

## PARENTS INFORMATION HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Royal Canadian Air Cadet Program. Your children have joined one of Canada's premier youth organizations. In Ontario there are almost 8000 people between the ages of 12 and 19 enrolled in 119 squadrons of which some 7000 cadets are in the 103 squadrons under the Ontario Provincial Committee. The remainder of the squadrons are in the Ottawa Valley and are part of Eastern Region (Quebec).

On behalf of the Air Cadet League, the Department of National Defence, the sponsors and staff of the local squadron, we would like to welcome you and your children to the Air Cadet program.

### BACKGROUND

The Air Cadet program started in 1941 when a group of civilian volunteers set up a country-wide voluntary organization to help stimulate an interest in flying and aviation. Many cadets eventually entered wartime service with the RCAF.

Following the end of the war, the Air Cadet program remained in place. Its role changed to meet the changing needs of society and its young people. The aims of the Air Cadet program are as follows:

- To develop the attributes of good citizenship and leadership
- To promote physical fitness
- To stimulate the interest of youth in aviation and aeronautics

Many cadets chose to pursue their interest in aviation through a career in the Armed Forces or through post-secondary study, leading to a position in Canada's aviation industry. 121 Squadron has a history of developing youth into leaders, and providing basic knowledge, skills and abilities that have led to numerous alumni with careers in aviation as pilots, as airport operations staff, and as aviation technicians (the people who keep aircraft safely in the air).

Everything we do in Air Cadets can be summed up in the motto of the program:

To Learn, To Serve, To Advance

We are pleased that your children have chosen to join Canada's premier youth program.

### THE PARTNERSHIP

The Royal Canadian Air Cadet Program is a unique partnership between the Canadian Air Force and the Air Cadet League. This partnership can be found at all levels of the program: at the national level, the provincial level and, most importantly, at the community / squadron level.

#### 1. THE LEAGUE

Each squadron is sponsored by a local organization, in our case, Branch 234 Col John McRae Legion. The sponsors form a Sponsoring Committee that assists in the operation of the squadron. The Sponsoring Committee is responsible for, among other things, fund raising, securing facilities for the squadron to do its training and administration, assisting in finding suitable adults to enroll as officers and civilian instructors and to assist in recruiting cadets. The Sponsoring Committee's role in fundraising makes possible supplemental

optional activities and programs such as citizenship trips and bands that are not funded by the Canadian Forces.

## 2. CANADIAN FORCES

Each squadron is staffed by a group of officers, civilian instructors and volunteers under the direction of the Commanding Officer (CO). The CO is responsible for the organization, welfare and training of the cadets. The CO is also accountable for supervising the operation of the squadron and the implementation of the training program as prescribed. The CO and his team organize the training program according to nationally set standards and plan and implement various training activities both during the week and on weekends.

At the provincial and national level, the Canadian Forces and the Air Cadet League work cooperatively to provide the necessary structure, guidance and resources to support the squadrons at the local level. This includes provision of uniforms and training for officers and cadets, aircraft and gliders for the gliding program as well as administrative support for squadrons and sponsoring committees.

Without this unique partnership, the Air Cadet program would not be as successful as it is today.

### CADET RESPONSIBILITIES

Air cadets benefit from the national program, and from local initiatives. To run a program of this quality takes a great deal of resources, and the Sponsoring Committee remains committed to keeping this program affordable for all cadets who wish to participate. Along with this commitment from the sponsoring committee come expectations for all cadets. These expectations include:

1. Attending all training nights, training activities and parades - It is important for cadets to attend all scheduled activities. Cadets who do not attend parade nights regularly will fall behind in their training and will not be as successful and may be released from the squadron. The same applies for weekend training.
2. Attendance at special parades such as the Annual Review is critical. If your son/daughter has a legitimate reason why he/she cannot attend a squadron activity, call the Squadron Administration line at 519-836-1611 in advance.
3. Taking part in fund raising activities - cadets are expected to take part in fund raising activities such as Tag Day and selling Air Cadet League Lottery Tickets. These activities raise the necessary funds to help the squadron plan and implement various training activities, keeping the program affordable for participants.
  - a. Participation at a level of 75% is expected for Tag Days and Poppy Drive.
  - b. Participation at 100% is required for Air Cadet League Lottery Tickets and participating in Remembrance Day activities and the Annual Ceremonial Review (late May or early June each year).A cadet failing to participate in Squadron mandatory events will prevent them from participating in some activities defined by the SSC.
4. Taking care of the uniform - Each cadet will be issued a uniform when she/he completed the intake program. It costs the Department of National Defense (DND) approximately \$400 to outfit each cadet. The squadron has a fixed budget to purchase uniforms each year. It is critical that the cadet takes care of his/her uniform, keeps it cleaned and pressed and returns it to the squadron when he/she leaves the squadron or outgrows the uniform. Each cadet is given training on how to look after the uniform. Ask your son/daughter to share this information.
5. Paperwork, paperwork, paperwork - There are permission forms for weekend training, summer camp applications, information bulletins, training schedules etc. This information is sent home for you as well as the cadet. Please ensure that forms are properly completed and returned in a timely manner.

