



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 Cadet Forces (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 first 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

▼ 86 720	Number of Cadets (Community Cadet Forces) At 1 April 2016 <i>Decrease of 1 720 (-1.9%) since 1 April 2015</i>
▼ 41 830	Number of Cadets (Combined Cadet Force) At 1 April 2016 <i>Decrease of 600 (-1.4%) since 1 April 2015</i>
▲ 24 540	Number of Adult Volunteers (Community Cadet Forces) At 1 April 2016 <i>Increase of 240 (1.0%) since 1 April 2015</i>
▲ 3 390	Number of Adult Volunteers (Combined Cadet Force) At 1 April 2016 <i>Increase of 310 (9.9%) since 1 April 2015</i>
▲ 31.1%	Proportion of female Cadets (Community Cadet Forces) At 1 April 2016 <i>Increase from 30.8% since 1 April 2015</i>
▲ 31.1%	Proportion of female Cadets (Combined Cadet Force) At 1 April 2016 <i>Increase from 30.7% since 1 April 2015</i>

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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

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Supplementary tables containing further statistics can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mod-sponsored-cadet-forces-statistics-2016>

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 Cadet Forces (**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 the 25th May 2017. 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 Expansion Programme

The Cadet Expansion Programme² (CEP) was launched in June 2012 by the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, with the aim to deliver 100 new cadet units in English state-funded secondary schools by September 2015. The Government has now committed to grow the total number of cadet units in schools across the UK to 500 by 2020, and the July 2015 budget announcement confirmed £50m has been allocated to fund this growth.

Cadet Force 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.

Wider Context

ONS Population Estimates

The ONS population estimates show that the UK population aged 10 to 19 (broadly those of eligible age to join the cadet forces) decreased by 405,092 between 2007 and 2014, a decrease of 5.2%. 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>

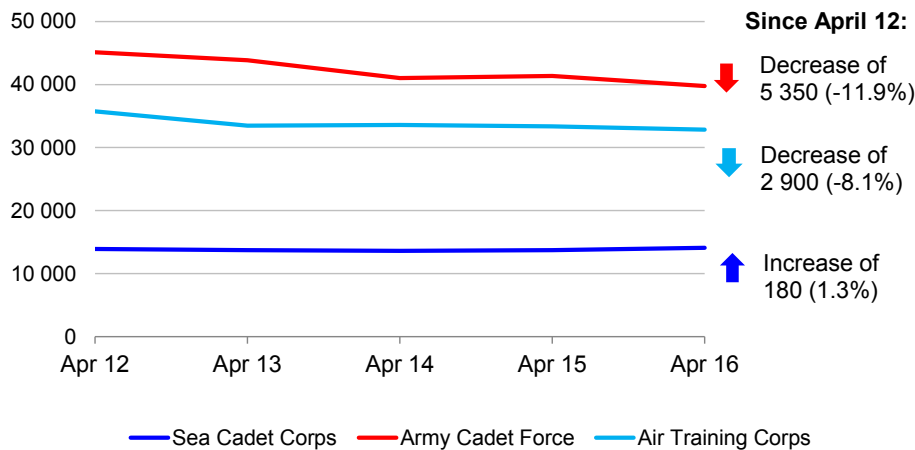
² <http://combinedcadetforce.org.uk/schools-expansion-programme/>

³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/adhoc/004356ukpopulationestimates1851to2014>

Community Cadet Forces

As at 1 April 2016, there were 86,720 cadets in the Community Cadet Forces, made up of 14,100 Sea Cadets (16.3%), 39,760 Army Cadets (45.9%) and 32,860 Air Cadets (37.9%). There continue to be decreases in the overall number of cadets since the peak in 2012 (94,780 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 remained generally stable.

Figure 1: Number of Cadets in the Community Cadet Forces



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 31.1% in 2016 compared with 27.0% in 2012. 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 Cadet Forces by gender

