



This annual publication presents figures on the number of **Cadets** and **Adult Volunteers** in the Cadet Forces sponsored by the Ministry of Defence.

Statistics are provided for the Community Cadets (the **Sea Cadet Corps**, **Army Cadet Force** and **Air Training Corps**) and the **Combined Cadet Force**. More detailed statistics and historic time series can be found in the [Excel Tables](#).

This is the second in a new series of MOD Sponsored Cadets Statistics bulletins, following the outcome of a public consultation on [Changes to Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Personnel Statistics](#). Previous statistics on cadets can be found in the [UK Reserve Forces and Cadets](#) publications.

Key Points and Trends

▼ 84 010	Number of Cadets (Community Cadets) At 1 April 2017 <i>Decrease of 2 720 (-3.1%) since 1 April 2016</i>
▲ 42 070	Number of Cadets (Combined Cadet Force) At 1 April 2017 <i>Increase of 240 (0.6%) since 1 April 2016</i>
▼ 24 410	Number of Adult Volunteers (Community Cadets) At 1 April 2017 <i>Decrease of 130 (-0.5%) since 1 April 2016</i>
▲ 3 340	Number of Adult Volunteers (Combined Cadet Force) At 1 April 2017 <i>Increase of 100 (3.0%) since 1 April 2016</i>
▲ 31.9%	Proportion of female Cadets (Community Cadets) At 1 April 2017 <i>Increase from 31.1% since 1 April 2016</i>
▲ 31.6%	Proportion of female Cadets (Combined Cadet Force) At 1 April 2017 <i>Increase from 31.1% since 1 April 2016</i>

Responsible statistician: Tri-Service Head of Branch 020 7807 8896 DefStrat-Stat-Tri-Hd@mod.uk

Further information/mailling list: DefStrat-Stat-Tri-Enquiries@mod.uk

Background quality report:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-reserve-forces-and-mod-sponsored-cadets-strengths-background-quality-report>

Would you like to be added to our **contact list**, so that we can inform you about updates to these statistics and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing DefStrat-Stat-Tri-Enquiries@mod.uk

Contents

Introduction	page 2
Background and Context	page 3
Community Cadet Forces	page 4 (NS)
Combined Cadet Force	page 6 (NS)
Key Comparisons of Community Cadets and Combined Cadet Force	page 7
Further Information	page 8
Glossary	page 9

Supplementary tables containing further statistics can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mod-sponsored-cadet-forces-statistics-2017>

The Background Quality Report is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-reserve-forces-and-mod-sponsored-cadets-strengths-background-quality-report>

Introduction

This annual publication presents figures on the number of **Cadets** and **Adult Volunteers** in the Cadet Forces sponsored by the Ministry of Defence. It includes age and gender breakdowns of the Cadets, and gender breakdowns of the Adult Volunteers.

The Ministry of Defence sponsors and supports four Cadet Forces (voluntary youth organisations). They comprise the Community Cadets (**Sea Cadet Corps**, **Army Cadet Force** and **Air Training Corps**) and the school-based **Combined Cadet Force**, whose contingents contain one or more sections from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army or Royal Air Force.

The Cadet Forces provide young people with interesting and challenging activities as part of a stimulating syllabus that develops valuable life skills. In addition, the Cadet Forces encourage young people to take an interest in Defence and the Armed Forces and, for those considering careers in the Services, shows them the various opportunities that exist.

Although the Cadet Forces are not part of the Armed Forces, some Cadet Force Officers do also hold commissions in the Reserve Forces, while others are granted honorary Officer status. Members of the Cadet Forces do not have any liability for military service or compulsory training in the Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve).

The next edition of this publication is scheduled to be released on GOV.UK at 9.30am on 31 May 2018. A calendar of upcoming MOD statistical releases can be found on **GOV.UK**.

A National Statistics publication

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This publication has since undergone a change in presentation following a public consultation, though the underlying methodology of producing the data remains unchanged. The MOD continues to seek feedback from users to ensure this publication is meeting user needs.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Background and Context

Key Policies

MOD Single Departmental Plan

The MOD's Single Departmental Plan: 2015 to 2020¹ states under the third objective, "Promote Our Prosperity", that the Department will contribute to the UK's wider skills and citizenship development that supports British society through the Cadet Forces, and addresses the commitment to increasing the number of cadet units in schools.