6. Communication – Please ask your cadet what they are participating in, and what activities are upcoming. Parents are encouraged to attend the unit closing which commences shortly after 9:00 p.m. This is when important information is conveyed verbally to the cadets and parents present. We will also post this information on the squadron website [www.121redarrows.ca](http://www.121redarrows.ca), along with the training schedule, routine orders, and contact information.

If you have any questions about each cadet's responsibilities and duties, please contact the squadron administration office

### HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

You can do a great deal to help your son/daughter become successful in the Air Cadet Program. The most important thing is to an interest in their success and training and to support them during the year. There are many other ways that you can help your son/daughter be successful. These include:

- Helping them organize and prioritize (junior cadets) time after school so that they will be on time for Air Cadets and have time needed to complete schoolwork.
- Encourage responsibility and assist (junior cadets) them to look after their uniforms (washing, drying, pressing, shining etc.)
- Including Air Cadet activities such as weekend training on the family calendar – we know what we are doing a year ahead of time and you can find the training schedule online at [www.121redarrows.ca](http://www.121redarrows.ca)
- Avoid conflicts with major activities such as Annual Reviews. Transporting your son/daughter (and maybe their friends) to parade nights and picking them up at the end of the night.
- Encouraging them to participate in squadron teams and activities. The more they put into the squadron, the more they will get out of the program.
  - Pipe Band practice and performances
  - Air Rifle marksmanship
  - Remote Control flying club (age 14+)
  - Drill Team
  - Ground School (age 15+)

### PROMOTIONS

Promotion in the Air Cadet Program is based meeting standards, except for the two most senior ranks. Those standards include the attendance and participation of cadets, and in level 3 and 4, knowledge checks that must be completed to show the cadet has absorbed the required information. In order to be considered for promotion, a cadet must first meet national standards including:

- Overall attendance
- training levels completed
- and summer training opportunities attended

Training levels completed have individual requirements that include:

- attendance in each individual training performance objective
- attendance and participation during required exercises, and
- the Recommendation of the Level officer (partly based in leadership attributes)

The decision to promote a cadet is made by the Commanding Officer in consultation with other members of the squadron staff and sponsoring committee. The promotion to senior ranks, Warrant Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Class and Warrant

Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class are not based merely on completion of training. These ranks have some additional areas that are looked at:

- leadership abilities determined nationally including:
  - a. *The CATO clarifies and emphasizes the fact that cadet rank promotions are based on merit—they are not automatic. It also reinforces that the corps / squadron CO is the authority for all cadet rank promotions.*
  - b. *Cadet rank promotions are linked to the Leadership Team Model and to leadership performance. Cadets must attain a minimum of "completed without difficulty in POs 303, 403, and 503 (Leadership) to be promoted to the ranks of PO2/Sgt/Sgt, PO1/WO/FSgt, and CPO2/MWO/WO2, respectively.*
  - c. *Additional leadership attributes that the Div O / PI Comd / Flt Comd (corps/sqn) needs to consider when recommending whether or not a cadet should be promoted have been added.*
  - d. *The importance of physical fitness in the Cadet Program has been highlighted by emphasizing the requirement of cadets to participate in the Cadet Fitness Assessment as part of PO X04 (Personal Fitness & Healthy Living).*
- attendance at optional activities
- initiative and enthusiasm
- Level training completion
- Local awards received
- National awards received
- Participation in Regionally Directed Activities
- Skills and qualifications
- Length of Service

The promotion to these most senior levels is driven locally, but includes the participation of a Detachment appointed person, in order to ensure consistence and a bias free result. The standards are measured objectively against the cadet's academic achievements within the program, and subjectively on things like articulation, knowledge, confidence, and deportment.

### SUMMER TRAINING COURSES

Each year, hundreds of Air Cadets have the *opportunity* to attend courses at summer training centres throughout the country. Courses run two, three and six weeks depending on the developmental period of the cadet is in. These courses cover a wide range of subjects from basic training to music, athletics, leadership and flying. Senior cadets also have the opportunity for summer employment. There is no cost to attend summer courses however the available spaces are limited. On average in 2014, approximately 30% of the cadets at the unit could achieve selection for summer training. For parents who were cadets previously, this is a drastic change from past practice, and the expectation that every cadet will attend summer training every year is no longer valid.

