

Civil Air Patrol – Washington Wing – Cadet Orientation Flight Program

Program Summary

January 28, 2014

Overview

The Cadet Orientation Flight Program in the Washington Wing is achieved by a fleet of 11 aircraft flown by a team of approximately 45 pilots. We also have two gliders which provide glider orientation flights out of Chehalis airport. The program is coordinated by the WAWG Orientation Flight Coordinator, in the role event promoter, pilot persuader, resource planner, and general cheerleader. The role is shared with a coordinator for the glider program. The Orientation Flight Coordinator roles fall under the Directorate of Operations.

The program is healthy and is growing each year despite budgetary shutdowns, systemic hurdles, and unique weather challenges. For example, the Pacific Northwest area faces long periods of poor weather on the Westside of the Cascades. CAP Units in Eastern Washington face a systemic hurdle in that these units are generally smaller and more dispersed, and with fewer pilots: of the 45 pilots who provide Cadet Orientation Flights in WAWG, only 7 are based East of the Cascades. Ironically, where the weather is better, the pilots are fewer.

We overcome these unique Washington challenges with a strategy to combine cadet orientation flights with aviation events such as airshows, community fly-ins, glider operations at Chehalis, and ESTA (Emergency Services Training Academy). Each year we publish a list of aviation events so CAP organizers can bundle “Oride Rodeos” around the events. This bundling strategy also achieves the goal of new member recruiting since the Oride ground operations can be observed by the public, and local units are prepared in advance for the recruiting mission. I believe another success factor is employing a light management approach, using the idea of selling the fun and educational aspects of the program, and less about taking control and making new demands upon CAP volunteer members, in this case primarily pilots, who as a group are hard to herd on even a good day.

Achieving innovation and efficiency in the program is the best way to keep it growing. New for this year 2014, my goal is to train up two Assistant Coordinators – one Eastside and one Westside - to help delegate the burden, and to assume my role if necessary. This year I also want support from Wing leadership to encourage all units to appoint a Unit Orientation Flight Coordinator, even if (especially if) the unit has no aircraft assigned.

The Numbers

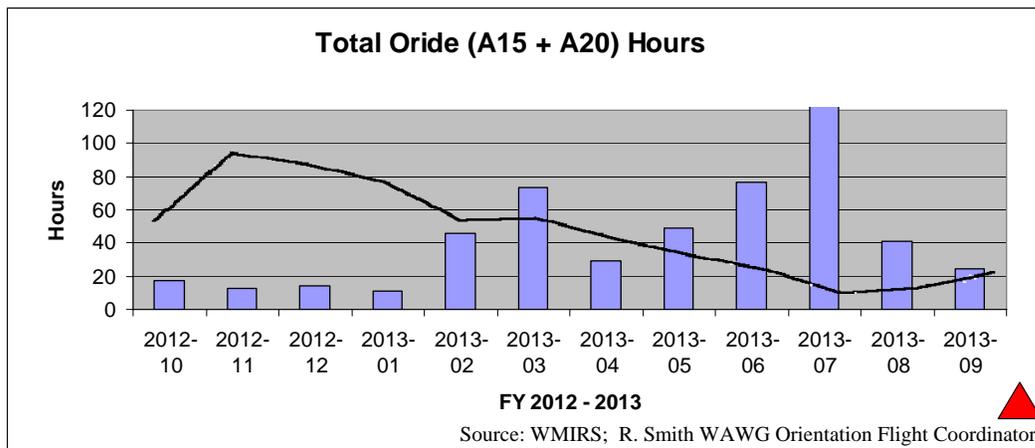
The annual WAWG Oride numbers have continued on an upward trend for the past 3 years, and this past year of 2013 (FY 2012-2013) was another record breaker. In 2013 the WAWG pilots and support staff organized approximately 900 flights for the Wing’s 670 cadets. In 2012-2013, this resulted in more than 500 hours of aircraft utilization for powered and glider ORides. In the bigger picture, the Cadet Orientation Flight Program delivered aircraft utilization numbers falling between the CD Program (360 hours) and Aircrew Proficiency (950 hours) types of flying.

