



INFORMATION HANDBOOK

No. 29 (Rotorua) Squadron
Air Training Corps

BOOKLET 2
Whanau Joining Handbook

Last revised: May 2023



I am Pilot Officer Belt, the Commanding Officer of 29 Squadron.

Thank you for your interest in New Zealand Cadet Forces (NZCF), and No. 29 (Rotorua) Squadron. We are an Air Training Corps (Air Cadets) and part of almost 100 cadet units across the country. Those also include Navy (Sea) Cadets and Army cadets, and together we represent about 4,000 officers and cadets!

29 Squadron started training Rotorua youth in 1941, and over the decades we have helped train many of our young community leaders. Our objective is to be the most sought-after youth organisation by providing a secure and safe environment where our young people can develop as individuals. Our cadets will gain a sense of self-worth, personal integrity, self-discipline, and increasing self-confidence as we give them new skills and help them achieve goals.

As parents, caregivers, and guardians, you will see your child develop self-discipline, a wide range of skills, an interest in others, leadership, self-confidence, self-pride, resilience, and a can-do attitude.

Developing these values and skills so early in their lives acts like a snowball: Employers will recognise them as more desirable. And once they are working and picking up those skills as well, cadets tend to advance within those organisations much faster than others.

Their outlook on life, respect for others, and sound decision making will last a lifetime.

It is a privilege for you to share your cadet with us, and we take our duties seriously.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pete Belt', written over a horizontal line.

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

Kaha Tahī



TOGETHER STRONG

INTRODUCTION

Please read Booklet 1, the *Cadet Joining Handbook*. It has information you need to know as well, so it won't be repeated in this booklet. Here we will cover topics that probably won't worry, concern, or interest your prospective cadet.

WHAT IS CADETS?

Cadets in its current form had its roots in the UK at the start of World War II, and New Zealand followed shortly after in 1941 by training young men aged 13-16 so they would require less training when entering active service on their 16th birthday. In 1971, the Government of the Day had been funding cadets since WWII and felt the taxpayer's money would be better spent on other things. The RSA and others back then were extremely upset at this, and a new agreement was made: The government would support Cadets via the New Zealand Defence Force by offering uniforms and training Cadet Force staff. The community (parents, mostly) would have to fund and organise the rest. Not long after that (but still too long!), girls were able to join, and the modern New Zealand Cadet Forces you see today is a thriving partnership between the taxpayer (via the government and the NZDF), and the community (you, other families, and stakeholders like Rotorua Council, the RSA, and others).

WHERE DOES CADETS FIT IN WITH THE NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE?

When a cadet joins a cadet unit, they are not required to join the Army, Navy, or Air Force. Of course, the NZDF would love it if you consider them as a career path after your cadet finishes school. We work closely with the NZDF and receive a lot of support from them, but joining the Army/Navy/Air Force is a decision for you and your child to make together. Having been a cadet will help them be more prepared for the NZDF.

29 SQUADRON – A TRUE PARTNERSHIP

29 Squadron is a cadet unit run by two separate groups. On the one side are the Officers, staff, and cadets. Their concern is with training. On the other side are the families and community organisations. They are responsible for the premises, finances, transport, equipment purchasing and management, and fundraising. The Cadet Unit Commander (Commanding Officer) is in charge of the staff and cadets, while the Unit Support Committee is led by a chairperson, treasurer, and secretary who are voted into their positions by the other parents during an annual AGM.

UNIT SUPPORT COMMITTEE AND ATCANZ

The officers take care of the training on Parade Nights and during other nights, weekends, and specific training weeks at NZDF bases, camps, and other facilities. But for a cadet unit to work, they need somewhere to have their weekly parades, pay for the electricity, internet, insurance and so on, and make sure there is coffee/tea/milo and a biscuit or two for the cadets on breaks. All families with a cadet automatically become part of the Unit Support Committee. They generally meet once a month and take care of running their side of the cadet unit. Any equipment they buy is owned by their side (not the NZCF), and the organisation they belong to is called ATCANZ, or the ATC Association of NZ. They provide governance, accounting support, and assistance when needed.

