



INFORMATION HANDBOOK

No. 29 (Rotorua) Squadron
Air Training Corps

BOOKLET 1
Cadet Joining Handbook

Last revised: May 2023



I am Pilot Officer Belt, the Commanding Officer of 29 Squadron, and I hope that once you have read the information in this booklet, spent a few nights with us to see what happens, and after talking it through with your family, you too will become one of our cadets.

Becoming a cadet is a serious decision. To be fully trained takes a minimum of four years. Being a cadet is a privilege few young people get to have. 29 Squadron has been training cadets since 1941.

One of the things we like to do is “learning by doing”, so instead of making this booklet 100 pages long, the best thing for you is to come along for a few Parade Nights and see if you like it.

If do you like what you see, learn, and do, and your whanau will support you becoming a cadet, we start the process of signing you up, showing you the basics (the Induction phase), and then you will be part of the New Zealand Cadet Forces family.

This booklet should cover most of your questions. After reading it, if you have any questions left, feel free to ask them during your next visit, or contact us via our Website or Social Media.

Being a NZCF Cadet is one of the best choices you can make, but you might not realise it until you are an adult just exactly how awesome it was. In the meantime, I can promise you that it will be fun, interesting, satisfying, and... fun.

I hope to see you on Parade soon.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pete Belt'.

PLTOFF Pete Belt
Commanding Officer
No. 29 (Rotorua) Squadron, ATC

Kaha Tahī
XXX(29)XXX
TOGETHER STRONG

REQUIREMENTS TO JOIN AS A CADET

- You must be at high school and be aged 15 or younger. If you are 12 and at Intermediate, then you may be able to join during Term 3 or 4.
- You must have the approval of your parents or guardian.
- You must be able to carry out the training physically and mentally.
- You must have a reliable email address you check at least once per day
- Your parent must have a reliable email address they check at least once per day
- You must have a way to join and be part of our Discord server
- You must have a way to access the NZCF website: CadetNet

REQUIREMENTS TO REMAIN A CADET

- You must attend all 40 training Parade Nights during the year
- If for some reason you can't, you must request permission (ask for Leave)
- You must follow all legal instructions/orders and follow our Code of Conduct
- You must attend all mandatory training scheduled during weekends
- You must care for your uniforms

WHAT IS CADETS?

Cadets is a military-style community organisation. We train 13–18 year old youth to become multi-skilled leaders. We use the same training and knowledge used by New Zealand Defence Force but at an introduction level appropriate for your age. Cadets is not a club. Even though it is fun, and it will make you life-long friends, it is not a social club. **We come together to train.** If you join, you must attend all 40 parade nights. Just like attending school, if you can't come you have to ask for permission (Leave). And if you miss too many Parade Nights, weekend training, or important community days (eg: Anzac Day) you may be released (you are no longer a NZCF cadet).

UNIFORMS

Once you have officially joined, you will be fitted for a uniform. In fact, two uniforms. One is our "working dress", and the other the "service dress". These uniforms are exactly the same as worn by personnel at the New Zealand Defence Force, except where theirs may say "New Zealand", our say "Cadet Forces" or "Air Cadets". These uniforms remain our property, but you are in charge of looking after them. That means cleaning, ironing, and repairing. All uniform items, once handed to you, can cost between \$1,500 and \$2,000 to replace. That's going to be your first job and responsibility: to take care of something expensive and that needs to be looked after.

HOW FIT DO I HAVE TO BE?

Physically Cadet training and activities will expect you to stand for periods up to 20 or 30 minutes or walk for up to an hour without a break. You need to be able to perform drill movements which require you to twist your feet, ankles, and legs as well as your body and arms. There is no “fitness test” as such, but if you are extremely unfit and unable to get fitter, then there may be activities that aren’t suitable for you.

Mentally You will be working with other cadets, staff, and other adults on common projects. You will be required to work within a group, cope with being in a larger group of people, be in a noisy environment, and able to carry out instructions (orders) given to you by cadets with more training – who may even be younger than you.

PERSONAL PRESENTATION (GROOMING)

As you become part of an Air Cadet / Air Training Corps unit, and wear a NZDF uniform, you are required to:

- Have no facial hair – be cleanshaven
- Your hair may not touch the collar of your uniform, or your ears
- Your hair must be of a natural shape and natural colour
- Apart from a watch there will be no jewellery with the exception of one single subdued ear stud per earlobe.
- Exceptions are made, most frequently for cultural reasons, but require prior permission from the Commanding Officer after an interview with you and a parent/guardian.

You may keep your hair long if you manage it away with hair gel, clips, or a net before attending any cadet activity, or NZDF camp or base. Other cadets will be able to help you with ideas and techniques.

UNIT TRAINING – WHAT WILL YOU DO AND LEARN?

Aviation Studies	Foot drill	Ceremonial rifle drill
Firearm Safety	Range procedures	Target shooting
Adventure training	NZDF knowledge	First aid
Casualty evacuation	Leadership training	Land navigation
Instructional techniques	Radio communications	Presentation training

TRAINING - NATIONAL COURSES

Once you have completed sufficient basic training, other opportunities become available. There are week-long regional and national residential courses held at NZDF camps or bases.

