



# CONR - 1 AF/AFNORTH

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## CONR commends Civil Air Patrol for 70 years of service

*By Angela Pope, AFNORTH Public Affairs*

**TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.** – The Civil Air Patrol, one of Continental U.S. North American Aerospace Defense Command Region-1st Air Force (Air Forces Northern)'s strongest allies and partners in homeland defense and Defense Support of Civil Authorities, is now 70 years old.

“CAP’s volunteers enable us to provide better service to the citizens of this great country,” said Lt. Gen. Sid Clarke, CONR-1st AF (AFNORTH) commander. “And though CONR-1st AF (AFNORTH)’s partnership with CAP is only a few years old, they’ve been providing this invaluable service since World War II.”

In the late 1930s, a group of more than 150,000 aviation enthusiasts began efforts to start a volunteer organization that would allow them to use their flying skills and airplanes to provide defense for the United States, according to the Civil Air Patrol website. Those efforts came to fruition Dec. 1, 1941, one week before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Assigned to the War Department under the jurisdiction of the Army Air Corps, CAP logged more than 500,000 flying hours, sinking two enemy submarines, and saving hundreds of crash victims during World War II.

The contributions of the volunteer force were realized, and the group gained presidential recognition July 1, 1946, when President Harry Truman signed Public Law 476 incorporating Civil Air Patrol as a benevolent, nonprofit organization.

Two years later, on May 26, 1948, Congress passed Public Law 557 permanently establishing Civil Air Patrol as the auxiliary of the new U.S. Air Force. This law would eventually enable CAP to work under CONR-1st AF (AFNORTH) in the capacity it does today.

“In its capacity as the Air Force Auxiliary, CAP was uniquely positioned to conduct homeland security operations in support of the nation’s security initiatives and to be a force multiplier for the Air Force,” said Mark OBrien, CAP-USAF liaison officer to 1st AF. “So in 2005, CAP operational mission approval for the continental U.S. was realigned under 1st Air Force.”

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**CAP**

The CONR-1st AF (AFNORTH) commander employs the services of CAP in lieu of or in supplement of Air Force resources to fulfill the non-combat programs and missions of the Air Force, according to OBrien. Such services may include Air Force-assigned missions in support of homeland security operations, consequence management, support to civilian law enforcement and other civil support.

“CAP has been recognized as a national leader in its ability to respond to search and rescue, disaster relief and homeland security missions,” OBrien said. “This is due to their technology, their low cost and the speed with which they respond to an incident or event.”

The partnership between CONR-1st AF (AFNORTH) and CAP is put to work nearly every single day of the year. CAP teams can regularly be found providing air and ground teams in search of lost hikers, missing aircraft and the like. Several times a year, CAP teams around the country provide "tracks of interest" to aerospace control alert pilots, giving them a chance to practice scrambling and intercepting aircraft in a safe, controlled environment. And when disaster strikes, CAP is out in force, doing everything from imagery analysis of the disaster-stricken area to rescuing victims of the disaster.

“We share a special relationship with CAP,” Clarke said. “We simply could not do what we do every day without them. I join a grateful nation in saying thank you for everything you do and have done for the last 70 years.”