UNIFORMS

All cadets receive two uniforms that are owned by the NZDF and are on loan to 29 Squadron for our cadets to use. Altogether, these cost about \$1,500 if purchased brand new. One of the primary responsibilities of a cadet is to ensure uniform items are not lost, damaged, and are cleaned and looked after. But if they are lost or damaged outside of normal wear and tear, replacements need to be paid for. To be responsible for \$1,500 of NZDF equipment at age 13 is a huge step to take.

LEARNING CHALLENGES

Often parents/caregivers are nervous when they approach us to tell us that their child has a specific learning challenge or is perhaps “on the spectrum”. Although we deal with all individual matters in strict confidence, it is fair to say that both staff and cadets either personally manage such challenges, have children with such challenges, or have experience dealing with cadets with such challenges. As a result, we are able to recognise certain behaviours for what they are and work with them. If your child has been diagnosed with ADHD, needs a reader or writer, can’t see certain colours on a whiteboard, or has other specific needs, all you need to do is come have a confidential chat with staff and we take care of the rest.

WHO ARE THESE OFFICERS? CAN I TRUST THEM?

All NZCF Officers are trained by NZDF and senior NZCF staff over a period that usually lasts 18 to 36 months. If they carry out all the minimum training requirements and pass an intense 9-day Commissioning course, they are then on probation for 12 months before becoming a proper officer. After that, the Officer development program

continues to offer NZDF/Senior NZCF training in instructional techniques, risk management, outdoor leadership and first aid, firearms safety and range control, and other areas. Any adult that wishes to join as a cadet Officer first needs to go through this program of training and being observed to be a fit and proper person over an extended time period.

WHAT ABOUT STAFF THAT AREN'T OFFICERS?

Every adult that assists our unit regularly must pass Police and NZDF security checks. They are closely monitored and supervised by commissioned officers. You are welcome to come to Parade Nights and activities to see how cadets are treated and how adults and Officers behave.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Everything we do has a thorough risk management process that occurs prior to the activity. All planning is written down and must be presented to NZDF staff who will review and approve before the activity is allowed to take place. It is the NZDF that will provide the final permission for any NZCF activity to go ahead. All NZCF activities will have at least one NZCF officer or NZDF staff member in charge at all times. The nature of Cadet activities means there are acceptable risks involved – without them, there would be no opportunity for growth, learning, and fun. But all other risks are eliminated, mitigated, or side-stepped.

RANKS AND PROMOTIONS

The Training program takes a minimum of four years, with some cadets choosing to remain with the unit for as long as seven years before “ageing out”. During this time, they have the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills and can start training younger cadets. To recognise their growth and our trust in their abilities, they receive promotions. Everyone starts as a “Cadet Recruit” or a Cadet Under Training. That lasts about a year, after which they should be comfortable with all the basic requirements, and they become a Cadet. That isn't a promotion, but it is a step up inside the Unit. Depending on their progress and the amount of time and energy they choose to dedicate to 29 Squadron, their next promotion will be to Leading Air Cadet (LAC). This is generally during the second or third year of training. For them to advance from this point, they need to complete their two years of basic training and attend a Junior Non-Commissioned Officer course (JNCO Course). This is a 6-day residential course generally held at a NZDF base or camp. Once they pass, they are eligible for promotion to CDT CPL

(Cadet Corporal). This depends on their dedication to 29 Squadron, and also on how many Corporal spots are available in the Squadron at the time. The next step up requires another course: Senior NCO, which can lead to being a CDTSGT (Cadet Sergeant). After this promotion, only the most dedicated make it to the rank of Cadet Flight Sergeant (CDTF/SGT). There is one more step left – for the truly dedicated. This is essentially equivalent to being treated as an Officer: The Warrant Officer. This is available to cadets for 12 months while they are 18 years of age. After serving as a Warrant Officer, they are expected to become an Officer Cadet and start their training towards becoming a commissioned officer.