Cadet 2020 Strategy

The Cadet Force 2020 Strategy (CF2020) was initiated in March 2015 to bring together current MOD and single-Service initiatives and recommendations from past reviews of MOD's youth engagement and cadet activity. It establishes a clear tri-Service vision and direction of travel for the MOD's Cadet Forces to 2020, while seeking to deliver coherence, innovation and value for money across the cadet organisations. The strategy recognises that the critical success factor for the Cadet Forces is the continuing commitment of sufficient, high-quality adult volunteers to deliver the cadet experience.

Cadet Expansion Programme

The Cadet Expansion Programme² (CEP) was launched in June 2012 by the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, with an initial aim of establishing 100 new cadet units in English state-funded secondary schools by September 2015. Following successful delivery of this target the Government has committed £50m from LIBOR fines to grow the total number of cadet units in schools across the UK to 500 by 2020.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding young people is our priority and we have robust procedures in place to protect cadets. This includes mandatory security and background checks for all adults who work with children, rigorous disclosure procedures and regular safeguarding training.

Wider Context

ONS Population Estimates

The most recent population estimates published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that the UK population aged 13 to 16 inclusive fell by 6.0% between mid-2012 and mid-2016. That is a good approximation to the population who are most likely to be cadets between April 2013 and April 2017.

The number of cadets in the Combined Cadet Force fell by 5.1% between 2013 and 2017.

The number of cadets in the Community Cadets fell by 7.8% between 2013 and 2017.

Further information on population estimates by age is available at the ONS website³.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mod-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020/single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020>

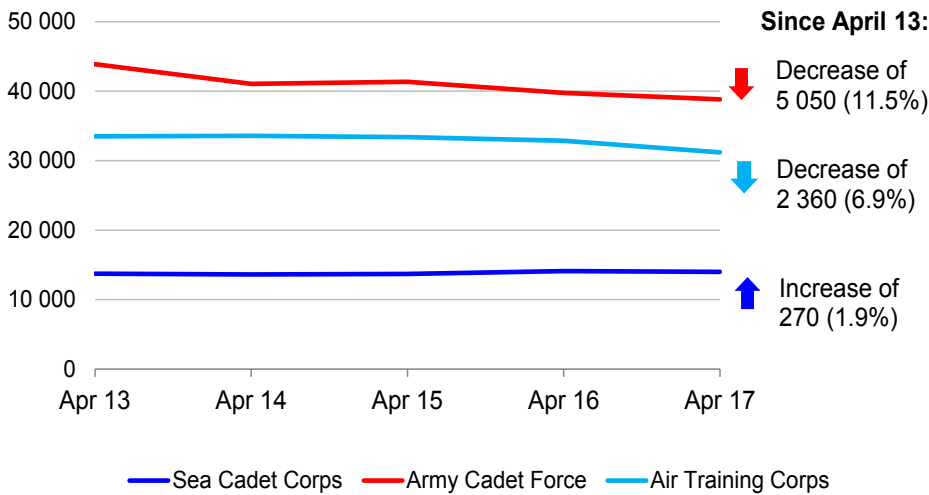
² <http://combinedcadetforce.org.uk/schools-expansion-programme/>

³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/>

Community Cadets

As at 1 April 2017, there were 84,010 cadets in the Community Cadets, made up of 14,000 Sea Cadets (16.7%), 38,810 Army Cadets (46.2%) and 31,190 Air Cadets (37.1%). There continue to be decreases in the overall number of cadets since 2013 (91,090 cadets), influenced mainly by the decrease in Army Cadet numbers seen in Figure 1. The number of Air Cadets has also reduced over this period, while the Sea Cadets has increased slightly.

Figure 1: Number of Cadets in the Community Cadets



Community Cadet Forces include the Sea Cadet Corps (SCC), Army Cadet Force (ACF) and Air Training Corps (ATC). See [glossary](#).

Adult Volunteers include uniformed and non-uniformed volunteers (see [glossary](#)).

Gender

Female representation in the Community Cadet Forces has increased slightly, rising to 31.9% in 2017 compared with 28.3% in 2013. However, while the number of female cadets has increased (see Fig. 2), the rise in the proportion of female cadets can largely be attributed to the decrease in the number of male cadets over the same period.

