



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

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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. If an organization is asked "What is it about your operation that if it were lost, would put you out of business?" the answer identifies what has to shape the fundamental business strategy. For the Air Cadet League, it would be "The Squadron Sponsoring Committees".

Thank you for giving your valuable time to be a volunteer member of this great program. This Website is for you.

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

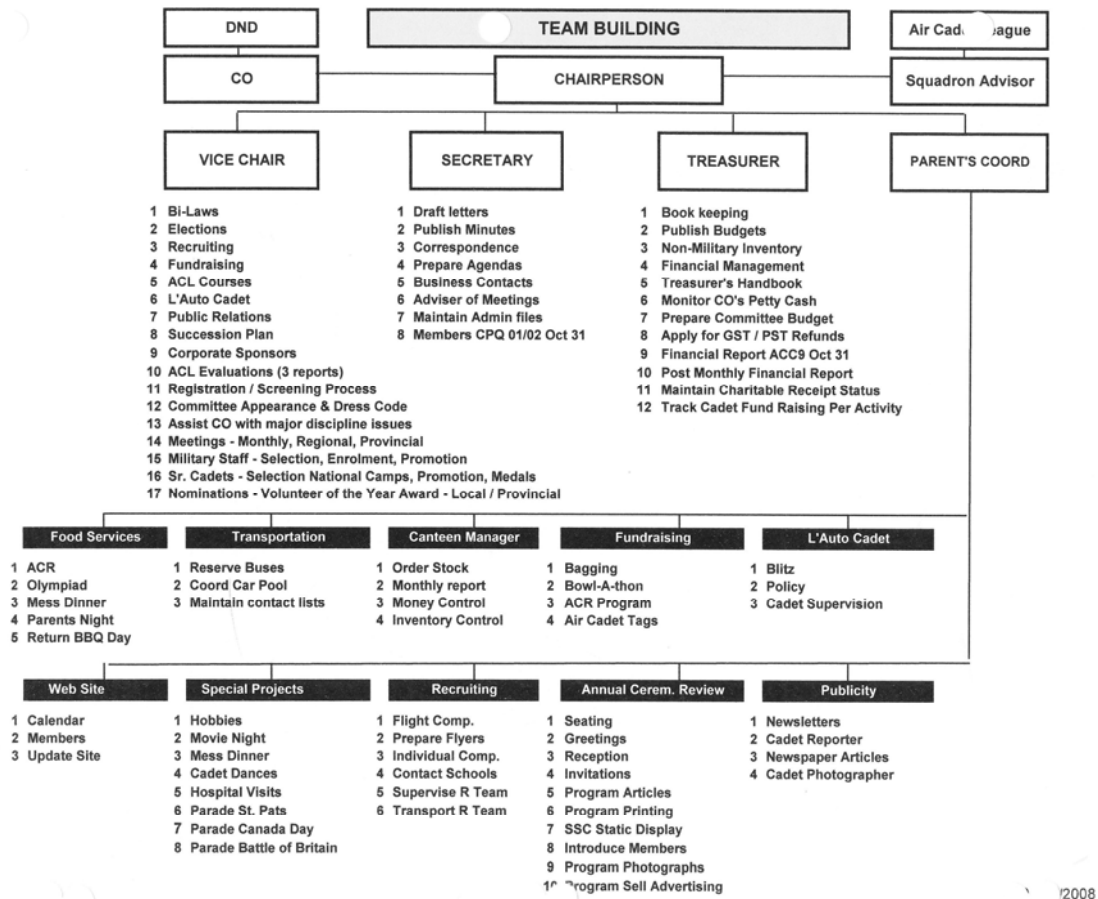
Parents are a marvellous resource but cannot always deliver the skill sets needed, making it necessary to search further afield. (See Principle #10 on Making a Presentation and Business Letter Writing for a Squadron). If you need the skills of a specialist, for example, a Treasurer, then consider recruiting 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



2008

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

