



AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADETS

321 (CITY OF NEWCASTLE) SQUADRON



RECRUIT HANDBOOK

1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome to 321 Squadron, Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC).

1.2 This handbook has been prepared to give new recruits an insight into squadron operations, enrolment requirements, and some general information about the AAFC and its aims and objectives.

1.3 Please keep this handbook available. It will provide you with information about your first weeks in the AAFC, and details on how to contact staff members.

2 History of the AAFC

2.1 The AAFC was formed in Australia on 11 June 1941, during the Second World War, and was originally called the Air Training Corps (AIRC). Six wings were formed (one in each state), with headquarters in the capital city of each state. An officer of Wing Commander rank commanded each wing. The original establishment over all wings was approximately 12000 personnel.

2.2 The original aim of the AIRC was to provide pre-entry training for youths between 16 and 18 years of age, who wished to serve as RAAF aircrew. Later, a wider scope of entry was introduced to cater for other mustering. By early 1944, the AIRC had expanded further and when fully operative, its input into the RAAF was 5000 men per year. During the war years, 14000 cadets graduated from the Corps and of these, 12000 enlisted in the RAAF, 7000 as aircrew and 5000 as ground staff.

2.3 Today, there are eight wings in the AAFC. NSW, VIC, TAS, SA, WA and NT each have a wing, with headquarters in the capital city of each state. There are two wings in QLD, divided along the Tropic of Capricorn. 1 Wing (North Queensland) has its headquarters in Townsville, and 2 Wing (Queensland) has its headquarters in Brisbane.

2.4 Promotion courses were commenced in 1949. Cadets could then reach Cadet Pilot Officer rank. Later, in 1959, Cadet Under Officer rank (CUO) was introduced to replace Cadet Pilot Officer. CUO is not a commissioned rank.

2.5 In 1975, the AAFC was disbanded as part of the RAAF, only to be reformed as a statutory body. Amendments to the Air Force Act established that staff and cadets were not members of the RAAF, even though the responsibility for the administration of the AAFC was vested in the Chief of Air Force, and exercise by his delegate.

2.6 Women were first admitted into the AAFC as officers and instructors in 1981, and from 1982, girls could enrol as cadets.

2.7 Today, the establishment for the AAFC is in the order of 6,600 cadet personnel.

2.8 3 Wing (NSW) is currently the nation's largest AAFC Wing, with an establishment of approximately 2000 cadets and 200 adult staff. The wing is organized into more than 38 squadrons, and 4 specialist flights. The 3 Wing headquarters is located in Sydney.

3. Aim of the AAFC

3.1 The statement of purpose and values of the Australian Defence Force Cadets, of which the Australian Air Force Cadets is a sub-component, is:

'The ADFC is recognized for providing comprehensive, activity-centred, personal and social development, care and enjoyment for young people in a community and Australian Defence setting. It offers cadets: a high quality program of adventure, responsibility and skills development, suited to the needs of young people; and close association with the Services, including some realistic experience of Service life and activities.'

3.2 The aims of the Australian Air Force Cadets are to:

- a. give Cadets a foundation of RAAF knowledge and discipline;
- b. develop the qualities of leadership, self-reliance and initiative;
- c. develop character and good citizenship in the widest sense;
- d. develop an interest in the Royal Australian Air Force and aviation generally;
- e. instil a knowledge of aviation history; and
- f. encourage cadets to continue an active interest in aviation into their adult life.

4. Enrolment Information

4.1 The AAFC enrolment process is largely the responsibility of the applicant, and is an online process through the *CadetNet* administration system. In addition to completing the online details, applicants are required to upload proof of their age (eg a copy of their birth certificate, or passport). Additionally, once the applicant's online details have been completed, they are required to download the information as a document, and then it must be signed by the applicant and their parent/caregiver. This document must then be scanned and uploaded to complete the enrolment process.

4.2 Also, the following forms are included in your recruit package. They are required to be completed before applicants to assist 321SQN staff with the enrolment process.

- a. **321 Squadron Recruit Personal Particulars**
This form must be completed on induction night, and returned to any staff member before departing. It is required to enable initial administration to commence.
- b. **AAFC Uniform Agreement**
This form outlines details the responsibility for uniform care and maintenance. It must be completed before uniform is issued.
- c. **321 Squadron Uniform Measurement Form**
This form will assist when ordering the recruits' uniform.

4.3 These forms are required for the enrolment of new recruits. They must be completed and returned to the squadron administrative staff in accordance with the recruit intake timetable.

4.4 Any potential recruit who has not returned the requested application forms by the due date may jeopardize his/her enrolment.