Figure 2: Number of Cadets in the Community Cadets by gender

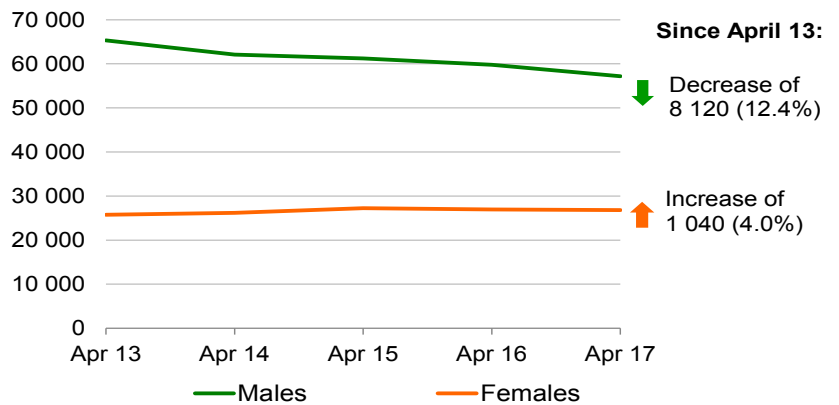
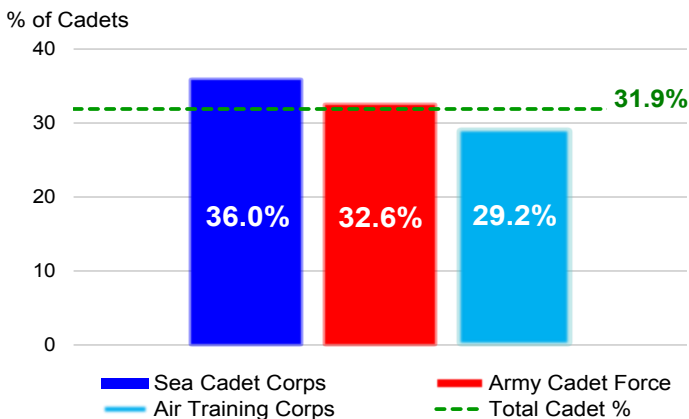


Figure 3: Proportion of Female Cadets in the Community Cadets as at 1 Apr 17



The Sea Cadet Corps had the highest proportion of female cadets at 1 April 2017 (36.0%) compared with the Army Cadet Force (32.6%) and the Air Training Corps (29.2%), shown in Figure 3. Following slight increases to the number of female cadets in the last few years, the SCC and ATC reached their highest number of female cadets in April 2017, while the ACF saw a small decrease compared with April 2016.

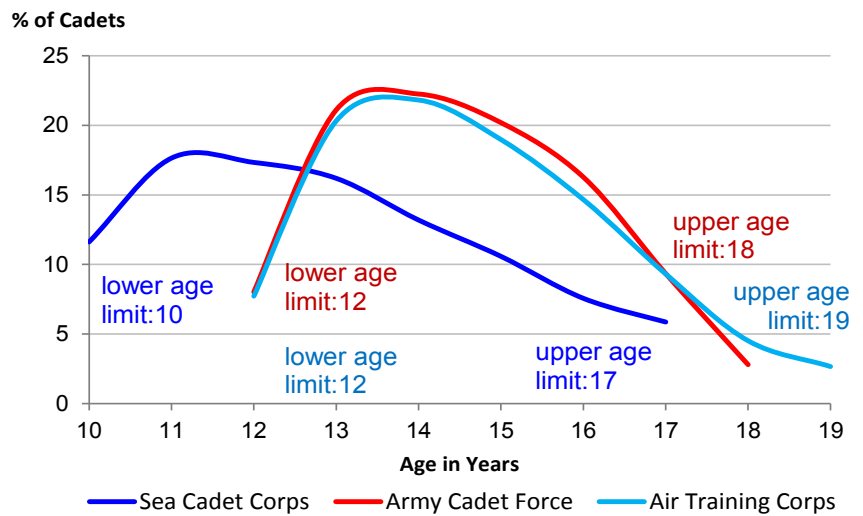
Community Cadets

Age

Due to varying age restrictions¹ in each of the cadet forces, different age distributions can be observed (Figure 4). There is a higher representation of younger cadets in the Sea Cadet Corps, whose largest age group is 11-year-olds (17.6% of cadets) compared with the Army Cadet Force and Air Training Corps, whose largest age groups are 14-year-olds (22.3% and 21.8% of cadets respectively).

