

Standards of Performance

All members of the Air League are expected to perform to one standard or another. Cadets are required to maintain high standards of dress and deportment, squadron officers have to uphold standards of administration efficiency and federal officers have to ensure compliance with legal or health and safety standards. A Standard of Performance (SOP) is an observable behaviour, action and/or outcome that can demonstrate efficiency or effectiveness. A SOP defines how a given task should be undertaken and communicates clearly what level of performance is acceptable.

Performance standards:

- Support the organisation to achieve its goals
- Are observable, specific indicators of success
- Are meaningful, reasonable and attainable
- Describe a 'fully satisfactory' performance once trained
- May be expressed in terms of quantity, quality, timeliness, cost or safety

In determining performance standards for Officer and NCOs, consider the following:

- How does an exemplary Officer or NCO behave, what standards are observable?
- How much commitment is needed to maintain high standards?
- How long should it take to perform to a high standard?
- What level of performance is satisfactory?
- What are the key differences between good and poor performance?

How do you know when standards are slipping?

Individual standards	Team standards	Squadron standards
Hair and grooming issues	Lower levels of commitment	Lack of forward planning
Dirty, unkempt uniform	Loss of purpose	Untidy meeting hall
Showing lack of respect	Conflict among team members	No sense of organisation
Falling attendance	Failing to achieve team goals	Poor communications
Not following instructions	Visible absence of leadership	Delays in administration

What can be done to improve standards?

- Firstly, you should know the acceptable standards for a given situation
- Recognise and agree that standards have fallen
- Determine why the standards have fallen
- Determine if further training will fix the situation
- Arrange for training, as appropriate
- If the decline in standards was a not training issue, find out any other reason
- If the lower performance is undesirable, advise people
- Tell people how their poor performance and standards are impacting on others
- Advise what improvement is needed
- Advise on the consequences of not improving
- Set targets for improvement
- Monitor progress and provide feedback

Why is it important for Officers and NCOs to maintain high standards?

1. They have a highly visible leadership role - people see them regularly.
2. As leaders, it is their duty to set high standards and maintain them.
3. Cadets look to their Officers and NCOs for a good example.
4. They may have to deal with the falling standards of other members.
5. Parents need to feel confident in the standards they uphold.
6. High standards usually mean high performance and a good reputation.

How can Officers and NCOs maintain high standards? (Complete the table)

	Standard to be improved	Action and by when
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Standards of Performance – Learning activity

Time allowed: 20 minutes

Resources: For each group
A1 size flipchart paper or whiteboard
Marker pens
Post-it note pads

Group size: 2-4 people

Task objective: To identify high and low standards at Squadron level

STEP 1 (10 minutes)

- Course tutor should nominate one person to lead the group. Do not ask for a volunteer (*to reinforce the point that leadership is frequently delegated*).
- The leader should nominate someone to take notes and write comments on the flip chart as follows.

TASK: Squadron Inspection

Ask the group to imagine they have been asked to carry out an inspection at their own Squadron to check on the standards of performance. They will arrive at the meeting place, be welcomed by an Officer and shown around, inside and out. From the group members' experiences, what would they find? Make a large chart using the following headings.

STEP 2 (10 minutes)

Area of inspection	High standard(s)	Low standard(s)
People		
Meeting place		
Systems		