



HQ, Alabama Wing
Civil Air Patrol
USAF Auxiliary
105 South Hansell St.
Maxwell AFB,
Alabama 36112
15 May 2023

Operation Plan - OPLAN SER-AL-03 (EMERGENCY LOCATOR TRANSMITTER SEARCHES)

References:

- A. CAPR 60-3, CAP Emergency Services Training and Operational Missions, dated 26 December 2012,
https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/media/cms/R060_003_075A4369FBA8E.pdf
- B. National Incident Management System, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims>
- C. Alabama – Atlas and Gazetteer, DeLorme, 2010.
- D. Mission Management & Support Guidelines, Headquarters, Civil Air Patrol, <https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/programs/emergency-services/operations-support/mission-management-and-support-guidelines>

Time Zone Used – Central Daylight Time (CDT) Local

Task Organization:

Phase I, IV – Habitual Command Relationship – Administrative Control (ADCON)

Phase II, III – Deployment and Employment – Operational Control (OPCON)

Alabama Wing Headquarters	Group I	Group II	Group III	Incident Commander
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AL-001(-) ADCON	AL-100 (-) ADCON	AL-200 (-) ADCON	AL-300 (-) ADCON	Deployed Personnel and Equipment (OPCON)
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I. SITUATION:

- A. Alabama Wing (ALWG) personnel and resources are trained and postured to conduct one of CAP’s principal missions, emergency services, in response to taskings from the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC), Headquarters, 1st Air Force, CAP’s National Operations Center (NOC), and approved requests from external civil authorities.
- B. The most common of searches conducted by CAP are electronic searches for electronic locator transmitters.
- C. Southeast Region (SER) – To be published in implementing operations order.
- D. Adjacent Wings:
 - 1. Georgia Wing (GAWG) – To be published in implementing operations order.
 - 2. Tennessee Wing (TNWG) – To be published in implementing operations order.
 - 3. Mississippi Wing (MSWG) – To be published in implementing operations order.
 - 4. Florida Wing (FLWG) – To be published in implementing operations order.
- F. Weather. <https://www.aviationweather.gov>
- G. Light Data. <https://www.usno.navy.mil/USNO/astronomical-applications/data-services/data-services>
- H. Assumptions.
 - 1. Weather conditions will permit the deployment of aircraft and ground personnel in a field environment.

2. Assist from adjoining wings may be requested from SER or the NOC in those cases where the target is being pursued in vicinity of a common border.
3. The initial small-scale of ELT search operations normally will not demand the employment of most positions within the IMT. Commonly, filling the IC alone or an IC, OSC/AOBD/GBD, and CUL/MRO are sufficient to manage such operations.

II. MISSION. Under the authority of the ALWG Commander, a designated IC assumes operational control of select ALWG personnel to conduct search operations to locate and disable a single or multiple ELTs. The supporting Incident Management Team (IMT) will initially execute command and control by virtual means.

III. EXECUTION:

- A. Commander's Intent. An important element of a ELT search operations is public relations. CAP personnel conducting searches are in a "high visibility" position. Bystanders may be getting their first look at CAP. Presenting CAP in a positive light by way of appearance, politeness and professionalism are essential. As always, safety in all operations must remain paramount.
- B. Concept of Operation. This operation will be conducted in four phases:
 1. Phase I – Pre-deployment – On-call ALWG Wing Alert Officer (WAO) receives and accepts mission tasking, alerts group Unit Alert Officers (UAOs), mobilizes and functions checks equipment and personnel resources required to execute immediate mission tasks.
 2. Phase II - Deployment – On order (O/O) of the IC, select personnel and equipment deploy to designated operational locations
 3. Phase III – Employment. Deployed elements search operations
 4. Phase IV – Redeployment. O/O of the IC, deployed personnel are directed to return to home stations.
- C. Orders to Subordinate Elements.
 1. Phase I – Pre-Deployment
 - a. ALWG ES Staff.

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- (1) For the purpose of receiving initial mission notification, ALWG will post to the Web Mission Information and Reporting System (WMIRS) Alert Roster a prioritized list of ICs serving as ALWG Alert Officers (WAOs). Those personnel listed on the roster are the only individuals authorized by the ALWG CC to commit assets to emergency service missions.
- (2) The WAO will immediately notify the ALWG command group and ALWG Director of Operations (DO) and provide an initial mission briefing.
- (3) ES staff will immediately release a text or email (TBD) message informing the wing membership that a mission has been opened and that additional information will be provided in a subsequent email warning order to follow. Both notices will include a prohibition against self-deployment.

b. IC.