WHAT THE NZCF CAN NOT DO FOR YOUR CHILD

If you are dealing with a troubled teenager and think that Cadets will help “straighten them out”, then you will probably end up disappointed. Parents/caregivers think of TV Programs like “boot camps for out-of-control teens” and “scared straight” and hope that 29 Squadron can provide such a service. We do not. With very few exceptions, troubled teenagers do not last because all cadets at 29 Squadron are expected to follow certain minimum behaviours. Cadets also agree to follow all orders. And troubled teens are generally not going to accept other teens telling them what to do.

Another challenge are teens with low self-esteem, low self-confidence, or with problems being in groups or situations that can be unpredictable. Although we treat every cadet as an individual with individual needs, and we put all our energy into accommodating personal needs to make them succeed, our environment is still one where the situations are dynamic and will appear to be out of control to someone who needs predictability, some degree of silence, and a sense of the situation being stable. Cadets can be as old as 19, and not ever 13-year old will be comfortable working with older cadets that have already left school.

NZCF is not a social service. We are a military-style youth training organisation. If you have questions or concerns, you are welcome to sit down with the Commanding Officer for a confidential chat. If there is a way, we want to try it.

OUR VALUES

Although we have lots of procedures to learn and rules that surround the running of a Cadet Unit, the most important part is that we are a values-driven organisation. We take our NZCF values from NZDF, and 29 Squadron also has its own:

NZDF VALUES	29 SQUADRON VALUES
Courage	Humility
Commitment	Excellence
Comradeship	Resilience
Integrity	

CODE OF CONDUCT

All personnel: cadets, staff, adult helpers, and officers, must agree to follow the NZCF Code of Conduct. Code of Conduct lessons and refreshers are held annually and after each breach to ensure that everyone remains current. You are encouraged to read our Code of Conduct by looking for it on our website (linked to every page – at the bottom). The Code of Conduct also outlines our approach to embracing diversity, and the process when someone falls short of expectations.

HOW MUCH ARE OFFICERS AND STAFF PAID? DO I HAVE TO PAY THEM?

All officers and staff are volunteers. They do not get paid. All parade nights and activities, all their planning, administration, and meetings – all of those are done at no cost to you. Officers and staff are true volunteers. They believe in what the NZCF can do for Rotorua’s youth, and your child. And they are happy to spend their personal time doing it. All money raised by the parents to run the unit goes to the operating expenses and to support the cadets. They are not to pay staff. Officers and staff serve their communities for free.

HOW MUCH IS THIS GOING TO COST THEN?

To start, you will pay a joining fee and the first Term’s fees.

Joining fee	\$35 (covers some of the personalised uniform items)
<u>Term fee</u>	<u>\$40</u>
Total	\$75

Per term, you pay a term fee

Term fee	\$40
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Throughout the year, there are activities. Each activity can have a fee of its own. Activities are split into Training activities, and Exercises. The Training activities are mandatory to attend, and costs are kept as low as possible. Firearms safety training

has no cost, while Bushcraft Training can have a fee to cover food and facility costs. Apart from the first Term, which has a lot of training and community activities due to Poppy Day and Anzac obligations, two or three activities may be planned for a term. Your cadet can but does not have to attend all of them. In general terms, weekend activities cost between \$20-\$70 depending on it being a single day or weekend. Parade nights and training weekends is where the cadet gets trained – there are also lots of optional activities involving camps, range shoots, gliding, powered flight, emergency management, and more. And a fair number are hosted by other units in the region. An enthusiastic cadet with good whanau support can be quite active and spend 3-5 weekends per term training or enjoying more social exercises.

THE ACTUAL APPLICATION PROCESS

- Visit on Parade Nights for 2-4 nights
- Ask staff for an application form (NZCF 2)
- Pay \$75 into **03 0415 0602951 00**
Use the cadet's surname and JOIN as references
- Return NZCF 2 the following parade night with proof of payment

Your child is then 29 Squadron cadet. We will start the process of fitting for a uniform. We operate national uniform stores, so ordered items can take some time to arrive. Personalised uniform items, such as name badges, are done in batches to keep costs down, and your cadet will need to wait for the next batch to be ordered.

