



NEWS

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Enhanced technology improves Civil Air Patrol's flood damage assessment imagery

COLUMBIA, South Carolina – Civil Air Patrol airmen photographing the flood damage in South Carolina began using a new tool Thursday in their emergency response arsenal – a Garmin Virb camera system that attaches to their planes' wing strut. The cameras capture ground images directly below, which allows officials to make much faster use of the images.

South Carolina Wing officials received three of the new cameras Thursday from CAP's National Operations Center at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. They were first used on damage assessment flights last night.

The cameras were developed in consultation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, said John Desmarais, CAP director of operations.

So far this week, Civil Air Patrol has provided 3,650 aerial photos of the South Carolina flood damage. Aircrews have made 110 flights, spending 202.9 hours in the sky above the state.

About 187 CAP members have worked in the air and on the ground in support of the flooding response.

Aircrews from South Carolina, North Carolina, Maryland, Georgia and Virginia are flying under the direction of 1st Air Force (AFNORTH) at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. A total of 21 CAP planes have been deployed for the South Carolina mission.

Members of the public are invited to join CAP members in raking the aerial photos; the crowdsourcing website is <http://fema.maps.arcgis.com/home/>. The crowdsourcing process expedites emergency officials' ability to identify critical infrastructure needs.

CAP is also conducting search and rescue flights. So far, CAP has directed emergency officials to numerous vehicles in distress, located two unsafe bridges that had no law enforcement or other barricades and flown over roads in and out of Georgetown to help state emergency management plan for evacuations.

Media: See Mission Overview attachment

Civil Air Patrol, the longtime all-volunteer U.S. Air Force auxiliary, is the newest member of the Air Force's Total

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Force, which consists of Regular Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, along with Air Force retired military and civilian employees. CAP, in its Total Force role, operates a fleet of 550 aircraft and performs about 85 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCC with saving an average of 70 lives annually. Civil Air Patrol's 58,000 members nationwide also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. Its Airmen additionally play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to more than 24,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet program. Civil Air Patrol received the Congressional Gold Medal in 2014 in honor of the heroic efforts of its World War II veterans. Congressionally chartered 74 years ago, the nonprofit organization also participates in Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. Visit www.capvolunteernow.com for more information.

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