



321 (CITY OF NEWCASTLE) SQUADRON AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADETS



Thank you for your interest in 321 Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets (321SQN AAFC). This information sheet is provided to introduce ‘**who we are**’, ‘**what we do**’ and ‘**how to join**’.

We are a national youth development organisation for 13 to 20 year old males and females.

The AAFC is modelled on the organisation and training of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). AAFC cadets wear RAAF uniform (with some changes to insignia) and attend camps and courses on RAAF Bases.

The AAFC is part of the Australian Defence Force Cadets (ADFC) which is funded and oversighted by the Department of Defence. Within the ADFC the AAFC is supported by the RAAF.

- The AAFC is not a unit of the RAAF. It is a **purely voluntary, youth development organisation**.
- **A cadet can terminate their enrolment in the AAFC whenever they wish.**
- **Cadets are not members of the Defence Force.** There is absolutely no requirement or expectation that they join the defence force after they leave the organisation.
- Many AAFC instructors are former or current defence force personnel. **AAFC Instructors undergo stringent background checks** including Police, Security and ‘Working with Children’. They must meet high standards of conduct, ongoing training and maintain a current first aid certificate.

The AAFC expects a level of conduct and discipline from all its members superior to any other youth organisation. An AAFC member in uniform is immediately recognisable as part of the ‘defence community’. The conduct and actions of all members in uniform reflect not only on themselves but on the AAFC and RAAF.

HISTORY

The AAFC was originally formed in 1941 as the Air Training Corps, a voluntary organisation providing pre-entry training for young males intending to join the RAAF during World War Two. During WW2 nearly 12,000 cadets joined the RAAF, the majority becoming air-crew. After the war the organisation evolved to develop its current aims and structure. The Air Training Corps was renamed the Australian Air Force Cadets on its 60th anniversary in 2001.

With staff and cadets coming from throughout Newcastle City and surrounding suburbs, 321 (City of Newcastle) Squadron AAFC has strong links with the local community. Originally formed in 1953, the squadron has now been in continuous operation for more than 60 years.

AIMS

The aims of the AAFC are to develop; citizenship, leadership and self-reliance, provide a foundation of RAAF training and knowledge and promote an interest in the RAAF and aviation.

There is no obligation or expectation that a cadet will subsequently join the Australian Defence Force (ADF). **The AAFC is not a recruiting body for the ADF** but naturally most cadets are already interested in the defence force or aviation prior to enrolling. The Cadet Study 2004 (the 'Topley Report') found that:

- While cadets represent only 1% of their age group they made up 10.4% of enlistment applications of which 11% resulted in enlistment (a higher success rate than average).
- Former cadets make up 40% of entries into the Australian Defence Force Academy.
- 14.6% of the permanent forces and 17.6% of the reserve forces are former cadets.
- Former cadets in the ADF are more likely to achieve long term careers and higher rank.
- Over 50% of senior officers or senior civilian managers in the RAAF are former cadets.

PARADES, ACTIVITIES & COMMITMENT

321SQN is located at the military training depot, Bullecourt Barracks, Adamstown (off Brunner Road). We parade on Wednesday nights of the school term from 1800hrs (6:00pm) to 2130hrs (9:30pm).

The Squadron conducts weekend field-craft bivouacs, .22 range shoots, gliding and powered flying air experience days, elective training days and the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Wing courses and camps are conducted during school holidays, most occurring on RAAF Bases. These courses include; Promotion, Gliding, Powered Flying, Field Craft, Abseiling, Aircraft Trades introduction, International Air Cadet Exchange (IACE) program and General Service Training camps (a week of living and experiencing life on a RAAF Base). Activities are planned and conducted with RAAF approval under ADF risk management, OH&S, harassment and discrimination guidelines and policies.

Wednesday Parades and Anzac Day are '**compulsory training**' activities. Cadets are required to '**request leave**' if they are going to be absent from a compulsory activity either by written request, email or telephone if at short notice. **LEAVE WILL ALWAYS BE GRANTED.**

The purpose of requiring a cadet to request leave is to instil a sense of responsibility and commitment reflecting both civilian working life and service in the ADF. It is also part of our 'duty of care' to telephone a cadets contact number when they haven't turned up for a planned activity where they've made a prior commitment to attend.

Poor attendance and in particular, **three consecutive 'absent without leaves'** from compulsory training will result in the cadet being contacted and may result in a '**termination of enrolment**'.

JOINING

The Squadron has an establishment of 45 cadets with two recruit intakes per year (usually February and August). **To join as a cadet, a young person MUST BE:**

- **13 to 18 years of age** (though our experience has shown under 16 years is preferable).
- An Australian Citizen or Resident (production of Birth Certificate or Passport is required).
- ‘Reasonably’ fit and healthy i.e. able to participate in activities such as drill, field-craft and flying.
- Willing to abide by our behavioural policy and standards of conduct.
- Attend a majority of ‘compulsory’ training parades.

COSTS

The AAFC is federally funded through the department of defence but to maintain a high standard of equipment, training and activities the Squadron has to impose the following costs:

- **\$50 joining fee plus \$120 yearly contribution fee.**
- A **\$100 uniform ‘deposit’** refundable on the return of all issued items (clean & intact) on a cadet’s termination and all other fees up to date.

Other costs vary depending on the activity e.g. \$25 for transport to a weekend Bivouac. Attending a week long gliding course can cost \$500 (including meals and accommodation) but scholarships are available. **Attending a camp or course conducted on a RAAF Base is free** (including all meals, accommodation and most travelling). With government funding and RAAF support the cost of being a member of the AAFC is much lower than any other youth organisation providing anything comparable to our range of activities. Many of our activities and experiences are unique to the AAFC.

In the event of financial hardship or difficulties we encourage the parents/guardians of a cadet or a prospective cadet to contact and speak confidentially with the Commanding Officer.

UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT

AAFC members are issued RAAF Service Dress Uniforms and Disruptive Camouflage Uniform at public expense, that is ‘**free of charge**’ through the RAAF and AAFC logistic supply chain. The ‘scale of issue’ for a cadet is naturally lower than for members of the ADF and delays can occur obtaining some items or sizes but a cadet should never purchase any of their own compulsory uniform.

321 Squadron maintains its own clothing store of replacement uniforms, most are used, but clean and serviceable. The squadron also issues basic field equipment such as a pack and webbing. This equipment is not on the ‘scale of issue’ and has been purchased by the squadron. Terminating cadets are **obliged to return all uniforms and equipment**. We are dependent on the return of items to maintain a good standard of issue hence the ‘uniform deposit’. Failure to

return items will deprive other cadets. It should also be noted that issued uniform and equipment remains the property of the Squadron or the Commonwealth.

CONTACT

For further information please don't hesitate to contact the Squadron during Wednesday night parades on Mobile **0400 372 839** or email: admino.321sqn@aafc.org.au