- (1) The IC will identify initial operational location(s) appropriate to his mission analysis or direct the establishment and means for a virtual ICP.
- (2) The IC will make an initial determination of required personnel and equipment resources to initiate operations.
- (3) The IC will inform Group UAO(s) of both the arrival time and destination for required mission resources.
- (4) The IC will conduct an initial Operational Risk Management (ORM) assessment of the anticipated operation and mission tasks.

c. Groups.

- (1) Group CCs will establish, maintain, and provide to the ALWG DOS a prioritized duty roster of individuals serving as group UAOs. If not assigned, respective unit commanders assume UAO responsibilities.
- (2) Assigned UAOs will remain available for telephonic contact 24 hours/day during their assigned period of duty and knowledgeable of availability and capabilities of group ES personnel and equipment.
- (3) Taking direction from the IC, group UAO(s) will alert and assemble requested personnel and equipment resources.
- (4) Subordinate leaders will begin pre-deployment tasks:
 - (a) Prepare and inspect individual and team equipment to including charging required batteries.

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- (b) Conduct safety inspections of aircraft and vehicles (CAPF-73); verify operational readiness of other mission equipment.
- (c) Verify personnel mission qualifications utilizing the operations qualification utility on eServices.
- (d) Task organize available aircrew and ground team (GT) qualified members into deployable teams
- (e) Conduct unit-level briefings.

2. Phase II – Deployment.

a. IC.

- (1) The IC assumes operational control (OPCON) of designated mission personnel and resources upon departure from home station
- (2) Authority for release of air and ground personnel from home station and for mission tasking resides with the IC. The IC may delegate this authority to a subordinate staff element as appropriate to specific incident circumstances.
- (3) Subject to the IC's operational analysis, the IC and designated incident staff establish, and activate a virtual ICP.
- (4) The IC will assure 100% accountability of personnel utilizing the resource element of the WMIRS mission folder.

b. Groups.

- (1) O/O of the IC or Operations Section Chief (OSC) identified by the IC, designated personnel and equipment deploy to the identified operational area
- (2) Air/Ground Operations. The IC, unless delegated to another, retains release authority for all mission r personnel; vehicles will not depart home stations without a CAPF 109 issued by the IC and a sortie ORM, aircraft will not depart home stations without a CAPF 108 issued by the IC and a sortie ORM.

c. Deploying Elements. Deploying elements report to and accept OPCON direction from the IC upon departure from home station and for in route taskings..

3. Phase III – Employment

a. General. The initial operational period will be 24 hours.

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b. IC.

- (1) IC will determine whether a written Incident Action Plan (IAP) will be prepared for each operational period; if prepared, an information copy will be provided to the ALWG CC. As a minimum ICS 201 (Incident Briefing) will be completed and uploaded to WMIRS
- (2) IC will present an initial mission briefing to mission personnel prior to significant mission taskings.
- (3) IC will continue to evaluate mission requirements, task organize available resources, and assign mission tasks.
- (4) The IC will determine the adequacy of mission resources and as required, coordinate with the Group UAOs for the provision of additional assets.

c. Deployed Ground Team/UDF Leader.

- (1) Deploy to the general area of ELT activation as provided by the requesting agency.
- (2) Determine a general direction of the distress beacon.
- (3) Utilizing triangulation procedures narrow the potential location of the target until the beacon's location is identified.
- (4) Once the distress beacon has been found the following procedures should be followed
 - (a) In a distress situation, the primary responsibility is to render aid to any victims.
 - (b) Immediately report the find to mission base.
 - (c) Attempt to locate the aircraft/boat owner in order to gain access to the distress beacon.
 - (d) If the owner is unavailable, contact the FBO or harbor master and local law enforcement officials to permit access to the aircraft or boat.
 - (e) Locate and deactivate the distress beacon, monitoring 121.5 Mhz to insure the signal ceases. If possible, disconnect the battery. (Distress Beacons are normally located in the tail section of small planes. Large commercial planes sometimes have a small access door on the fuselage to access an on/off switch to the distress beacon).
 - (f) Always make sure the signal has stopped as the wrong source may have been identified.
 - (g) Leave a distress beacon deactivation sticker, so that the owner knows that his distress beacon has been deactivated if not present

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when silenced. If you no sticker is available, leave a note where the pilot will find it.

c. Aircrew(s).