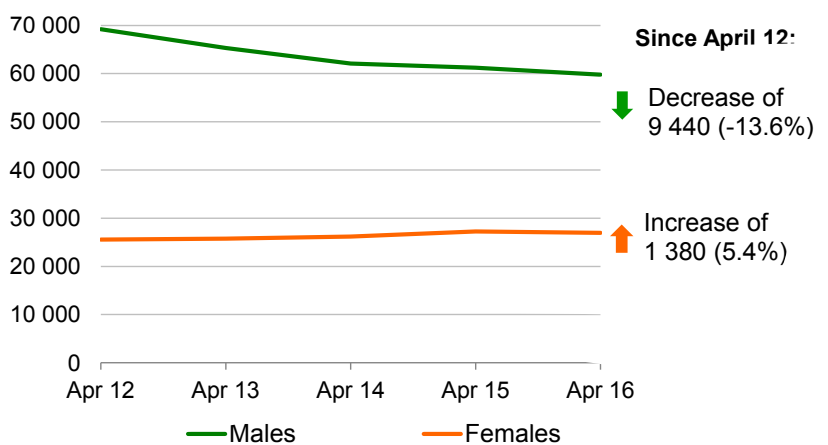
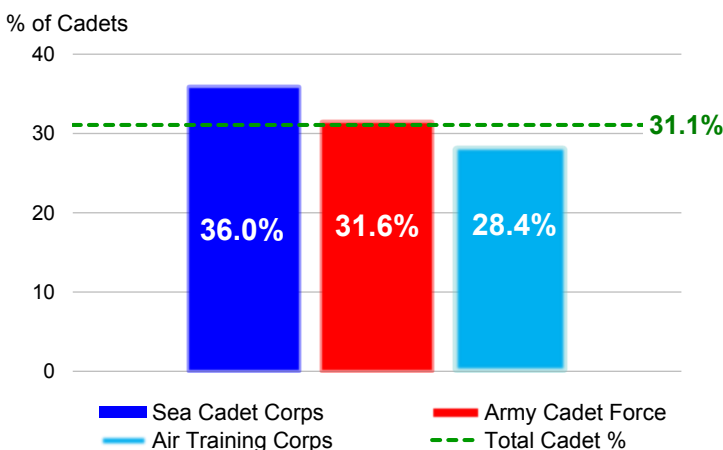


Figure 3: Proportion of Female Cadets in the Community Cadet Forces as at 1 Apr 16



The Sea Cadet Corps had the highest proportion of female cadets at 1 April 2016 (36.0%) compared with the Army Cadet Force (31.6%) and the Air Training Corps (28.4%), 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 2016, while the ACF saw a small decrease compared with April 2015.

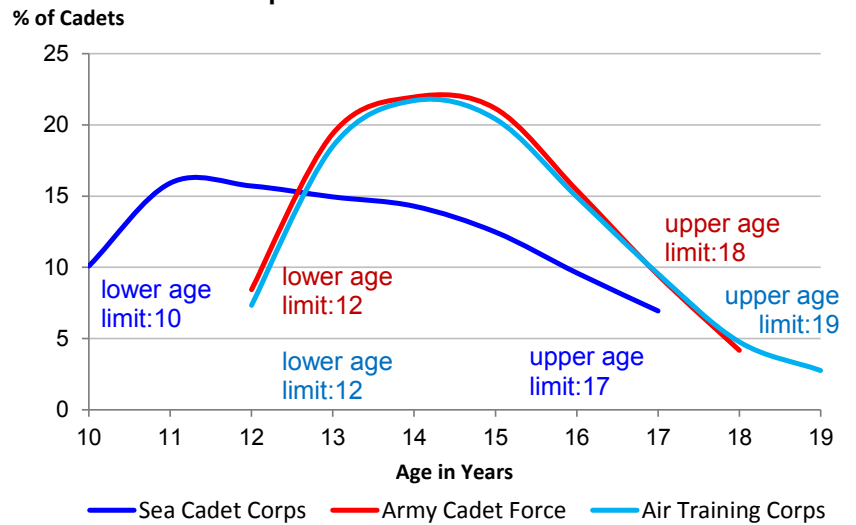
Community Cadet Forces

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 (15.9% of cadets) compared with the Army Cadet Force and Air Training Corps, whose largest age groups are 14-year-olds (22.0% and 21.7% of cadets respectively).

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

Figure 4: Age Distribution of Cadets in the Community Cadet Forces as at 1 Apr 16



Adult Volunteers

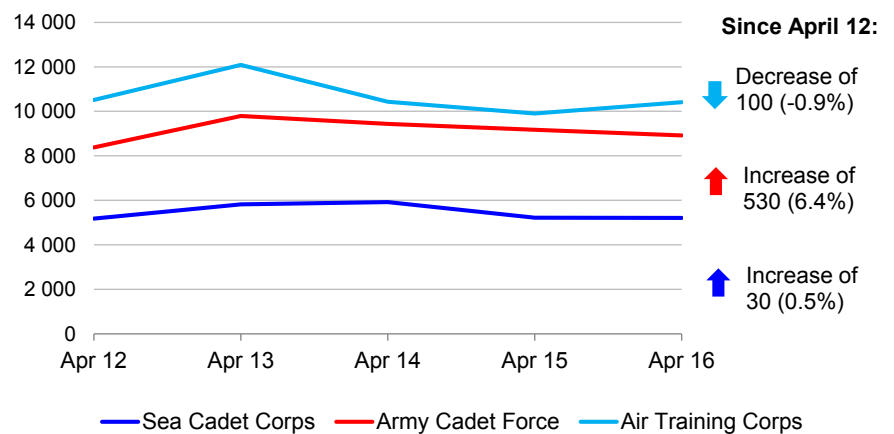
As at 1 April 2016, there were 24,540 Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) in the Community Cadet Forces, made up of 5,210 in the Sea Cadet Corps (21.2%), 8,920 in the Army Cadet Force (36.3%) and 10,410 in the Air Training Corps (42.4%). Figure 5 shows the changes in CFAV numbers across the Community Cadet Forces since April 2012.