¹ See [glossary](#) for age restrictions.

Figure 4: Age Distribution of Cadets in the Community Cadets as at 1 Apr 17



Adult Volunteers

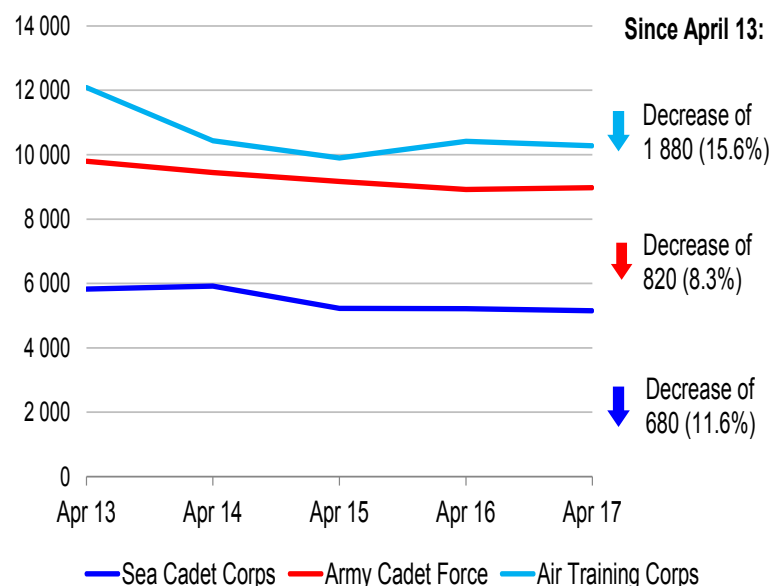
As at 1 April 2017, there were 24,410 Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) in the Community Cadets, made up of 5,150 in the Sea Cadet Corps (21.1%), 8,980 in the Army Cadet Force (36.8%) and 10,280 in the Air Training Corps (42.1%). Figure 5 shows the changes in CFAV numbers across the Community Cadets since April 2013, which was the peak year for both the sea cadets and the army cadets.

Figure 5: Number of Adult Volunteers in the Community Cadets

Adult Volunteers Gender

As with the cadet population, the Sea Cadet Corps had the highest proportion of female Adult Volunteers at 1 April 2017 (32.8%) compared with the Army Cadet Force (28.6%) and the Air Training Corps (25.7%).

While there is a greater proportion of males in both the Uniformed and Non-Uniformed Volunteers, the gender difference is greater in the Uniformed population (73.9% male) compared with Non-Uniformed Volunteers (67.7% male).



