



Pacific Region Cadets

ROYAL CANADIAN SEA CADETS

ROYAL CANADIAN SEA CADETS IS A NATIONAL YOUTH PROGRAM SPONSORED BY THE CANADIAN FORCES
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CIVILIAN NAVY LEAGUE OF CANADA

BACKGROUND

DOCUMENTATION

ROYAL CANADIAN SEA CADET CEREMONIAL GUN CREW

The ceremonial guns used in the “Ceremony of the Flags” by the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets are century -old naval 12-pounder, eight-hundredweight quick fire guns. This gun was originally used between 1894 and 1918 as a “boat gun” intended for use in a 13-metre pulling cutter. When not employed in that capacity, it was mounted as light armament on naval ships. They were declared operationally obsolete in 1933 and have been used in ceremonial functions ever since.

The guns are mounted on steel field carriages and equipped with ammunition limbers for use ashore. The total weight of the gun and limber is 831 kilograms. Originally the ammunition consisted of 12 solid projectiles, 12 shrapnel shells with 24 cartridges. The ceremonial ammunition used today consists of 24 cartridges fitted with a .50-calibre blank round inserted into a modified casing or a four-ounce blank charge for a more spectacular effect.

When hooked to the limber, a battery crew of 32 cadets, a non-commissioned senior member and a battery officer pull the gun. The cadets chosen to man the gun positions are senior cadets, aged 16 to 18 years, who are undertaking trades training at the Sea Cadet Summer Training Centre HMCS QUADRA at Comox, BC. They spend many hours practicing their roles, dry firing the gun and learning the safety procedures before firing an actual blank round.

An individual gun crew consists of nine personnel. The battery commander has overall responsibility for the gun position; the battery non-commissioned member orders each gun to fire at the timed interval; the recorder makes notes on the result of the firing such as recording a misfire; the safety number stands ready to retrieve any misfired round and making it safe by immersing it in a bucket of water; the extractor removes spent rounds from the gun; the breech operator, opens and closes the breech to fire each round; the loader place rounds into the breech and cocks the striker mechanism after the breech is closed; the firing number operates the striker lanyard on the command “fire”.