

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION

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THE CANADIAN CADET ORGANIZATIONS

Introduction

The Canadian Cadet Organizations (CCO) provide a dynamic and structured activity to Canadian youth. Through a variety of challenging yet rewarding activities, cadets are encouraged to become active, responsible members of their communities. Cadets are organized into units according to their preference (Sea, Army and Air) and availability, and participate in local, regional and national activities. The Canadian Cadet Organizations is the largest federally-sponsored youth program in the country. It currently consists of approximately 56,000 cadets located in approximately 1,115 corps and squadrons in cities and towns all across Canada.

Objectives

The Cadet Program develops in youth attributes of leadership, good citizenship, and physical fitness, while stimulating interest in the Sea, Army and Air elements of the Canadian Forces.

Participants

The Cadet Program is open to all young people in Canada aged from 12 to 18 years. These young men and women come from cities and towns all across Canada and from all levels of society. All training costs and uniform expenses are assumed by the Department of National Defence.

However, a parent or legal guardian is required to sign a consent form prior to the registration of his or her child.

Training

Cadets participate in training on a weekly basis during the academic school year, with the opportunity to advance to summer training based on their achievements and level of instruction. Depending upon which element a cadet chooses to join, he or she may participate in rappelling, adventure training or survival exercises for Army cadets, flying and gliding exercises for Air cadets, and navigation and seamanship activities for Sea cadets. All cadets are also provided the

opportunity to participate in marksmanship and biathlon competitions, map and compass exercises, as well as drill. Other activities focus on developing their leadership, self-discipline and citizenship skills, including the Cadet Harassment and Abuse Prevention Program (CHAP).

Through CHAP, cadets are sensitized to the various forms of harassment and abuse, and their effects. Method of instruction, public speaking and healthy living courses are also practical components of the regular Cadet Program. Furthermore, cadets frequently enjoy sports, environmental challenges, and music instruction (pipes and drums, or band). Each cadet also participates in a minimum of three field exercises per year.

Cadets participate in training a minimum of one night per week with optional weekend activities depending on their unit Commanding Officer. Although cadets themselves are not part of the Canadian Forces, they wear a military-style uniform that is provided free of charge upon joining the Canadian Cadet Organizations. Training for cadets is conducted by a specialized group of Canadian Forces officers in the Cadet Instructors Cadre (CIC), which is a sub-component of the Reserve Force. As Reservists, these 4,500 members of the CIC receive training specific to their unique roles as youth leaders. Many CIC themselves are graduates of the Canadian Cadet Organizations, who are now attending college or university, and are interested in continuing their work with Canadian youth in a formal setting.

Summer Training

Of the 56,000 cadets, approximately 23,000 of them have the opportunity to attend advanced training at national and regional centres each summer. During the summer period, cadets are able to further develop their skills while experiencing new challenges and adventures in one of the 28 Canadian Forces-conducted Cadet Summer Training Centres (CSTC). Summer training is both an enhancement of local headquarters training and an introduction to new programs. Many of these courses are offered in settings that take advantage of their proximity to nature by conducting outdoor activities such as canoeing, camping, hiking, meteorology, sailing, and mountain climbing. Summer training courses range from two to six weeks depending on the specialty being offered.

International exchanges provide another unique experience for a number of senior cadets each summer. These cadets are selected based on merit, and are given the opportunity to visit foreign locations such as Japan, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Singapore and the United States. Cadets taking part in exchanges represent Canada as youth ambassadors abroad, and participate in training and cultural activities with their foreign cadet counterparts.

Specialized summer training can include national and international marksmanship competitions for advanced cadets, and Regular Force parachute courses for others. In addition to the obvious benefits of experiencing different cultures and meeting new people from all over Canada and the world, all cadets undergoing summer training also receive a weekly training bonus.

Furthermore, cadets aged 16 and above have the opportunity to be employed as Staff Cadets (course instructors) at the various Cadet Summer Training Centres.

Programme Support

The Canadian Cadet Organizations is funded by the Department of National Defence/Canadian Forces. However, the Canadian Cadet Organizations is greatly assisted in this venture by three civilian agencies: the Navy League of Canada, the Army Cadet League of Canada and the Air Cadet League of Canada. Each cadet corps and squadron also has a Local Sponsor.

Cadet Leagues

The three civilian Cadet Leagues are viewed as partners of the Department of National Defence/Canadian Forces. Each consists of members of the civilian community who are dedicated to the development of youth. The Cadet Leagues work directly at the community level with the cadet corps and squadrons in areas such as fund-raising, recruiting, and supervision. League members volunteer their time and energy to help ensure the success of the local cadet unit.

Local Sponsors

Each cadet unit has a Local Sponsor that is responsible for providing a building and storage facility to the cadet unit and helping to recruit suitable people for employment in the Cadet unit among other duties. Local Sponsors may include such entities as the Kiwanis Club, local businesses, the Royal Canadian Air Force Association, Royal Canadian Legions or other community associations, as well as the Cadet Leagues themselves in certain cases. The Cadet Leagues are the ultimate supervisory bodies for all Local Sponsors.

Affiliated Units

All Army cadet corps and some Sea and Air cadet units are affiliated with Regular and Reserve Force units. In such cases, the cadets wear the affiliated units cap badges on their headgear to reflect their association with these units. Regular and Reserve Force units provide direct logistical support and expertise to the cadet corps and squadrons, such as vehicles, military equipment and qualified specialists on field trips.

Vision of the Canadian Cadet Movement

The Canadian Cadet Organizations is part of a larger collective known as the Canadian Cadet Movement (CCM). The Canadian Cadet Movement consists of the following stakeholders: all cadets, CIC, Civilian Instructors, League Members, Regular Force and Reserve Force members in support of the CCO, Local Sponsors and interested parents.

By working together, stakeholders in the Canadian Cadet Movement are able to create a positive and enriching environment where individual and group learning flourishes, and certain shared values are embraced. The following Vision Statement reflects the essence of what "Cadets" is all about.

“We commit to develop in each and every Sea, Army and Air cadet qualities of leadership and an aspiration to become a valued member of his or her community. We reinforce values necessary to prepare youth to meet the challenges of tomorrow and to embrace the multicultural dimensions of Canada.

To this end, we offer dynamic training in a supportive and efficient environment where change is a positive and essential element.

We further commit to attain this vision by living shared Canadian values, paying particular attention to:

LOYALTY, the expression of our collective dedication to the ideals of the Cadet Movement and to all its members;

PROFESSIONALISM, the accomplishment of all tasks with pride and diligence;

MUTUAL RESPECT, the treatment of others with dignity and equality; and

INTEGRITY, the courage and commitment to exemplify trust, sincerity and honesty.”

Conclusion

Diversity is the Canadian Cadet Organizations' greatest asset. Membership in the Canadian Cadet Organizations provides thousands of Canadian youths with unique opportunities free of charge that they might not otherwise experience. Teenagers who join the Canadian Cadet Organizations learn valuable life and work skills like teamwork, leadership, public speaking and time management. They also reap the personal benefits of increased self-confidence, learning how to take initiative and how to make decisions.

Cadets further benefit from exposure to both Canadian and foreign cultures, and develop a better sense of what it means to be Canadian. All of this while participating in a physically challenging, mentally stimulating, structured environment which promotes community and environmental responsibility as well as personal health and well-being. The Canadian Cadet Organizations are an investment in our youth today and a means of safeguarding our future tomorrow.