- (1) As directed by mission staff, fly to the general area of ELT activation as provided by the requesting agency.
- (5) Determine a general direction of the distress beacon.
- (6) Utilizing triangulation procedures narrow the potential location of the target until the beacon's location is identified.
- (7) Once the distress beacon has been located the following procedures should be followed
 - (a) Immediately report the find to mission base.
 - (b) If directed, land at the suspect airfield to identify the specific aircraft.
 - (c) Coordinate with the FBO and attempt to locate the aircraft owner to gain access to the distress beacon.
 - (d) If the owner is unavailable, coordinate with the FBO to contact local law enforcement officials to permit access to the aircraft.
 - (e) Locate and deactivate the distress beacon, monitoring 121.5 Mhz to insure the signal ceases. If possible, disconnect the battery. (Distress Beacons are normally located in the tail section of the fuselage. Large commercial planes sometimes have a small access door on the fuselage to access an on/off switch to the distress beacon).
- (8) Always make sure the signal has stopped as the wrong source may have been identified.
- (9) Leave a distress beacon deactivation sticker, so that the owner knows that his distress beacon has been deactivated if not present when silenced. If you no sticker is available, leave a note where the pilot will find it.

4. Phase IV – Redeployment

a. IC.

- (1) Provides the search results to the requesting agency
- (2) Develops and executes a redeployment plan, including determining whether a time-phased redeployment of resources is appropriate

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- (3) Notifies by electronic mail, the Wing CC, VC, CS, DO, and DOS of the mission's outcome
- (4) In conjunction with the ALWG staff, schedules an after- action review, no later than 14 days after the close of the mission

b. Deployed Air/Team

- (1) Obtains permission to redeploy from the IC
- (2) Reports the team's departure from operation's location
- (5) Upon return to home station, submits closing reports as established by the IC
- (6) Returns all resources and equipment to an operationally "ready" status as soon as possible

D. Coordinating Instructions.

1. Most distress beacon finds are non-distress situations, where the beacon activation is due to an accident or malfunction. Even so, all ELT searches must be pursued with operational vigor and, until proven wrong, an assumption that a life maybe at risk. Further, it is essential to turn off any distress beacon (ELTs, EPIRBs, PLBs, or other transmitters as a transmitting distress beacon can mask other distress signals.
2. Team training and experience must be appropriate for the mission (proficiency in DF use, ground rescue knowledge, concentrated area search procedures, missing person search, etc.). Ground Members – Level 1 should be prepared to conduct ground team operations within their limits of training up to 72 hours. Ground Team Members – Level 2 should be prepared to conduct ground team operations within their limits of training for up to 48 hours. Ground Team Members – Level 3 should be prepared to conduct ground team operations within their limits of training for up to 24 hours.
3. All aircrews during the conduct of approved A, B, and C missions will utilize ATC flight following, when available, to ensure greater situational awareness for both ATC, CAP, and local aviation traffic. CAP aircrews operating in the local airport traffic pattern are exempt from this requirement Exceptions to this guidance are at the discretion of the mission AOBD or IC.
4. Ground teams will not be released without a qualified ground team leader and at least three qualified ground team members or supervised trainees.

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5. Urban Direction Finding (UDF) teams will consist of at least two members with one individual identified as the senior member.
6. The ALWG CC must approve, in writing, justification for use of a privately owned Vehicle as official CAP transportation, when adequate CAP vehicles are not available. Approval is limited to unusual circumstances where lack of transportation or capability for CAP members adversely impacts important activities. Prior to granting such permission, the member must provide evidence of insurance coverage and registration. Written approval for use of an owner-owned vehicle will be maintained on file IAW CAPR 10-2, Files Maintenance and Records Disposition. (CAPR 77-1, Operations and Maintenance of Civil Air Patrol Vehicles).