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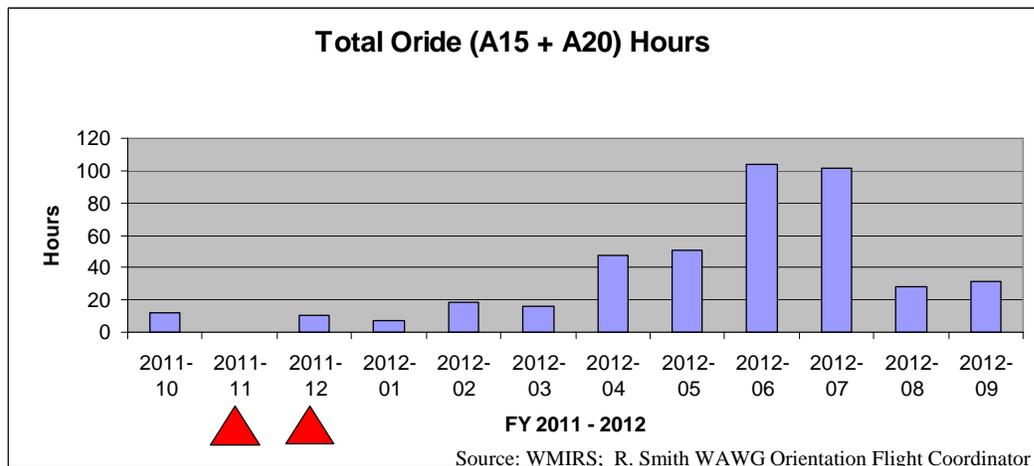
January 28, 2014

The charts below show the number of A15 (powered) +A20 (glider) hours flown on the WAWG powered aircraft. New for this year's reporting, the solid black line on the 2013 graph tracks historic monthly averages for precipitation in Western Washington. Not surprising that flying hours track the good weather...and cadet/highschool student summer break. The bump in March 2013 was due to a big Oride Rodeo event held at Renton airport. June 2013 was a slow start this year but a strong Arlington Airshow and local unit efforts packed on the Oride sorties in July 2013 for an outstanding finish this year.



Total 2012-2013 Oride Hours: 518

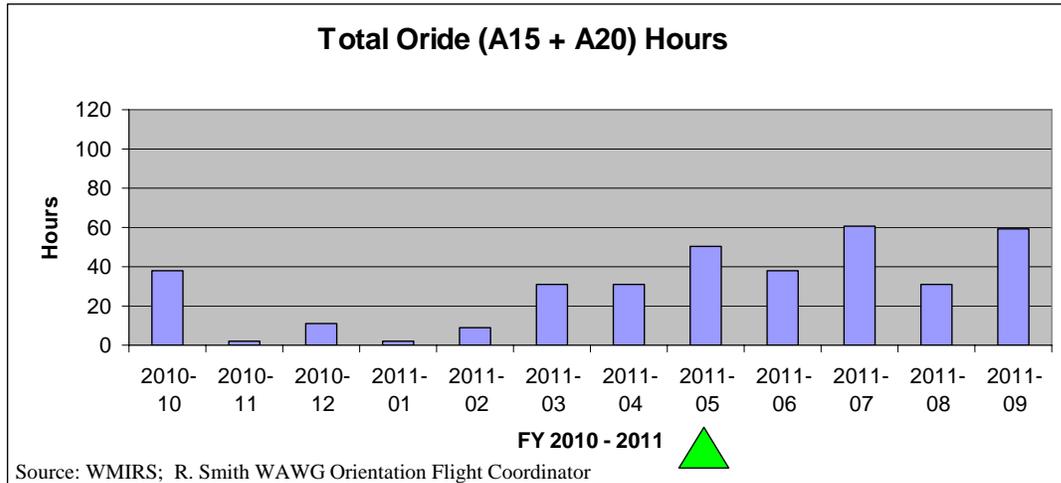
▲ Federal budget shutdowns (October O-Ride funding restored 17 Oct 2013)



Total FY 2011-2012 Oride Hours: 427

▲ Federal Continuing Resolution/ shutdowns

Civil Air Patrol – Washington Wing – Cadet Orientation Flight Program
Program Summary
January 28, 2014



Total FY 2010-2011 Oride Hours: 364

▲ Start of Orientation Flight Coordinator position

The most important success factor in these numbers remains the dedication of the WAWG pilots and unit staff organizers who volunteer the hours to make this program a big success each year, so credit goes to those folks.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Smith CAP Capt
WAWG Cadet Orientation Flight Program Coordinator
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