

South Carolina Wing, Civil Air Patrol



2020 Year In Review



No 2020 message would be complete without the phase “COVID-19” or some nod to the pandemic which changed everything about the year. The fiscal year was half over when, in Mid-March, the stand-down through 11 May was announced. The COVID-19 pandemic has filled our vocabularies with words and phrases like “flatten the curve,” “limited exposure,” and “unprecedented.” There are few areas of our Wing unaffected by the necessary changes, and yet 2020 has been a year for retooling, adapting, and overcoming challenges that may have seemed unimaginable this time last year. Read on to understand how the Airmen of the South Carolina Wing of Civil Air Patrol have met the challenges and continue to do so every day. What they have accomplished this year is simply amazing.

Col Lee Safley, Commander

When the South Carolina Wing found itself in a stand-down, required to perform operations virtually due to COVID-19, the Internet Technology officers of the South Carolina Wing found themselves supporting the squadrons in this new virtual world. Immediately a push was begun to move the Wing membership to the Microsoft 365 suite, using Microsoft Teams for virtual meetings. In addition to a 4 times increase in member usage, the IT Officers have created a process for automatic account creation for South Carolina Wing members, created a process for keeping information in Microsoft 365 synced with e-Services and hosted 6 professional development courses which were open to members nationwide.

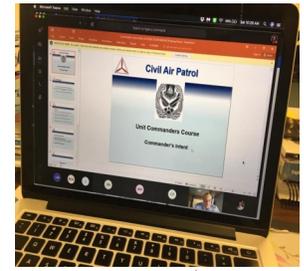


Although the COVID-19 stand-down fundamentally altered the way squadrons could operate from March 15 through the end of fiscal year 2020, numerous squadrons still qualified to earn the Quality Cadet Unit Award. Due to the change in methods of operations, National Headquarters did reduce the total number of qualifying metrics to five, down from a minimum required 6 metrics in previous years. Of the 15 Cadet and Composite Squadrons in the South Carolina Wing, 11 squadrons met at least the minimum requirements of five metrics—demonstrating that despite the changes brought on by COVID-19, squadrons are continuously raising the bar to accomplish the missions of Civil Air Patrol.

Greenville Aerospace Education Officer 1st Lt Bob Roberts, who was the South Carolina Wing Aerospace Education Officer of the Year in 2019, became a nationally-recognized contributor to engaging AE lessons during the COVID-19 stand-down. Now the owner of a popular YouTube channel centered around Aerospace Education, he has also recorded audio lessons of all 6 Aerospace Education modules. He has been featured on the National Civil Air Patrol website, in the *Volunteer Magazine*, and in several National Headquarters Facebook posts—both at the main Civil Air Patrol page and the National Aerospace Education page.



Unprecedented training and professional development was an enhancement to everyday life in fiscal year 2020. The new opportunities offered by nationwide virtual training allowed numerous members to attend and graduate from the National Staff College, Region Staff College and Chaplain's Corps College. Additionally, the South Carolina Wing offered an online Unit Commander's Course (UCC), Training Leaders of Cadets (TLC), Squadron Leadership School (SLS), the Corporate Learning Course (CLC) and others, with 91 participants in 18 Wings attending the SLS & CLC offerings. In total, during FY 2020, 40 members completed Level 1, 28 members completed all Level 2 requirements, 21 members earned their Level 3 awards, 17 members completed Level 4, and 6 members fulfilled all requirements to earn their Level 5 Gill Robb Wilson Award. Numerous South Carolina Wing members are now qualified to teach in the newly-launched Volunteer University.



The Communications Department of the South Carolina Wing continued to strengthen its network across the state. Participation on the weekly “net” check in increased greatly within the South Carolina Wing, mirroring the reported increases at the national level. This department provided MRO & Air Crew Comms training via Teams. Additionally, Lt Thorp hosted an in-person Comms meeting pre-COVID and a virtual Communications Conference in November.

Emergency Services response in 2020 included a live—but virtual—response to Hurricane Isaias. Ultimately the hurricane's impact in South Carolina was minimal and the virtual Incident Command post proved the Wing could respond to a more dire ES need within the confines of the COVID-19 Phase guidelines. During the state's Hurricane Preparedness Week, the South Carolina Wing also participated by staffing the Emergency Operations Center and responded with aircraft & communications participation. Despite a very active hurricane season, Isaias was the only actual 2020 hurricane mission for the Wing. Other tabletop exercises were conducted throughout the year to maintain mission readiness, and pre-COVID, trainings included an Aerial Photography class at the Wing Headquarters as well as Mission Observer & Scanner trainings throughout the state.



Operations experienced a slow-down during 2020 as almost all forward momentum stopped suddenly. Nevertheless, upon the opening of pilot operations and cadet orientation flights during Phase One, this department wasted no time in regaining any lost footing that occurred in metrics during the stand-down. According to Lt Col Mark Bailey, Director of Operations, South Carolina Wing is in the top 5 nationwide in flight hours (Nov 2020), and only one wing in the Mid-Atlantic region has more mission pilots per plane than the SCWG. Currently cadet orientation flight percentages are higher than any other wing in the region. Of the 8 measurable metrics, 6 are green and 2 yellow metrics are less than 1% away from the green. This department continues to embody the “semper vigilans” motto of Civil Air Patrol.

Reconstruction of the South Carolina Wing headquarters parking lot was completed in the summer of 2020 under the direction of project officer 1st Lt Kirsten Linz. This project involved the removal of the debris and storage containers behind the building and from the back of the lot, followed by the re-paving of the lot. This multi-step project ended weeks later with the painting of the stripes on the lot. Those who have visited the lot in the second part of 2020 have commented favorably on this repaving and striping, which may be the first complete renovation of the lot since this site became the Wing Headquarters in 1981.



The Public Affairs Department of the South Carolina Wing influenced its 43 Public Affairs Officers to continue to make an impact telling the Civil Air Patrol story despite the virtual challenges. In January 2020 the Wing hosted a Public Affairs Conference in-person which drew members from NCWG. The PA Department achieved nearly 90 publications wing-wide and (pre-COVID) assisted units in presenting STEM Kits and information at the Charleston STEM Fest, the S.E.E.D. STEM Festival, and others throughout the state of South Carolina. During the COVID-19 stand down an emphasis has been placed on social media reach and print advertisements in the Pee Dee and Midlands area of the state.



A commitment to the core value of Volunteer Service is evident regularly from our members. In addition to their Civil Air Patrol service, members have volunteered this year in their churches, with equestrian therapy centers, on Beach Rescue Squads, with Team Rubicon, on leadership and safety boards, on Crime Stopper teams, and the list goes on and on. During the 2020 COVID stand-down members have not only continued this service, which to them is routine, but have added preparing meals for those affected financially by COVID, sewing hundreds of face masks, teaching virtual classes for 4-H & the Scouts, delivering meals to front-line responders, donating PPE, and serving through Meals on Wheels to shut-ins. These members—cadets and senior members alike—embody the Core Value of Volunteer Service and have demonstrated in tangible ways their commitment to be of service to their “community, state and nation.”

2020 Financial Information