4.5 Until issued with a uniform, recruits attending squadron training are to wear long trousers/slacks (female recruits may wear a skirt), a collared shirt, and shoes and socks. Shirts are to be tucked into trousers/slacks. Recruits are to ensure a similar standard of dress and bearing as uniformed cadets.

4.6 Uniform fitting and ordering will occur once the recruits are enrolled.

5. Squadron Contributions

5.1 Although assisted materially by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), the AAFC is expected to rely heavily on its own resources for its continued operation. Consequently, 321 Squadron requires a quarterly contribution from each cadet. Without this income the Squadron could not operate effectively.

5.2 All persons enrolling as cadets with the AAFC also gain membership to the NSW AIRTC Association. The Association is essentially an external body maintained by 3 Wing AAFC to provide insurance coverage for all AAFC assets, extended public liability insurance, and financial support for undertakings not funded by the Commonwealth (training equipment etc).

5.3 The 321 Squadron quarterly contribution structure amounts to \$30.00 per cadet. This means that cadets pay an annual contribution of \$120.00. However, if the amount is paid in full by the end of the first term, the amount is discounted to \$100.00.

5.4 An additional *joining fee* of \$70 is required at the time a cadet joins 321 Squadron. This is for uniform items and equipment which are not provided by the Commonwealth. These items include:

- a. DPU name badges;
- b. 321SQN cap
- c. 321SQN undershirt;
- d. 321SQN patch, and RAAF ensign patch;
- e. SD name badge;
- f. ID card holder and lanyard;
- g. DPU trouser 'lackies;' and,
- h. DPU back-pack.

5.5 Recruits who join 321 Squadron in a mid-year intake pay \$30 per quarter (ie school term). The additional \$70 joining fee is also required.

5.6 Occasionally, cadets may be required to meet some of the cost of participating in approved AAFC activities. This includes the purchase of bus and/or rail tickets (for training conducted outside the Hunter Region) and fees for fieldcraft exercises. Subsidized Squadron activities such as air experience flying, gliding, visits and social activities all involve participants meeting a portion of the total cost involved. The Squadron's objective is to stage high-quality, cost effective training activities for the cadets, and the staff aim to keep any costs met by parents/caregivers as low as possible.

5.7 The majority of camps and activities staged at wing level, including General Service Training (GST), promotion and other specialized camps, are conducted at RAAF and ADF bases at no cost to cadets. Instructional type courses including powered flying, gliding abseiling will require cadet students to meet relevant costs.

6. Squadron Administration

6.1 **Staff.** 321 Squadron is staffed by personnel appointed by the RAAF through 3 Wing AAFC. Additionally, RAAF personnel or selected specialist civilian personnel assist as instructional staff.

6.2 All staff are required to pass rigorous national and state security and Working With Children checks, and for continued appointment they must maintain a current first aid qualification, and must satisfy annual Officer/Instructor appraisals.

6.3 **Compensation.** You should be aware that all approved activities conducted through the AAFC are covered for Commonwealth Compensation.

6.4 **Grievances.** It is possible that you or your parents may wish to complain about a matter which may have you worried, and which involves the AAFC. All parents have the right to complain to their federal Member of Parliament, particularly if they feel they will get faster action this way. However, the opposite is usually the result. The best way to go about filing a complaint is to use the chain of command, and talk to the Commanding Officer first. In the majority of cases, this is the most effective and fastest way of resolving a serious problem.

6.5 Each staff member has specific duties within the Squadron, and a chain of command is used for any cadets requiring information within the Squadron. Any cadet who may experience difficulties is to follow the chain of command. Their first point of contact should be their cadet NCOs.

6.6 Cadets who feel that they are the subject of harassment or discrimination may discuss their concerns directly with any staff member.

6.7 AAFC training involves attendance at all squadron Home Training and Continuous Training activities. If a cadet cannot attend a Squadron Training Parade or any other training activity, he/she is required to lodge an Application for Leave form (available on the 321SQN website). Please note that this form is not available for 24 hours before a squadron parade, and cadets who will be absent with short notice should telephone the 321SQN duty phone.

7. **Discipline, Drill and Dress**

7.1 The AAFC is justly proud of its achievements and traditions. Its members reflect that pride in their behaviour, appearance and dress - and above all, a willingness to obey orders instantly and without question. These qualities are necessary in a civilized community, providing a code of behaviour for all to follow. They are particularly necessary in a military service where efficiency and swift reactions are vital.

7.2 Discipline can be loosely described as 'organized good manners,' and although this is by no means a complete definition, it certainly covers a large part of the subject.

7.3 In a highly technical service like the RAAF, a high degree of self-discipline is required, and this is also fostered in the AAFC. Self-discipline is the ability to display responsible and sensible behaviour without supervision or fear of punishment. The RAAF, the parent service of the AAFC, looks to each cadet to uphold its good name.

