

WING MEDIA COMMUNICATION OFFICERS REPORT
OC'S CONFERENCE FEB 2011

This report is submitted for circulation to all Warwickshire & Birmingham Wing units, in advance of the OC's Conference to take place on 26th Feb 2011

MEDIA AWARDS

Thanks to the consistent efforts of many of the wings Media Communications Officers and their Squadrons we have had notable success at both regional and national level during 2010:

At the 2010 Central & East Region Field Day, Warwickshire & Birmingham Wing won the following competitions:

- Wing Media Communications Activity.
- Squadron Media Activity
- Photographic (Cadet)
- Photographic (Staff)

The Warwickshire & Birmingham Wing also gained notable recognition at the 2010 HQAC National Media and Communications Awards (MACA), which took place at the Royal Air Force College Cranwell with Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Barbara Cooper in attendance. Although the wing didn't come away with any silverware this year we were recognised by reaching the final four in the HQAC nominations for three of the MACAs.

- In the Category Best News Article - 489 (Acocks Green & Olton) squadron was nominated by HQAC for their article Poppy Appeal cadets net a winner at Villa Park written by Cpl Simon Watson RAF.
- In the Category Best ACO website – The Warwickshire & Birmingham Wing website, aircadets-wbw.org which won the award in 2008, was once again nominated for its abundance of up to the moment News and Interactive content.
- In the Category Best Wing Media & Comms Officer - Flt Lt Paul Hincks who won the award in 2009 was nominated for yet another year of consistent article output whilst running a successful website.

MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING

Staff from several Squadrons within the wing attended the Regional Media Communications Training course. This course is well worth attending and gives a good grounding in the role of SMCO.

The next Central & East Regional Media Communications Training course will be held on 9~10 April 11 at RAF Wittering. Candidates are required to register for the course by submitting their name, rank, number and car details via e-mail to wmco@bedscambswgatc.org by 11Mar11.
Ref: ACCE/M20-1-1 dated 27Jan11

Our colleagues within the ACF PR training team also run a number of PR courses throughout the year and have very generously offered any surplus places to the ACO MC community. The ACF Introduction to Public Relations Course is a two day residential course which provides a practical, hands-on, introduction to PR, media relations and marketing techniques. Delegates will learn the specialist techniques used by professionals to present their case effectively, to identify critical target audiences and to generate all important media coverage. Contact the Wing MCO for further information.

WING WEBSITE

The wing website continues to get good support from squadrons with all 27 units having had an item published on the site.

During 2010, 280 news items submitted by most of our 27 units and wing staff were published.

The site currently attracts an average of 4910 visits a month and an average of 32079 page views a month.

The site hosting and domain accounts are due to be renewed for a further 12 months.

The Warwickshire & Birmingham Wing Facebook social networking page which carries links into the wing website is also attracting significant interest.

Wing staff officers are requested to review their website pages and advise the Wing MCO of any necessary changes.

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

An official ACO social networking policy will be rolled-out in the next few months. This policy document will cover the use of websites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and personal blogs by members of the ACO.

Many of you may already be using social networking and may already have established a Squadron presence on some of these sites.

The Key Points of the new ACO Social Networking Policy are:

- It is deemed as inappropriate for adult staff to be 'friends' with cadets on a social networking website. This also applies to cadets adding an adult member of staff as a 'friend'.
- A member of the Air Cadet Organisation must not bring the organisation into disrepute, either through comments or actions online.
- Publishing pictures or information on cadets or staff on private social networking sites without permission is strictly prohibited. Photographic permission can be written or a simple verbal agreement. (ACO consent form 3822A).

It is advised that we adopt the above key points as wing policy in advance of the release of the official ACO policy document.

RE-BRANDING

The Air Cadet Organisation is re-branding in order to bring itself closer to its parent service the RAF.

HQAC have announced this re-branding and have published the new RAF Air Cadet logo in the Air Cadet and have also started using it on the HQAC website. However despite constant requests, HQAC have not yet released the official artwork or usage guidelines. As a result various unofficial or sub standard representations of the new logo are being used even on the HQAC website itself.

It is important to understand that we must use the new RAF Air Cadet corporate identity correctly. The following representations of the new logo are correct.



RAF Air Cadet logos with white text for use on coloured backgrounds



I understand that we all want to start to use the new logo as soon as possible, therefore in the absence of any official artwork I will be uploading our own versions of the logos onto the wing website. Please avoid using any other versions of the new logo that you may find on the web which do not comply with the above illustrations.

SQUADRON MONTHLY MEDIA REPORTS

The wing still has a large number of Squadrons, which have not been sending in their Media Reports. I am aware that virtually all squadrons are in fact taking part in events, which would result in reportable PR activity, so I would encourage all units to submit their monthly Media Reports by the 19th of each month.

With only 3 months to go in the Wing competition we have 9 units which have not submitted media reports since our last Wing Field Day.

Within the current Regional competition, which has 6 months to go, the Wing has points deducted for every squadron, which is not taking part. Only the proactive actions of our Wing MCO with the help of Wing HQ who have been reporting participation in public events on their behalf have prevented our score from being drastically reduced. Even so we still have 3 units, (487DF, 493 and 495) which are currently registering no activity since September 2010 and as such the wing is incurring a 1614 points penalty in the current Regional competition.

The wing did manage 100% unit participation in the 2009/10 Regional competition, but this was only achieved by the proactive actions of Wing HQ and the Wing MCO as described above.

The Warwickshire & Birmingham Wing is currently very well placed to do extremely well again in the 2010/2011 regional competition with several of our Squadrons achieving some very good scores. As of December 10 with 8 months still to run Warwickshire & Birmingham have exceeded their last years total and were currently in first place, some way ahead of the competition. Having said that, if we don't get the full support of all of our wing's 27 units and wing staff, we will fail to stay ahead.

Having given an update of the levels of Squadron participation in both Wing and Regional competitions, I would add that individual Squadron media activity is not all about competition between different Squadrons. More importantly, it's about increasing the profile of your unit and our wing within your community, which in turn attracts new recruits and significantly increases your Squadron's chances of attracting local community funding and support. So if you're not actively promoting your Squadron in the media you could be missing out.

Once again I would urge all Squadrons and Wing Staff to do their best to help to bolster the Wings performance in the 2010/2011 Regional media communications competition. A copy of the Monthly Media Report and guidelines can be found on the Wing website on the forms page.

WING FIELD DAY

During the 2010 Wing Field Day we only had entries from 8 Squadrons into the Photographic and Media design elements of the Media Communications competitions. I would encourage all Squadrons to enter these competitions this year.

I appreciate the fact that the photographic competition requirement for a portfolio of 3 images conforming to very specific criteria may have discouraged some units from entering, however this year I have managed to persuade Region to introduce a new category for a single photograph of any Air Cadet related activity, thus all units should be able to enter this element of the competition.

Full details of this years entry subject matter and competition rules are available from the wing website.

Warwickshire & Birmingham Wing

Finally, I would take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been contributing to the Wing's media communications activities during the past year for all their efforts.

Paul Hincks
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Warwickshire & Birmingham Wing

Copy to:
OC Squadrons
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WSO's