

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW ZEALAND CADET FORCES

This is a letter of introduction to the New Zealand Cadet Forces (NZCF), by way of background the cadet movement was created in 1864, making it the oldest youth development organisation in New Zealand. The NZCF has evolved into its present form through various Acts of Parliament that now see the organisation comprising of the Sea Cadet Corps (Navy Cadets), the New Zealand Cadet Corps (Army Cadets), and the Air Training Corps (Air Cadets).

The NZCF is raised and maintained by the Minister of Defence, and operated under the direction of the Chief of Defence Force, who provides only limited and conditional support. It is important to note, however, that members of the NZCF are not members of the New Zealand Defence Force, and belonging to the NZCF places no compulsion or obligation on its members to join the New Zealand Defence Force.

The NZCF is a voluntary, disciplined and uniformed training organisation for youth in New Zealand. The NZCF mission is: "To develop and enable self-disciplined, confident and responsible young New Zealanders". The core values of the NZCF, which are instilled in cadets and officers throughout their involvement and training, are: Courage, Commitment, Comradeship and Integrity.

The role of the NZCF is to provide training courses and programmes for its members, both cadets and officers, similar to those undertaken by the New Zealand Defence Force. All members of the NZCF are volunteers, and it is estimated that the average Officer in a Cadet Unit invests in excess of 20 hours per month organising and conducting Unit parades and activities. A number put in significantly more hours and some also assist in the delivery and management of national-level courses, covering such topics as leadership, risk management, instructional techniques and training development, fieldcraft, aviation and sailing.

Officers attend weekly Parade Nights (meetings) and training weekends, however they are used in administration, teaching, planning, personnel management and development roles, which are all transferrable skills able to be used in a workplace environment.

Officers are required to attend training courses in health and safety, first aid, equity and diversity, adolescent behaviour, acceptable behaviour, mandatory reporting, duty of care, managerial decision making, youth development philosophies, legal and societal practices and procedures, military etiquette, instructional techniques, and Code of Conduct Training to enable them to be effective leaders for the cadets.

Officers have a number of courses available to them throughout their NZCF careers. These include both leadership (promotion) courses and specific skill training courses, most often these courses a week long in duration, however some occur over a weekend.

Without our Officers, the NZCF would not be able to exist as they are the backbone of our organisation and are essential for the proper care and supervision of cadets. Our Officers come from all walks of life, and each brings with them personal attributes and leadership qualities that are enriched by working with youth.