PAYMENT METHODS

Only bank payments are accepted. Cash and cheques are not. When paying for anything, please use these two references: The **CADET** surname and the Term or activity you are paying for. Examples: TERM2, TERM3, SHOOT, BUSHCAMP. Instructions on what reference to use for camps is available from the activity documentation. Activity documentation is on Discord and accessible to your cadet. Ask your Cadet to keep you up to date.

LOST OR DAMAGED UNIFORM ITEMS

You must pay for lost or damaged items. Name badges, ties, caps, hats, rank slides, brassard, boots, and belts are the most common items needing replacements. They are charged at cost. As in indication: name badges \$30 per pair, tie \$30, cap \$35, hat \$70,

rank slides \$60, boots \$250, Unit Recognition Patch \$20, brassard \$30-\$80 (depending on badges). Please note, the above amounts are only an indication.

MANDATORY COMMUNICATIONS: CADETNET, DISCORD, AND EMAIL

A cadet family and their cadet need to have access to and be competent in operating a number of phone and computer tools. 29 Squadron needs to be able to reliably communicate with you, and your cadet needs to be able to reliably communicate with other cadets and staff.

- You will need an email address and phone number.
- The cadet will need an email address and daily access to a device capable of accessing the NZCF “CadetNet” website, as well as join the 29 Squadron Discord Server.

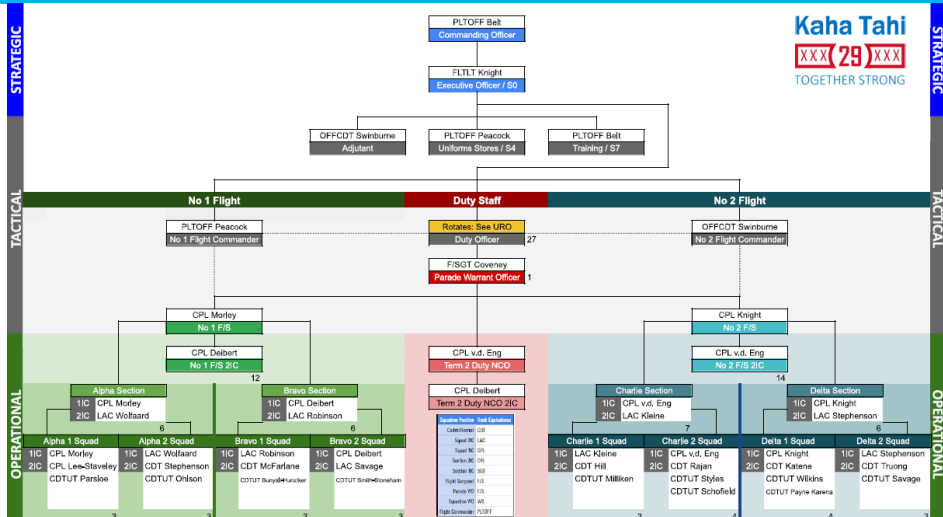
Both you and your cadet are expected, under normal circumstances, to respond to any email or message within 24 hours. This helps the Squadron run smoothly.

YOUR FAMILY RULES REGARDING PHONES/DEVICES

It's not impossible, but it is very difficult for a cadet to be part of 29 Squadron if they do not have access to the information we send out. This is mostly done through a service called Discord. We respect that younger cadets may not have their own phone or will have device access limited. But a cadet at 29 Squadron must have a personal functional email address and a way of accessing Discord at least once per day. If this is something your family rules does not allow, please come talk to the Commanding Officer to discuss how we can effectively manage this.

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT IS COMING UP?

As part of your cadet's training, we make them responsible for keeping you informed. High-level information of activities (dates) is communicated via the weekly newsletter, but detailed information about each activity is released on 29 Squadron's Discord Server that you as a parent/caregiver/guardian do not have access to. Information is generally posted at least 2 weeks prior, but often as much as a month prior to the activity. It will contain detailed timings, equipment requirements, contact details, and other information. **It is your cadet's responsibility to keep you updated.**



All new cadets are assigned to a Squad with Squad leaders. When they have a question, they ask their Squad leader – in person at a parade night or at an activity, or online in our Discord server. If the Squad Leader is unable to help, they will ask their Section leader. The section leader will ask a Senior NCO, and they will ask an officer. Officers, if they don't know the answer, will approach the XO or the CO.

