



## Alaska Wing, Civil Air Patrol, Public Affairs Talking Points – For Public Distribution

**Q:** How has the Alaska Wing of the Civil Air Patrol been affected by this year's legislative budget cuts?

**A:** The Alaska Wing has definitely felt the pinch of the recent State budget cuts. Aircraft hangers have closed in Homer and Seward. The heat has been turned off in Valdez. The Bethel squadron moved out of a shared hangar. The Kodiak hanger needs a new roof, which will have to be postponed. Many other hangars are no longer heated. Squadrons' effectiveness is hampered and mission launch times are lengthening.

With cold hangers, incident response time has slowed because the engines need to be heated to 200 degrees before flight. The lower the ambient temperature, the longer this takes - often an hour or more. Aircraft and equipment stored outside will require more costly maintenance.

The Wing has been able to maintain its operational readiness by using funds in a savings account to pay the day-to-day expenses. Unfortunately, limited funds will also slow the growth of the congressionally-mandated Aerospace education program in elementary schools, currently one of the largest in the nation.

Alaska State funds in the past have covered the maintenance, insurance, repairs and utilities required to keep the hangers open and operational. The Wing's roughly 750 volunteer members have maintained a positive attitude and will continue to do their best, albeit in an environment of austerity. Most of the 17 squadrons around the State have attempted to make up for the fiscal shortfall by hosting local fund raising initiatives to keep the lights on.

CAP's missions of emergency services, cadet programs, and aerospace education within Alaska are described at <http://www.akwg.cap.gov>.

*Civil Air Patrol, the longtime all-volunteer U.S. Air Force auxiliary, is the newest member of the Air Force's Total Force, which consists of regular Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, along with Air Force retired military and civilian employees. CAP, in its Total Force role, operates a fleet of 550 aircraft and performs about 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCC with saving an average of 78 lives annually. Civil Air Patrol's 62,000 members nationwide also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. Its members additionally play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to more than 27,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet program. Performing missions for America for the past 77 years, CAP received the Congressional Gold Medal in 2014 in honor of the heroic efforts of its World War II veterans. CAP also participates in Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. Visit [www.capvolunteernow.com](http://www.capvolunteernow.com) for more information.*

CAP contact:  
Maj Bryan Emerson  
Wing Public Affairs Officer  
Email – [bryan.emerson@akwg.cap.gov](mailto:bryan.emerson@akwg.cap.gov)  
(907) 795-5586 - Cell