7.4 Another aspect of a cadet's personal discipline is his/her uniform, which is his/her personal responsibility for care. The care taken with a uniform can be seen in the very appearance of the uniform. A cadet's reputation for appearance will depend upon the attention to detail when wearing a uniform, and because it is a 'uniform' - the same for all cadets - deviations from or additions to the approved uniform are forbidden.

7.5 **Uniform.** AAFC cadets are supplied with a variety of uniforms. The Service Dress (SD) uniform is worn on ceremonial occasions, and at 321 Squadron, on the first parade night of each month. At other times, the Disruptive Pattern Camouflage Uniform (DPCU) is worn. During fieldcraft activities, cadets also wear DPCU.

7.6 **Drill and Ceremonial.** Some cadets consider Drill and Ceremonial lessons to be a dreary part of AAFC training, intended for the amusement of Officers and NCOs, so perhaps an explanation of the purpose behind drill may assist in the understanding of why it is included in training.

7.7 The correct performance of drill demands the following:

- a. alertness;
- b. split second reflexes;
- c. perfect balance and body control;
- d. the ability to remain perfectly motionless;
- e. instinctive and instant obedience; and,
- f. good teamwork.

7.8 When this is understood, then the real purpose of drill becomes obvious. From these characteristics develops a sense of pride, precision, alertness and readiness to obey directions, and thus cadets are better prepared for any work they are required to perform - both as members of the AAFC and the greater community.

7.9 **Hairstyles - Male Cadets.** The length and bulk of the hair is not to interfere with the correct wearing of AAFC headdress (uniform hat). The hair is to be tapered towards the neckline and is not to cover the ears or touch or overhang the shirt collar. 'Punk' styles and outlandish haircuts are strictly forbidden, as are undercut or 'stepped' haircuts. Judgement of acceptability of hairstyles is based on neatness, cleanliness and general appearance when wearing the AAFC headdress.

7.10 **Hairstyles - Female Cadets.** Hair should be above the collar in a neat and simple style so that it does not extend below the lower rear level of a buttoned shirt collar. Acceptability of hairstyles is based on neatness, cleanliness and general appearance when



wearing the AAFC headdress. One or two plain combs, which match the hair colour, may be worn. The hairstyle should be such that the hair does not sit upon, nor sweep the shoulders. The wearing of 'punk' and outlandish styles, ponytails, heavy mesh nets or an excessive number of pins is forbidden when in uniform.

7.11 **Cosmetics.** Facial make-up may be worn in accordance with modern styles and maturity, but with moderation with respect to application. Obviously false eyelashes or heavy eye make-up is not to be used. Clear, cream or pale pink nail polish only may be worn when wearing uniform.

7.12 **Jewellery.** The use of jewellery by male cadets is to be kept to a minimum. A wristwatch and ring may be worn with the uniform. Necklaces and earrings are not to be worn when in uniform. Female cadets may wear a wristwatch when in uniform. Engagement, wedding, eternity, or a single conservative dress ring may be worn on one finger of one hand when in uniform. One matching plain gold or silver sleeper or stud earring of the smallest size available may be worn in each earlobe. Necklaces are not to be worn by female cadets when in uniform.

7.13 **Appropriate clothing for male recruits.** Clothing should be a collared shirt and full length trousers. Clothing with offensive designs/text or large brand names must not be worn when on cadet activities. This rule also applies to hats. Shoes worn to cadet activities are to enclosed and ideally leather. Alternative shoes may be used if leather shoes are not an option, providing that they provide appropriate ankle support. Skate shoes are not appropriate.

7.14 **Appropriate clothing for female recruits.** Clothing should be a collared shirt (covering shoulders and stomach) and full length slacks. Clothing with offensive designs/text or large brand names must not be worn when on cadet activities. This rule also applies to hats. Shoes worn to cadet activities are to enclosed and ideally leather. Alternative shoes may be used if leather shoes are not an option, providing that they provide appropriate ankle support. Skate or high-heeled shoes are not appropriate.

8. Training

8.1 AAFC training is planned on several levels. Firstly, the wing headquarters will plan and conduct camps (called 'continuous training') like flying, gliding, and promotion courses - all involve going away to an RAAF Base or other location for periods ranging from seven to twenty-five days. A 'GST' or General Service Training camp is generally the first camp a cadet attends. This is a general activity camp where the experience of RAAF life is the primary aim. Most camps are scheduled during school holidays, and sometimes over weekends. The squadron will provide information on these activities, as they become available.