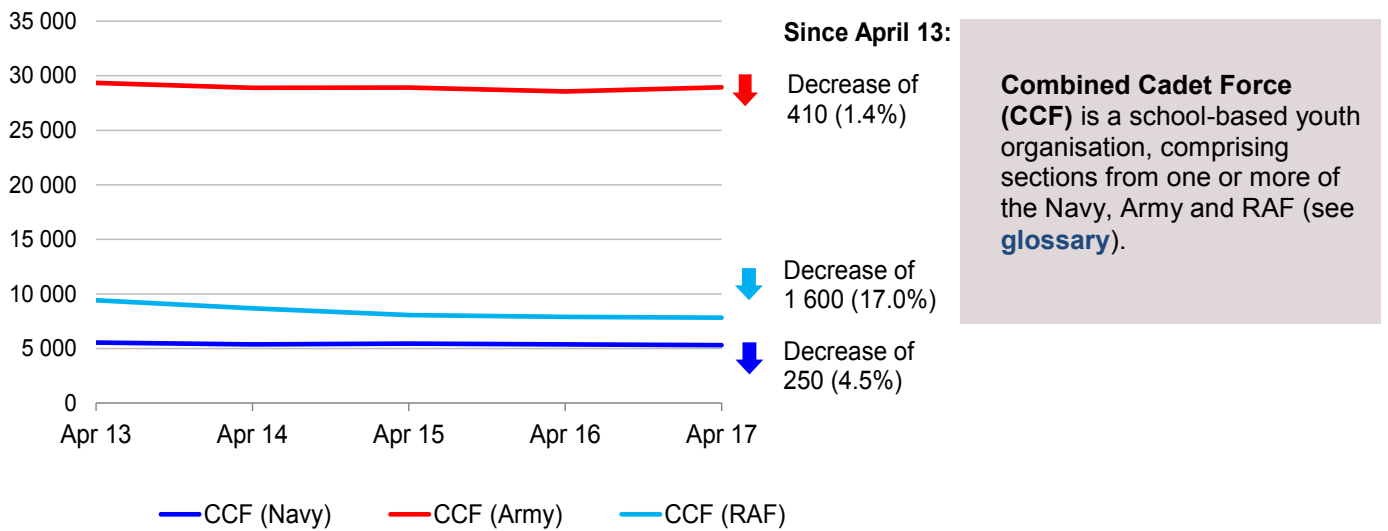
Adult to Cadet Ratio

The overall ratio of cadets to each Adult Volunteer at 1 April 2017 was 3.5, with variations between the Cadet Forces. Please note that this ratio may differ across individual cadet units, and may reflect the different Adult Volunteer skills and knowledge requirements across the cadet forces.

Combined Cadet Force

As at 1 April 2017, there were 42,070 cadets in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), made up of 5,310 cadets in the Naval sections (12.6%), 28,930 in the Army sections (68.8%) and 7,830 in the RAF sections (18.6%). There has been a decrease in the overall number of CCF cadets since 2013 (44,320 CCF Cadets), influenced mainly by the decreases in Army and RAF cadet numbers seen in Figure 6. However, in the past year the number of cadets in the Army CCF has risen by 1.3%.

Figure 6: Number of Cadets in the Combined Cadet Force



Gender

Female representation in the CCF has increased slightly, rising to 31.6% in 2017 compared with 29.0% in 2013. The rise in female numbers can be attributed to the Army sections, reaching their highest number in 2016. Overall, this compensated for the decreases in the number of female cadets in the Naval and RAF sections over the same period.

Figure 7: Number of Cadets in the Combined Cadet Force by gender

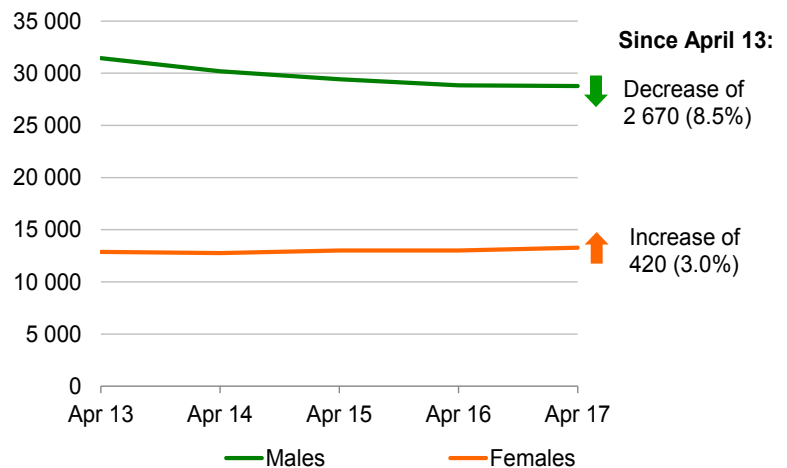
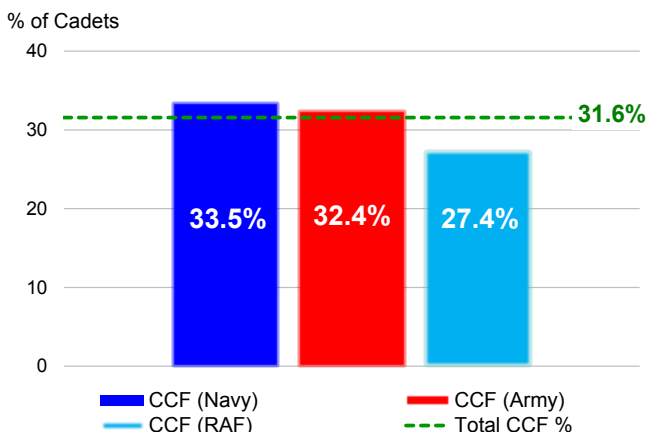


Figure 8: Proportion of Female Cadets in the Combined Cadet Force as at 1 Apr 17



While the overall number of female cadets has increased since 2013, the rise in the proportion of female cadets can largely be attributed to the decrease in the number of male cadets over the same period (see Figure 7).

