and increased grade, rewarding their commitment and achievement in the program. Each phase becomes more challenging and builds on what the cadet has already learned.

Phase I, the Learning Phase is just that: cadets learn to function in a military-type environment. They learn to march, wear their uniform



A cadet gets ready to have his glider released from the tow plane



Cadet color guards are one of many activities cadets can participate in



Two cadets ride aboard a HH-60 Pavehawk during an activity

properly, learn the principles of followership, and begin to learn about the aerospace environment. At the conclusion of this phase, the cadet is awarded the first major milestone award for achievement in the Cadet Program, the Wright Brothers Award.

In Phase II, the Leadership Phase, cadets become more involved in the program. They may enter leadership roles in their squadron and attend a CAP encampment, which is designed to give cadets an introduction to the Air Force culture and hands on leadership and aerospace training in a team environment. At the conclusion of this phase, cadets receive the General Billy Mitchell Award.

In Phase III, the Command Phase, the cadet is expected to take on greater responsibility for activities and training within their squadron. They must assume a leadership position and mentor younger cadets in a variety of areas. In addition, they must also become knowledgeable in different staff areas, learning from their senior member counterparts in areas such as public affairs. This is in addition to continuing the activities they began in Phases I and II. At the conclusion of this phase, the cadet may receive the Amelia Earhart Award and go on to the final phase of cadet training.

The achievements in Phase IV, the Executive Phase, are designed to provide high-level leadership experiences to the individual cadet. When the cadet has completed the requirements for Phase IV, they will receive the General Ira C. Eaker Award and become eligible to test for the highest award for achievement in the Cadet Program, the General Carl A. Spaatz Award.

The Spaatz Award is a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the cadet program phases. This exam is passed by less than one percent of the total cadet population. Once a cadet has passed the Spaatz examination, they are promoted to the highest grade in the program, cadet colonel. Spaatz cadets continue to improve themselves through applying what they have learned throughout the cadet program and assisting other cadets to excel.

Activities and Awards

Cadets at all levels of CAP enjoy a wide variety of activities at the squadron, wing and national level. Cadets may train and participate in SAR missions, enjoy orientation flights, take field trips, go to the encampments we have described (mandatory for Phase II completion), etc. In addition, they may become eligible to go on a variety of national activities designed to complement the cadet curriculum. These activities cover a wide range of aerospace, emergency services, career exploration, and leadership topics. Cadets may even qualify to travel to a foreign country to represent Civil Air Patrol and the United States.

Cadets may also qualify for college scholarships. Cadets wanting to enlist in the Air Force or the Coast Guard and holding the Mitchell Award may enlist at a higher pay grade over their contemporaries. This can mean thousands of extra dollars over a career. The Cadet Program offers today's youth unlimited opportunities to excel.

NOTES