8.2 Secondly, the squadron will organize activities, including visits, ceremonial parades and fieldcraft exercises, where cadets learn to apply skills taught in the classroom in a practical sense. The squadron will also organize air experience flying and gliding. This is the first introduction to learning to fly, and is the first step for those interested in becoming a pilot. Squadron activities usually occur over weekends.

8.3 In addition to the continuous training, the squadron conducts regular 'squadron training' which is conducted weekly on the squadron parade night. The first stage of training is Recruit Stage and takes approximately four months to complete. Upon completing the recruit training stage, cadets are then eligible to commence the Basic Stage of training, which takes approximately 8 months. At the end of Basic Stage, the cadets are reclassified to Leading Cadet, and earn their first chevron ('stripe'). Basic stage is followed by Proficiency Stage, then Advanced Stage, and then Qualified Stage, the final stage of squadron training.

8.4 Some activities undertaken by the AAFC will require a degree of physical fitness. Activities such as drill and physical training may be arduous, and for some can be physically and mentally draining. It is imperative cadets be prepared for the physical demands that can arise when participating in selected activities, however parents and guardians please note that the safety and welfare of cadets is always the highest consideration during the planning and execution of any and every activity. The Medical Declaration, which is included in application process, takes into consideration the medical ability of recruits, and should be the first point of action for those who need consideration.

8.5 During the first year as an AAFC member, cadets will learn about the foundation of the AAFC and the rules and regulations that govern their behaviour and participation in the AAFC. The squadron staff will send home newsletters and cadets are required to take notes during class, so your child should be able to assist in answering any questions you have about 321SQN and the AAFC generally. If however you have questions please do not hesitate to approach any of our staff.

8.6 A table outlining the subjects that are taught in each training stage is included with this enrolment pack.

8.7 A detailed copy of the recruit training program, is included with the enrolment pack. Additionally, there is a copy of the 321SQN annual training program. The squadron training program is subject to small changes, and the program is frequently updated. Cadets and parents should frequently check the current training program, which is available for download on the squadron website www.321sqn.aafc.org.au

9. CadetNet¹ and 321SQN Website

9.1 The AAFC operates an internet based, computerized administration system, known as *CadetNet*. Staff and cadets have various levels of access. The system allows cadets to nominate for activities, and to keep a track of their training progress. Staff use the system to enroll and discharge cadets, to record training results and promotion history, and to log attendances at various activities.

9.2 Cadets gain access to the system, once they are enrolled. Their 'log-in' is their cadet service number, and access is password controlled. Information about activities and the AAFC in general is distributed via the integral email system. It is therefore important that cadets have access to the internet, and to an email system.

9.3 Once enrolled, cadets are able to update their contact details (address, telephone number etc) as any changes become necessary.

9.4 The logon page to the system is <https://www.cadetnet.gov.au/>

9.5 *CadetNet* is used by cadets to nominate for 321SQN and AAFC activities, and to upload parental consent forms etc for these activities. It is also used to enter and maintain personal details, and is also used by staff to records training assessments, qualifications, attendance etc.

9.6 321SQN also operates its own website. This is used to provide information for the staff and cadets which is largely relative to the functioning of the squadron. Cadets are able to download information from this website regarding upcoming activities, uniform maintenance, training notes etc. It is not used to apply for activities.

10. 321SQN Standing Instructions and Routine Instructions

10.1 To ensure that 321SQN runs efficiently, there are several documents available on the 321SQN website which detail the procedures under which the squadron operates.

10.2 The 321SQN Standing Instructions outline the general rules procedures for all staff and cadets. It details the requirements for:

- a. administration;
- b. operations;
- c. training;
- d. personnel;
- e. supply and logistics;
- f. finance; and,
- g. security.

¹ NB. The *CadetNet* system has been recently introduced, and is experiencing some initial operation issues.

10.2 The SQN Standing Instructions are updated bi-annually.

10.3 The 321SQN Routine Instructions supplement the Standing Instructions, and provide information about changes within the squadron (eg enrolments, promotions etc). These are usually published on a bi-monthly basis.

10.4 Recruits and their parents are encourage to download these documents, and to familiarize themselves with the content and requirements.

11. **Squadron Contact Details**

- a. **Squadron Address:** 321 Squadron AAFC
Bullecourt Barracks
Military Road
Adamstown NSW 2289
- b. **Telephone:** 0400 372 839 (Duty Staff Member)
- c. **Parade Timings:** Wednesday Evenings (school term only)
1800h – 2130h
- d. **Commanding Officer:** FLTLT(AAFC) Grant Mayler
0408 345 333
- e. **E-mail address:** admino.321sqn@airforcecadets.gov.au
- f. **Squadron website:** www.321sqn.aafc.org.au
- g. **AAFC website:** www.aafc.org.au