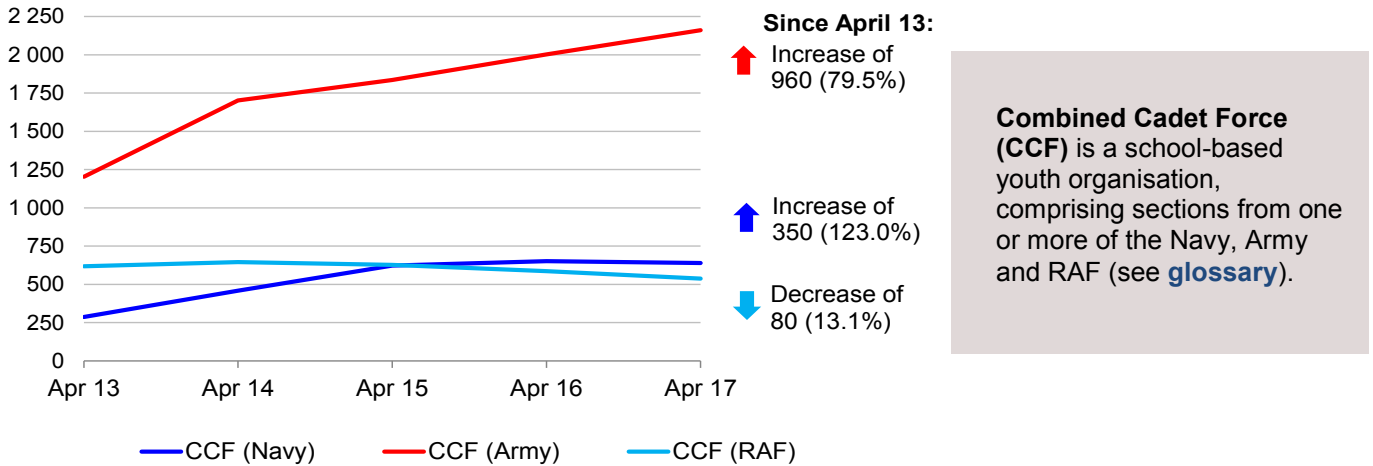
At 1 April 2017, the CCF Naval sections had the highest proportion of female cadets (33.5%) compared with the Army sections (32.4%) and the RAF sections (27.4%).

Combined Cadet Force

Adult Volunteers

As at 1 April 2017, there were 3,340 Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), made up of 640 in the Naval sections (19.2%), 2,160 in the Army sections (64.7%) and 540 in the RAF sections (16.1%). Figure 9 shows the changes in CFAV numbers across the CCF since April 2013.

Figure 9: Number of Adult Volunteers in the Combined Cadet Force



Adult Volunteers Gender

The RAF sections had the highest proportion of female CFAVs at 1 April 2017 (34.2%) compared with the maritime sections (29.7%) and the Army sections (28.0%). While there is a greater proportion of males in both the Uniformed and Non-Uniformed Volunteers, the gender difference is greater in the Uniformed population (72.9% male) compared with Non-Uniformed Volunteers (61.0% male).

Adult to Cadet Ratio

The overall ratio of Combined Cadet Force Cadets to each Adult Volunteer at 1 April 2017 was 12.3, with variations between the sections. Please note that this ratio may differ across individual cadet units.

Key Comparisons of the Community Cadets and the Combined Cadet Force (CCF)

- More than double the number of Community Cadets than CCF Cadets.
- Proportion of female cadets is increasing in both populations, each with rising females numbers but more notably decreasing male numbers.
- Sea Cadets and CCF Naval sections have the highest proportion of females, while Air Cadets and CCF RAF sections have the lowest.
- There is a greater proportion of Adult Volunteers in the Community Cadets (1 adult for every 3.5 cadets) compared with the CCF (1 adult for every 12.3 cadets).

Further Information

Rounding

Figures in this publication have been rounded to the nearest 10, though numbers ending in a “5” have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent the systematic bias caused by always rounding numbers upwards. For example; a value of “25” would be rounded down to “20” and a value of “15” would be rounded up to “20”.

Totals and sub-totals are rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts.

Percentages are calculated from unrounded data and presented to one decimal place.

