



MAINE STATE POLICE GENERAL ORDER

E-34

SUBJECT: MAINE STATE POLICE AIR WING

EFFECTIVE DATE: 08.01.2020

EXPIRATION DATE: 08.01.2027

RECENT HISTORY: AMENDED (08.01.2020); AMENDED (01.01.2019); REVISED (01.29.2016); TECHNICAL CHANGE (10.04.2011); CONVERTED TO WEB FORMAT (02.05.2009); FORMERLY G.O. 41D

DISTRIBUTION CODE: 2 (MAY BE PUBLICLY DISCLOSED)

APPLICABILITY CODE: S

SIGNATURE OF COLONEL:

I. PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this General Order is to establish the Maine State Police Air Wing.

II. POLICY

1. The policy of the Maine State Police is:
 - A. To maintain an aircraft unit ("Air Wing") staffed by sworn personnel who are certified pilots; and
 - B. To use Maine State Police aircraft in accordance with this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. For the purposes of this General Order, the terms included in this section are defined as follows, unless otherwise indicated in the order.

- A. C.F.I. "C.F.I." is an acronym for "Certified Flight Instructor."
- B. Colonel. "Colonel" means the Chief of the Maine State Police, or her or his designee.
- C. F.A.A. "F.A.A." is an acronym for "Federal Aviation Administration."
- D. Traffic Safety Unit Commander. "Traffic Safety Unit Commander" means the Commanding Officer of the Maine State Police Traffic Safety Unit, or her or his designee.

IV. PROCEDURE

1. USE OF MAINE STATE POLICE AIRCRAFT GENERALLY

- A. Maine State Police aircraft only may be used for the following purposes:
 - 1. Traffic law enforcement and highway safety;
 - 2. Surveillance activities;
 - 3. Transportation of personnel and equipment for official business;
 - 4. Lost person and fugitive searches;
 - 5. Assisting other law enforcement agencies; and
 - 6. Other functions, as approved in advance by the Traffic Safety Unit Commander.

2. AIR WING PERSONNEL COMPOSITION

- A. The Air Wing shall consist of sworn personnel who are certified pilots and who are selected to be Air Wing members in accordance with this policy.
 - 1. Air Wing personnel may be assigned to other units as necessary, depending on the needs of the agency.

3. REQUESTS FOR EMERGENCY AIR WING ASSISTANCE

- A. The ranking Maine State Police officer at an incident controlled by the Maine State Police may request the emergency assistance of the Air Wing, as may the ranking sworn officer at such an incident controlled by that officer's agency.
- B. Requests for emergency Air Wing assistance are to be made through the Regional Communications Center of jurisdiction.

1. A person requesting the assistance of the Air Wing shall provide as much information as possible to the RCC through which the request is being made, including, but not limited to:
 - a. The name of the person, the name of the person's agency (if applicable), and a call back number;
 - b. A brief description of the nature of the incident to which the request relates;
 - c. The proposed use of the Air Wing;
 - d. The location of the incident to which the Air Wing is being asked to respond; and
 - e. As much additional relevant information as possible.
 - C. Upon receiving a request for emergency assistance of the Air Wing, the Traffic Safety Unit Commander – or, if the Traffic Safety Unit Commander is unavailable, then an Air Wing Pilot – shall decide whether the assistance is to be provided.
4. REQUESTS FOR NONEMERGENCY AIR WING ASSISTANCE
- A. Requests for nonemergency Air Wing assistance are to be directed to the Traffic Safety Unit Commander, or directly to an Air Wing Pilot.
 1. An Air Wing pilot receiving such a request will consult the Traffic Safety Unit Commander about the request and advise her or him if the flight is feasible.
 2. The Air Wing Pilot assigned to the mission will have the final say as to whether the flight can be conducted.
 - B. When a request for nonemergency Air Wing assistance is granted, the Air Wing Pilot assigned to the flight shall coordinate all activities with the requesting officer or contact person.
 - C. All requests for non-emergency flights will be made as far in advance as possible.
5. AIR WING-RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRAFFIC SAFETY UNIT COMMANDER
- A. The Traffic Safety Unit Commander shall administer the operations of the Air Wing and ensure:
 1. That Air Wing aircraft are used in accordance with this policy and the *Maine State Police Air Wing Operations Manual*;

2. That Air Wing aircraft are properly maintained;
3. That each Air Wing Pilot maintains required certifications and qualifications;
4. That F.A.A. and manufacturer's recommendations for maintenance and inspection of equipment are followed;
5. That all Air Wing operations are conducted safely; and
6. That the Air Wing comply with Department of Public Safety and Maine State Police budgetary requirements.

