

# History of WSASAS

## *Organization*

The Western States Association of Sheriffs' Air Squadrons was founded in 1947 by the Fresno County Sheriff's Air Squadron at Bass Lake (Madera County) California. It was incorporated as a California non-profit organization in 1956.

The purpose, as stated in its by-laws, is to aid law enforcement and furnish aircraft and trained personnel for official purposes as designated by the Sheriff, help enforce civil air regulations, furnish search and rescue aid in disasters, support activities that benefit and promote aviation and to unite members in a bond of fellowship.

The Western States Association of Sheriffs' Air Squadrons acts as a clearinghouse by allowing member squadrons to share ideas and successes in search, rescue, communications, flight safety and other vital matters.

Approximately three to six meetings are planned each year. Various air squadrons sponsor these meetings or fly-in seminars and all squadron members are encouraged to attend. Almost every Western States gathering includes pistol shooting and flying competition between the squadrons and individual members. Prizes are awarded for the best individual and team scores. Strict rules for the pistol shoot and flying competition are specified by Western States and all participants are required by Western States to adhere to the rules. All members of individual squadrons are volunteers.

A publication called "**FLIGHT PLAN**" is sent to all members. This publication is used to disseminate safety information, news of squadron activities and other items of interest to members. Currently, there are approximately 600 members.

The Squadrons Council and its elected officers manage affairs of Western States. All squadron members are encouraged to attend the meetings. The Squadrons Council meetings are held at each gathering or Fly-in Seminar to conduct business and pass along Western States related information.



## ***Purpose & Benefits***

In the beginning, this organization was chartered for the purpose of uniting Sheriffs' Air Squadrons in the western states to:

- Serve in a major disaster as well as in national and local emergencies.
- Search for down or lost aircraft.
- Search for persons lost or in distress.
- Provide a means of cooperation with the Civil Air Patrol.
- Promote Civil Aviation in general.
- Provide camaraderie among members through shared interests in aviation and law enforcement.

The purpose has broadened to include:

- Expanding our expertise beyond our own county by helping to develop other squadrons in emergency services of all kinds.
- Develop uniformity of operations and be integrated into the state offices of emergency service.
- Provide necessary supplies to squadron members at substantial discounts i.e. emergency locator transmitters, badges, caps and other items amenable to volume purchase associated with search and rescue.
- Provide a loaner ELT on frequency 121.6 that is available to all squadrons to develop proper search and rescue techniques, thereby becoming effective in tracking and locating of distressed aircraft.
- Participate in legislative matters affecting volunteer search and rescue and other emergency services.
- Develop and produce a semi-annual roster of members.
- Promote a pistol shooting competition between all squadrons and members.
- Promote proficiency in aircraft handling and search exercises such as ELT search, spot landing and message drop.
- Provide a platform for exchange of ideas between counties and squadrons (methods of operations, etc.)
- Promote Fly-In Seminars as a means of expanding cooperation among squadrons and enhancing communication on flight safety and other items of mutual interest.
- Promotes a better understanding between the public, law enforcement agencies and flyers through their volunteer status and willingness to help others through search and rescue operations and other public service efforts.
- Membership is limited to Sheriff's and other qualified Police Aero Squadrons, thereby developing an excellent rapport among members.



## *Past Commanders of WSASAS*

<b>Term</b>	<b>Commander</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1955	Vincent Raney	San Francisco
1956	Robert Borrmann	San Francisco
Unknown	Thomas Heeney	San Bernadino
Unknown	Garr Ence	Washoe
1960/61	Vincent Raney	San Francisco
1963/64	Duanne Potter	Clark
1967/68	Bud Fuller	Marin
1969	Elwood L. Hansen	San Francisco
1970	Vince Vanderford	Yuba-Sutter
1971	Charles G. Fink	Fresno
1972	Robert Kelly	Orange
1973/74	Marvin Rogge	Clark
1975	Gerald Kachinskas	Orange
1976	Robert Kolsters	Mendocino
1977	William Wilgus	Clark
1978	John A. Hinman	San Francisco
1979	Jack Worel	Solano
1980	Gilbert Riddle	Orange
1981	Wally Dean Jr.	San Mateo
1982	Russell Baker	Solano
1983	Leonard Schaer	Yuba-Sutter
1984	Joe Crotti	El Dorado
1985	John A. Porter	Orange
1986	Paul R. Carlsen	El Dorado
1987/88	Ron Richmond	Orange
1989	Jim Martino	El Dorado
1990	Bob Hooper	Kern, Fresno
1991	Don Webb	Solano
1992	Marv Rudin	Palm Springs
1993	Bill Hughes	Fresno
1994	Jim Hanley	San Joaquin
1995	Priscilla Hughes	Fresno
1996	Cal Bender	San Diego
1997	Tiny D'Agosta	Napa
1998/99	Jack Dalton	Mendocino
2000	Tom Ellington	Alameda
2001	Keith Rahn	Fresno
2002/03	Don Perry	Palm Springs
2004/2005	Tom Rhyme	Napa
2006/2007	Marvin Rosenberg	Palm Springs
2008/2009	Harriet Wright	Alameda
2009/2011	Charles Touton	Fresno

