



Alaska Wing  
Civil Air Patrol

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## FROM THE NATIONAL COMMANDER: A Conversation About the Death of George Floyd

1 message

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Thu, Jun 4, 2020 at 1:15 PM



### ***During Unrest, 'Always Remember Who and What We Are' in Civil Air Patrol***

In this week's message I was going to explain the actions we are taking at the national level to facilitate growing a culture of innovation in CAP. However, recent events across the nation motivate me to have a different conversation with you. This is a conversation I had with our wing and region commanders a couple of days ago.

It seems safe to say that lately everything has been all about COVID-19, all day every day. You continue to do an extraordinary job in both supporting missions in local communities along with getting the business of CAP done. Thank you. However, on top of the stressors everyone is dealing with we now have nationwide civil unrest over the death of Mr. George Floyd on May 25th. The rage is real and justifiable. How we respond to it, personally, and as members of CAP, is important.



On a personal level, it's important for us to acknowledge that there is a continuing issue of racial divide and divisiveness in the United States. And it's important for us to be willing to have civil, healthy, respectful conversations about the topic. How each person deals with the matter is, of course, personal. Remember that personal actions, though, can often bleed over to the CAP parts of our life. This could happen through words, actions, or social media posts. All of us must be wise in what we say in social media for many reasons, one of which is that the lines between our personal lives and CAP lives can easily be blurred.

As for us, members of CAP, the topic of race is an important one to not shy away from. How we address it can be challenging. We need to remember that CAP must operate at a higher level of ethics. We strive, always, to be an inclusive organization that values and respects all our members. We have our core values and ethical framework that we adhere to as an organization and members of the organization. It's important for each of us to start from a position of respect, kindness, and compassion. And let's make sure we model the tenets of professionalism and excellence that CAP is known for.

The complexity of our very interesting, stressful environment just got turned up a couple of notches, didn't it? The civil unrest we are witnessing, underscoring continued racial divide divisiveness in our nation, may very well be perceived as a difficult challenge. Rather, I would challenge us to view it as an opportunity. This is an opportunity for self-reflection and self-improvement, for stepping up to having those awkward conversations, and to again shine as bright examples to others. As individuals. As members of the amazing organization called CAP. Let's always remember who and what we are as an organization, and let's remember to always come from a position of inclusiveness, respect, kindness, compassion, professionalism, and excellence.

Thank you for what you do with, for, in, and because of Civil Air Patrol. Be well. Be safe. Be strong.

**Maj. Gen. Mark Smith**  
National Commander/CEO



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