Revisions

There are revisions to the April 2015 and April 2016 data in Tables 4 and 6 of this year’s bulletin. The total number of Community Cadet Forces Adult Volunteers in 2015 was reported incorrectly last year, which was discovered during the production of this year’s bulletin. The number of Cadet Force Adult Volunteers in the Sea Cadet Corps in 2016 was reported incorrectly last year, which was discovered during the production of this year’s bulletin.

Data sources:

Data are derived from several management information systems which the individual Cadet Force Headquarters use to administer their Cadets and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers.

Symbols

	Discontinuity in time series
*	not applicable
..	not available
–	Zero
~	5 or fewer
p	Provisional
e	Estimate
r	Revised

Italic figures are used for percentages and other rates, except where otherwise indicated.

Contact Us

Defence Statistics welcome feedback on our statistical products. If you have any comments or questions about this publication or about our statistics in general, you can contact us as follows:

Defence Statistics (Tri-Service) Telephone: 020 7807 8896

Email: DefStrat-Stat-Tri-Enquiries@mod.uk

If you require information which is not available within this or other available publications, you may wish to submit a Request for Information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the Ministry of Defence.

For more information, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request/the-freedom-of-information-act>

If you wish to correspond by mail, our postal address is:

Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)
Ministry of Defence, Main Building
Floor 3 Zone M
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

For general MOD enquiries, please call: 020 7218 9000

Glossary

Air Training Corps (ATC) aims to promote and encourage an interest in aviation and the Royal Air Force among young people from age 12 up to 20 years, by providing training which may be useful both in the services and in civilian life.

Army Cadet Force (ACF) offers young people from age 12 up to 18 years a broad range of challenging, educational and adventurous activities which help them develop physically, mentally and socially.

Cadet Forces The Ministry of Defence sponsors and supports four cadet forces (military-themed voluntary youth organisations). The cadet forces comprise the Sea Cadet Corps (SCC), Army Cadet Force (ACF), Air Training Corps (ATC) and Combined Cadet Force (CCF). The Cadet Forces are not part of the Armed Forces and have no operational role; nor are they conduits for entry into the Armed Forces.

Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) The cadet forces could not exist without the support of adults who volunteer to help train cadets, run meetings, activities and events. No previous military experience is necessary and adult volunteers are not liable for military call up. This includes Uniformed and Non-Uniformed volunteers. Like cadets, the adult volunteers can obtain vocational qualifications linked to community, social action and volunteering during their time with the cadets.

Combined Cadet Force (CCF) is a unique educational partnership which operates in schools across the UK. Through military-themed activities, cadets have the opportunity to develop skills such as leadership, self-reliance, resourcefulness, endurance and perseverance. CCF contingents contain one or more sections from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army or the Royal Air Force, and promote the aims and values of the Services they represent.

Community Cadets comprise the Sea Cadet Corps, the Army Cadet Force and the Air Training Corps.

Ministry of Defence (MOD) is the United Kingdom government department responsible for the development and implementation of government defence policy and the headquarters of the British Armed Forces. The principal objective of the MOD is to defend the United Kingdom and its interests. The MOD also manages day to day running of the Armed Forces, contingency planning and defence procurement.

Sea Cadet Corps (SCC) (including Royal Marines Cadets) aims to give young people from age 12 up to 18 years the best possible start in life through nautical adventure and fun. There is also a Junior Section for young people between 10 and 12 years. Sea Cadets is the largest national maritime voluntary youth charity, which is sponsored by and follows the customs and traditions of the Royal Navy.

See below for lower and upper age limits for cadets in the Cadet Forces:

Cadet Force	Lower age limit	Upper age limit	Comments
Sea Cadet Corps	12 years (13 for Royal Marines Cadets)	18th birthday	-
Junior Sea Cadets	10 years	12th birthday	-
Combined Cadet Force	Year 8 ¹ or later at the discretion of the Head, noting specific restrictions may apply for individual sections.	To the end of the summer holiday of their final year of school.	-
Army Cadet Force	12 years and in Year 8 ¹	18th birthday	The upper age limit was lowered from 18 years 9 months in Sept 2015. Cadets aged 17 years or over on 1 Sep 15 could continue until they reach 18 years 9 months.
Air Training Corps	12 years and in Year 8 ¹	20th birthday	The lower age limit was lowered from 13 years in Sept 2014.

¹ S2 in Scotland and Year 9 in Northern Ireland