Junior NCO course	Senior NCO course	Gliding (soaring) camps
Aviation immersion	Airforce experience	Air Navigation training

ADDITIONAL TRAINING – 29 SQUADRON AND REGIONAL CAMPS AND ACTIVITIES

29 Squadron will have its own days and weekend camps offering Range Shoots, Sports Days, Tramping, Camping, Bush craft, Navigation, Two-way radios, Gliding or Powered flying experiences. But other Cadet Units in the Bay of Plenty and Waikato invite our cadets to come to their camps, where they may get to learn about Patrolling, Harbours, Field First Aid and Patient Management, assisting Search and Rescue, and more.



COMMUNITY SERVICE

29 Squadron also is part of Anzac Day, Armistice Day, and Battle of Britain Commemorations. We assist the Rotorua RSA, Rotorua Council, Te Arawa Māori Returned Services League, the Royal New Zealand Air Force Association, and the Rotorua community in general.

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES NOT AVAILABLE TO CIVILIAN TEENAGERS

From year to year, different opportunities come up that we take advantage of. In recent years we have been asked to be part of a LandSAR exercise, we dined on the Navy Frigate HMNZS Te Mana before touring the frigate, and we had a tour of a C-130 Hercules (including sitting in the cockpit). Every three or four years cadets get to attend a national camp. The most recent was held at the Waiouru Army Camp and involved flying, boating, abseiling, tramping the Tongariro crossing, sports, and much more. You can apply to go on International Cadet Exchanges to Canada, the UK, Hong Kong, and other countries (these do require significant personal funding).

MORE INFORMATION – WHERE TO GET IT

The best place to get your questions answered is on a Parade Night. Write them down and bring them with you. Ask other cadets first – they are eager to help. And if they don't know, you will find that they will either find out for you, or they will find someone who does. Away from Parade Nights, you can look at our website (29squadron.org.nz), visit our Facebook page (search for: 29 Squadron ATC), our Instagram (no.29squadronatc) and ask your questions by contacting us there. You can also research NZCF on the Internet and check out the website, Facebook, and Instagram pages, Wikipedia, and the websites of other units.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Come to at least two parade nights to see what happens. **Please turn up in your full school uniform with closed-in black/dark shoes.** You can keep coming that way for about four weeks and then you need to decide if you will join or not. When you decide to join, you go home with an application form. Bring that back, signed and filled in correctly and completely on the next Parade night. You will be enrolled from that day.

WHEN WILL I GET MY UNIFORM?

We may have a uniform in your size, in which case it may be quite soon after you enrol. If we need to order your uniform, it can take 3-6 weeks for it to arrive. Other uniform items, such as name badges, may take a while as orders are grouped together and may happen only two or three times every year.

SOCKS AND SHOES

The only part of the uniform we do not provide are socks and shoes. (We do provide the boots). You need to wear dark-blue or black socks and black shoes that are laced and can be polished as a “parade shoe”.

DO I NEED ANY OTHER GEAR OR EQUIPMENT?

To come to Parade Nights, you just need two pens. The rest will be supplied. Equipment needed for activities will depend on what the activity is. We have some items in Stores that can be loaned, such as packs, tents, cookers, and foam rolls. But in general cadets start building their own equipment over the years they attend.

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS, AND ANSWERS

Q. I'm 16, can I join?

A. Probably not. Only under very unique circumstances where you intended to join when you were 15 but something very significant prevented you from applying.

Q. Do I HAVE to join the Army/Navy/Air Force if I become a cadet?

A. No. But you are welcome to!

Q. Can I leave at any time? How do I leave 29 SQN?

A. You make an appointment with the CO and tell them you want to leave 29 SQN

Q. Do I really have to cut my hair off / be clean-shaven / have no jewellery / ensure tattoos are subdued or managed away?

A. Yes. You really do. NZCF is a military-style organisation with military rules. You may not stay as a cadet if you do not agree to present yourself to RNZAF military standards

Q. Do I have to get a buzz cut?

A. No.

Q. Do I really have to attend all training?

A. NZCF is a training organisation. Your progress will depend on completing your training. If you do not attend, you can not get ahead. Promotions and attending courses on Military bases only become available if you are dedicated to training.

Q. Is there a way to catch up?

A. If you miss training one year, there is always an opportunity to catch up the next year. However, until you do, you may not be able to go to/attend certain courses or be in line for promotions.

Q. If I don't come to training, can I still do the camps, tramps, shoots, and other fun activities?

A. At some point, no. Just like a sports team – only those who train get picked to play. You must earn the right to come on the adventure activities by making sure you take your training seriously.

Q. I have a part time job/am part of a sports team/am committed to other interests. I am not lazy, I am just very busy

A. We congratulate you on having a varied life with lots of activities. However, to get

ahead as a cadet, you need to complete all training. And you are also competing with other cadets for promotions and additional responsibilities within the Squadron.

Q. I really like 29 Squadron, but I want to join the Army/Navy when I'm older. Can I still join an Air Cadet unit?

A. Absolutely. Cadet training programs are 95% the same no matter what cadet corps you join. Also, you will have opportunities to train with Army and Sea cadets and will pick up most of their knowledge and skills as well.

Q. I can't do Wednesday nights, but I still want to join a Cadet Unit.

A. You can parade on Tuesday nights with RDCU (Army cadets), or Thursday nights with 75 Squadron (Air cadets). Same address, same times.

Q. I am already a cadet. I want to transfer to 29 Squadron.

A. Transfers are possible. Contact the unit and we'll see what needs to be done.

Q. Can I smoke, vape, drink alcohol?

A. No. Not at any stage before, during, or immediately after a cadet activity, nor on/in NZCF or NZDF properties/premises/vehicles/aircraft/ships.

29 Squadron provide a 100% smoke/vape/alcohol/drug free environment.