When you have a question, you need to check which of the following types of question it may be:

Question type	Where to get help
Immediate Safety Concern	CO or any other officer, <i>immediately</i>
Personal, medical, confidential	Make an appointment with the CO
Financial	USC Treasurer
Hardship	USC Chair or CO
Parade night	Your cadet is to ask their 1-Up
Activity information	Your cadet gets information from Discord for you
Times, dates, travel instructions	Your cadet gets information from Discord for you
Gear lists, equipment to bring	Your cadet gets information from Discord for you
USC fundraising	USC treasurer
USC meetings, minutes	USC secretary

ACRONYMS... (THERE IS NO END TO THEM)

You will learn (even if you don't want to) a lot of "NZCF speak" as you settle in as a cadet family. Here are some to start with – a full list would take pages!

2IC	Person in charge of a group, 2 nd in command of the group
1-UP	The leader of the group you belong to
Adj	Adjutant, the administrator of the unit
ASO	Area Support Officer – offers support for units in the region
ATC	Air Training Corps (Air Cadets)
CDT	Cadet
CO	Commanding Officer / Unit Commander
CDTCPL	Cadet Corporal, rank up from LAC
CDTSGT	Cadet Sergeant, rank up from CDTCPL, a SNCO
CUCDR	Cadet Unit Commander (the Commanding Officer, or CO)
DNCO	Duty NCO (see NCO) – a cadet that manages the activity
IC	Person in charge of a group
JNCO	Junior NCO (CDTCPL) – a cadet
LAC	Leading Air Cadet (first promotion from CDT, not yet a JNCO)
NCO	Non-commissioned officer – a cadet that is a JNCO or a SNCO
NET	Not earlier than, as in: do not turn up before that time
NLT	No later than, as in: do not turn up later than that time
NZCF	New Zealand Cadet Forces
NZDF	New Zealand Defence Force
O	Officer – eg Pilot officer, Flying Officer, Squadron Leader
OIC	Officer In Charge (of a specific activity)
SQN	Squadron
SSM	Supplementary Staff Member, non-officer adult staff volunteers
XO	Executive officer (2 nd in charge)
SNCO	Senior NCO – a senior cadet, CDTSGT or higher

ANY REMAINING QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Your family and 29 Squadron could be starting a relationship that lasts many years. It is important that we start out with the right information and expectations. You are entirely welcome to approach staff or sit down with the Commanding Officer to have a chat.

The best way to get more information is to come to a parade night. You can also message us via our website, Facebook, and Instagram. If the matter is urgent staff are contactable via email, TXT, or phone calls. If the matter is sensitive, you can arrange a confidential meeting.

Person	Role	Details
PLTOFF Pete Belt	Commanding Officer	pete.belt@cadetforces.org.nz 027 356 8915 Safety, confidential issues, discipline
FLTLT Poihaere Knight	Executive Officer/S2	poihaere.knight@cadetforces.org.nz 021 774 688 Operational questions or concerns
PLTOFF Ben Peacock	Uniform Officer/S4	benjamin.peacock@cadetforces.org.nz 027 666 2330 Uniforms and Equipment loans
OFFCDT Nat Swinburne	Adjutant	natalie.swinburne@cadetforces.org.nz 022 603 9261 Update Personal/Medical details
SSM Precious Morgan	Social Media Officer/S9 Assistant Adjutant	precious.morgan@cadetforces.org.nz 028 411 8423 Update Personal/Medical details
SQNLDR Heidi Paignton	Area Support Officer	heidi.paignton@cadetforces.org.nz 027 289 5785 Concerns or complaints about 29 SQN officers, staff
Mr Kurei Knight	USC Chair	kureiknight@gmail.com 021 222 4045 USC matters, financial hardship
Mrs Rita Hill	USC Treasurer	rita.hill@fonterra.com 027 705 6959 Accounts enquiries, financial hardship
Ms Claire Armstrong	USC Secretary	claire.armstrong@cadetforces.org.nz 027 361 7310 Communications, USC operations