The Commanding Officer establishes a priority list for each course. A cadet's position on the priority list is determined by a number of factors including:

- the age of the cadet,
- the interest and aptitude of the cadet in the particular course,
- a recommendation provided by the level training staff,
- all previous summer training and,
- the cadet's level of effective participation in local squadron activities.

This information helps the DND Cadet Detachment to make the final decision on which cadets go on course. Final decisions on summer training and course loading is completed by the Regional Cadet Support Unit detachment - London.

Cadets and parents/guardians must fill out an application form for summer courses and return them in a timely manner. We will have a summer training administration night (date to be announced) – if your cadet wants to attend a summer training opportunity, you must make your self available for that evening (or have an alternate arrangement in place with the Training Officer). Parents must take the time to complete the form fully and return it to the squadron promptly. If you have any questions about the information requested on the form, please contact the Training Officer.

Six-week senior courses are sponsored by the Air Cadet League and have a more involved application process. The application package is sent home in November or December. Supporting documentation is required including:

- a narrative on why they wish to attend the course,
- a transcript from their school showing grades, and
- other inclusions: written endorsement of the Commanding Officer or Deputy Commanding Officer

These required items must be included in the application package. You can assist your son/daughter in completing these forms.

For the Glider Pilot scholarship and Power Pilot Scholarship, there is a *written exam* for candidates in January and a *mandatory* interview for all candidates in February. For more information about summer courses, including application procedures and possible summer course dates, contact your Training Officer.

### GETTING INVOLVED

There are many ways that adults can get involved with the Air Cadet Program.

- Become a Volunteer - Ask a member of the Sponsor Committee if there is a need for volunteers. This squadrons uses adults volunteers for driving on weekend or other activities (tag days, poppy campaign), and to operate the canteen during training nights or for special activities.
- Become a Civilian Instructor - If you can devote time on a regular basis to the squadron, or if you have special skills (flying, first aid, photography, etc.) you could become a Civilian Instructor. Civilian Instructors are considered part of the staff complement of a squadron and receive some pay for their efforts. Civilian Instructors are subject to screening by the Canadian Forces as part of their application process, and they are not members of the Canadian Forces but are employed directly by the CO.
- Become a CIC Officer - The Cadet Instructor Cadre Officers are members of the Canadian Forces whose duties are to instruct cadets. Officers must be able to attend regularly (both parade nights and weekend activities) as well as take training courses offered through the Canadian Forces. CIC Officers receive a small amount of pay, their uniforms and training through the Canadian Forces, and are eligible for promotion in ranks when openings exist and after meeting established national standards.
- Join the Squadron Sponsoring committee - Each squadron has a Sponsoring Committee. The Sponsoring Committee provides the support for the squadron and is involved with fund raising, proving facilities and promoting the squadron activities. The committee usually meets monthly, and occasionally more frequently. If you have skills (accounting, fund raising, public relations, administrative or secretarial) you think might be useful to the Sponsoring Committee, please contact the Sponsoring Committee Chairperson. Any adult who wishes to work with Air Cadets must be registered and screened by the Sponsoring committee or the Canadian Forces. This process will include a reference check and requires both criminal record check and Vulnerable Sector Screening checks.

## CONCLUSION

Joining the Air Cadets is a big step for a young person. As parents, you can do a lot to support your son/daughter as they proceed through the Air Cadet Program. If you have any questions about the information included in this publication, please contact the Commanding Officer or the Chair of the Squadron Sponsoring committee. They will be able to answer your questions and provide you with additional information about squadron procedures, the Air Cadet program and the Air Cadet League.

## LOCAL INFORMATION

Squadron Name/Number: 121 Red Arrows Squadron, Royal Canadian Air Cadets

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Squadron Telephone Number: 519-836-1611

Parade Night Location: 7 Wyndham Street South, Guelph, Ontario

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Squadron Mailing Address:

7 Wyndham Street South, Guelph, Ontario

Squadron E-Mail Addresses are available on the website [www.121redarrows.ca](http://www.121redarrows.ca)

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Commanding Officer: Major David Elloway

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Sponsoring Committee Chair: Lesley WOODHOUSE

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Air Cadet League (Ontario) Contact Numbers

Telephone:

1-800-513-0952 or 416-635-4411 Ext 2793 / 6166

FAX: 416-635-2789

E-Mail: [exdiropc@bellnet.ca](mailto:exdiropc@bellnet.ca)

Royal Canadian Air  
Cadets

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