IV. SERVICE SUPPORT:

A. Administration and Personnel:

1. Wear of duty appropriate uniforms IAW CAPR 39-1 is required of all mission participants. CAP identification card and CAPF 101, CAP Specialty Qualification Card, will be carried on person. In the case of a virtual ICP, home units will maintain file copies of the CAPF 161.
2. For AFRCC activated missions, the AFRCC will open the mission in WMIRS. Use of WMIRS for mission record keeping is mandatory. Under circumstances where internet service is unavailable and mission record keeping is accomplished on paper, the IC must enter all mission data into WMIRS NLT 72 hours of mission close
3. Within 15 days, the IC will ensure that all records pertaining to an authorized mission are filed in the WMIRS mission file. No files are maintained outside of WMIRS.
 - a. The uploaded documents will include at least the ICS 201 or full Incident Action Plan; IC's log; personnel, vehicle registers; all CAP and wing forms used; sortie logs, message log; copies of news releases; reports to the controlling agency (CAPF 122, SITREPs, etc.); and any related information that may be needed in answering future inquiries relating to the mission. Reference CAPR 60-3, 1-21.
 - b. No mission records will be released outside CAP without prior written approval of NHQ CAP/GC and HQ CAP-USAF/JA.

B. Logistics.

1. Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants (POL).

- a. Teams will make payment for fuel purchases using the National Credit Card.
- b. The ALWG Form 173-RA, Alabama Wing Fuel/Oil Receipt Checklist and Addendum, and associated receipts will be uploaded to the WMIRS within 24 hours of purchase. The upload will be a one-page PDF document with the fuel form and receipts side by side.

2. Equipment. Ground teams will deploy with all mandatory individual (appropriate to individual mission qualifications) and team equipment; food is initially an individual/team responsibility

C. Information Management.

1. The ALWG IO will provide the IC initial guidance for participating member interactions with the media and public.
2. No statements of assumption about the accident will be made by any CAP member and no member owned pictures taken during the mission shall be made public without IC or ALWG IO approval.
3. Aircrews, ground teams and staff are encouraged to bring digital cameras to record mission activities. Imagery obtained during the mission will be reviewed during the mission debriefings. Some images may be appropriate for public release (PIO), or for release to customers (IC). No member owned pictures taken during the mission shall be made public without IC approval.

D. Legal Considerations.

1. An ELT signal does not provide legal cause for entry onto private property. ELT search teams have no more rights to enter onto private property than any common citizen
2. Neither AFRCC nor the IC can authorize a team to enter private property.
3. To gain entry to private property seek permission from the legal owner or assistance from law enforcement.

V. COMMAND & SIGNAL:

A. This order effective for planning upon receipt, execution O/O ALWG CC

B. Command.

1. Phase I Pre-deployment – ALWG CC, VC, COS- ADCON
2. Phase II-III Deployment/Employment – Deploying personnel and resources OPCON to the IC
3. Phase IV Demobilization. Upon return to home station and rendering of final reports to the ICS staff, previously deployed elements are returned to parent command control - ADCON
4. IMT:

Incident Command Team	Name	Number/E-Mail
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Incident Commander	TBD	TBD
Mission Safety Officer	TBD	TBD
Operations Section Chief	TBD	TBD
Ground Branch Director	TBD	TBD
Air Operations Brand Director	TBD	TBD

C. Signal. Annex C (COMMUNICATIONS PLAN) - TBP

1. ALWG command net will be opened NLT - TBP
2. ICP command net will be opened NLT - TBP
3. Channel allocation:
 - a. ICP-Air, Air-Air – TBP
 - b. ICP-Ground – TBP
 - c. Air-Ground Coordination - TBP

Site	Location	Telephone/Email
Incident Command Post	TBD	TBD
Staging Area	TBD	TBD

4. Telephone Numbers - TBP
5. Codewords – None
6. All members will remain cognizant that CAP frequency plans are FOUO information

D. Safety

1. The IC will update the ORM as appropriate and conduct an onsite safety assessment of operational locations,
2. Only members of CAP may operate CAP vehicles. All personnel operating vehicles will have a valid CAP and state driver's license and will operate all vehicles in accordance with applicable state and local laws.
3. No member should ever put themselves at risk to deactivate a distress beacon.

Signed

ALTIERI
Col, Director for Operations
FOR THE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:

BABBITT
Deputy Director of Emergency Services (PLANS)

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