B. The Traffic Safety Unit Commander shall provide the Colonel with an annual report of Air Wing activities no later than the last day of the month of January of the year following the year accounted for in the report.

6. AIR WING PILOT RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Air Wing Pilots shall:

1. Use Air Wing aircraft in accordance with this policy and the *Maine State Police Air Wing Operations Manual*;
2. Maintain required certifications and qualifications;
3. Conduct all operations safely;
4. Follow F.A.A. and manufacturer's recommendations for maintenance and inspection of equipment;
5. Report defective, damaged, and lost equipment to the Traffic Safety Unit Commander as soon as reasonably practicable; and
6. Satisfactorily perform other assigned duties.

7. AIR WING PILOT SELECTION

A. When an Air Wing Pilot vacancy exists, the Traffic Safety Unit Commander shall notify all Maine State Police sworn officers of the opening.

1. To be considered for an Air Wing Pilot vacancy, a sworn officer must meet the following minimum requirements:
 - a. The officer must have at least five (5) years of experience as a sworn officer with the Maine State Police;
 - b. The officer must have an overall "acceptable" or better rating on her or his two (2) most recent performance evaluations;
 - c. The officer must have a current F.A.A. Private Pilot's certificate with an airplane single-engine land rating; and

- d. The officer must have a current F.A.A. Class Two (2) Medical Certificate.
- 2. Upon notification of an Air Wing Pilot opening, an interested officer shall forward a written request for consideration through the officer's Commanding Officer to the Traffic Safety Unit Commander.
 - a. The written request must include a resume evidencing the officer's pilot training and piloting experience.
- 3. The requesting officer's Commanding Officer shall forward a copy of the officer's two (2) most recent performance evaluations and a written recommendation to the Traffic Safety Unit Commander.
- 4. Each requesting officer shall complete the following tests:
 - a. An oral board whose members must include at least the Colonel, an Air Wing Pilot, and another sworn officer selected by the Traffic Safety Unit Commander;
 - b. A flight test with the F.A.A. or a C.F.I. to current F.A.A. pilot certificate level held.
- 5. Following the process set forth in this section, the Traffic Safety Unit Commander shall make an Air Wing Pilot assignment-recommendation to the Colonel, who then shall make the final selection.

8. PROBATIONARY AIR WING ASSIGNMENT

- A. An officer newly assigned to the Air Wing shall be assigned on a probationary basis.
- B. The newly-assigned officer must successfully complete the "Probationary Pilot Training Program" set forth in the *Maine State Police Air Wing Operations Manual*.
 - 1. An officer newly assigned to the Air Wing who does not successfully complete such training shall return to the rank her or she previously held.

9. AIR WING PILOT TRAINING

- A. Each Air Wing pilot shall participate in and successfully complete assigned training related to pilot proficiency and safety.

1. Examples of such training are those classes offered by the F.A.A. Wings Program, and Flight Safety International Programs.
 - B. Training may include specialized and advanced pilot techniques and certificates, as determined by the Traffic Safety Unit Commander.
 - C. Training must be conducted on a regular basis, as logistics and scheduling allow.
10. AIR WING PILOT EQUIPMENT
- A. Each Air Wing Pilot shall keep issued equipment in her or his issued vehicle or aircraft, or in an otherwise secure location.
 - B. Each Air Wing Pilot shall cross-train with all equipment and have equal access to any shared equipment.
 - C. Each Air Wing Pilot shall have keys to all aircraft and hangers housing Air Wing aircraft.
 - D. Each Air Wing Pilot shall maintain all equipment in excellent working order and ensure that the equipment is clean.
 - E. Each Air Wing Pilot shall report problems with issued equipment to the Traffic Safety Unit Commander as soon as practicable.
 - F. Each Air Wing Pilot shall receive and keep up-to-date a copy of *Maine State Police Air Wing Operations Manual*.

NOTICE

THIS GENERAL ORDER IS FOR USE OF THE MAINE STATE POLICE AND NOT FOR ANY OTHER AGENCY. THE GENERAL ORDER IS NOT INTENDED TO BE RELIED UPON BY ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL OR PRIVATE OR PUBLIC AGENCY. THE GENERAL ORDER EXPRESSLY DOES NOT CREATE, AND IS NOT INTENDED TO CREATE, A HIGHER LEGAL STANDARD OF SAFETY OR CARE IN AN EVIDENTIARY SENSE WITH RESPECT TO THIRD-PARTY CLAIMS. VIOLATIONS OF THIS ORDER ONLY MAY FORM THE BASIS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS BY THE MAINE STATE POLICE.