

HISTORY OF THE CCF

The Cadet Corps originated from a letter sent by the War Office on 12th May 1859 to Lord Lieutenants asking them to raise Rifle Volunteer Battalions for Home Defence. As a result, a number of schools formed units in 1859 which were attached to these battalions. In 1908, the Minister for War, Lord Haldane, invited universities and schools to form units of new Corps to provide officers for the then newly formed Territorial Force and a reservoir of officer material in the event of war. As a result, 87 schools accepted and formed the Junior Officers' Training Corps. This was administered directly from the War Offices which drew up schemes for training, introduced proficiency certificates and arranged for annual camps and Inspections. HM King Edward VII consented to become the Colonel-in-Chief of the OTC.

Some other schools besides those forming the OTC had formed Volunteer cadet units soon after 1900 and subsequently received full official recognition and a small grant from public funds. These units were usually affiliated to TA Regiments and administered through County TA Associations. In 1915, 92 such School Units were attached to various TA Regiments. Official recognition and financial support were withdrawn in 1930 from cadet units not in the OTC. The Public Secondary Schools Cadet Association under the guidance of its President, Field Marshal Lord Allenby, supported and played a significant part in the forming of the British National Cadet Association which subsequently organised County Cadet Committees to administer local cadet units and it is a matter of justifiable pride that so many of the schools affected carried on. In 1938 the OTC (Junior Division) became the Junior Training Corps (JTC) and had at that time 183 units.

The Second World War caused far-reaching changes in cadet organisations and, with the need for an extension of pre-service training, the RN and RAF became vitally concerned. Some schools had already formed sections to do Air Training and in 1938, under the auspices of the Air League, the Air Defence Corps had been formed. This was subsequently absorbed into the Air Training Corps, formed in 1941, with both School and open squadrons quite separate from the JTC. In 1942 some schools began units of the Sea Cadet Corps. In the same year the Army Cadet Force was reorganised and expanded with full War Office support and included all Army cadet units not in the JTC. This organisation continued until after the war.

In 1948, to secure greater efficiency and economy, it was decided to combine all cadet units in schools into one organisation termed the Combined Cadet Force, in which each contingent would consist of a basic Training Section and one or more Service Sections. They were to be administered by a Joint Cadet Executive under an Inter-Services Cadet Committee. In all, 247 schools accepted the invitation to adopt the new scheme and the new CCF was honoured by HM King George VI becoming its Captain General. In 1952 the Combined Cadet Force Association was established to represent all the schools with CCFs. In 1953 HM Queen Elizabeth became Captain-General.

The CCF has a strength of over 42,000 cadets and more than 2000 officers and School Staff Instructors. The Cadet Forces Celebrated the 150th Anniversary in 2010