Adult Volunteers Gender

As with the cadet population, the Sea Cadet Corps had the highest proportion of female Adult Volunteers at 1 April 2016 (32.7%) compared with the Army Cadet Force (28.9%) and the Air Training Corps (25.8%).

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 (73.5% male) compared with Non-Uniformed Volunteers (68.1% male).

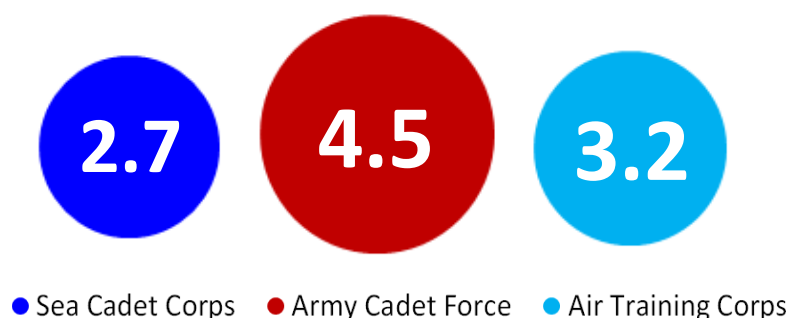
Figure 5: Number of Adult Volunteers in the Community Cadet Forces



Adult to Cadet Ratio

The overall number of cadets to each Adult Volunteer at 1 April 2016 was 3.5, with variations between the Cadet Forces (Figure 6). 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.

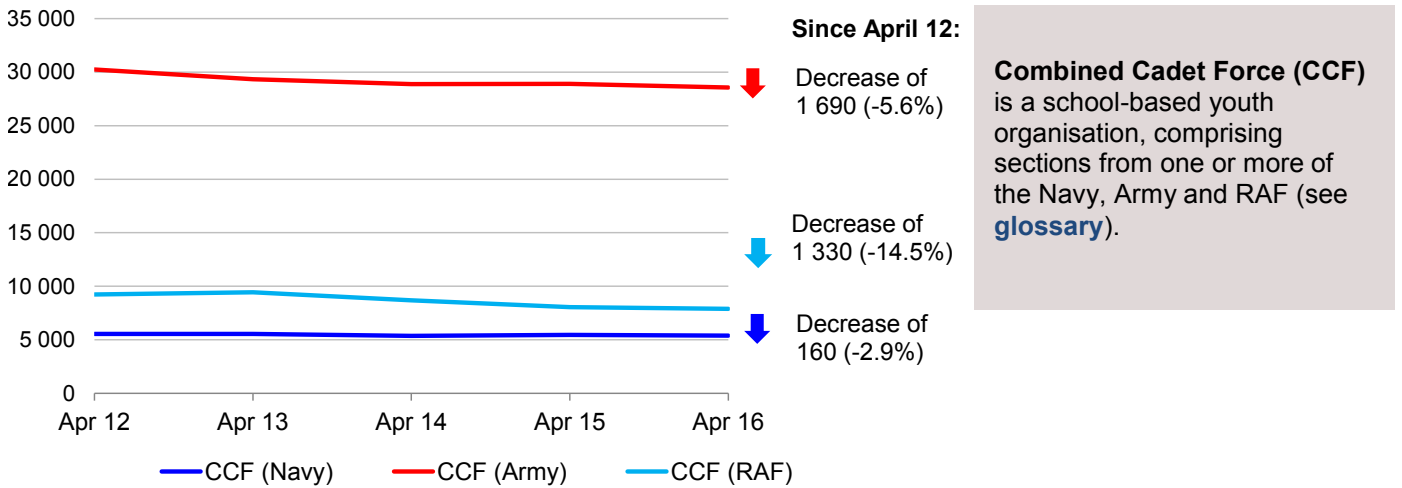
Figure 6: Number of Cadets to each Adult Volunteer in the Community Cadet Forces as at 1 Apr 16



Combined Cadet Force

As at 1 April 2016, there were 41,830 cadets in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), made up of 5,380 cadets in the Naval sections (12.9%), 28,560 in the Army sections (68.3%) and 7,890 in the RAF sections (18.9%). There continue to be decreases in the overall number of CCF cadets since the peak in 2012 (45,020 CCF Cadets), influenced mainly by the decreases in Army and RAF cadet numbers seen in Figure 7. The number of cadets in the Naval sections has remained fairly stable over the same period.

Figure 7: Number of Cadets in the Combined Cadet Force



Gender

Female representation in the CCF has increased slightly, rising to 31.1% in 2016 compared with 28.1% in 2012. 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 8: Number of Cadets in the Combined Cadet Force by gender

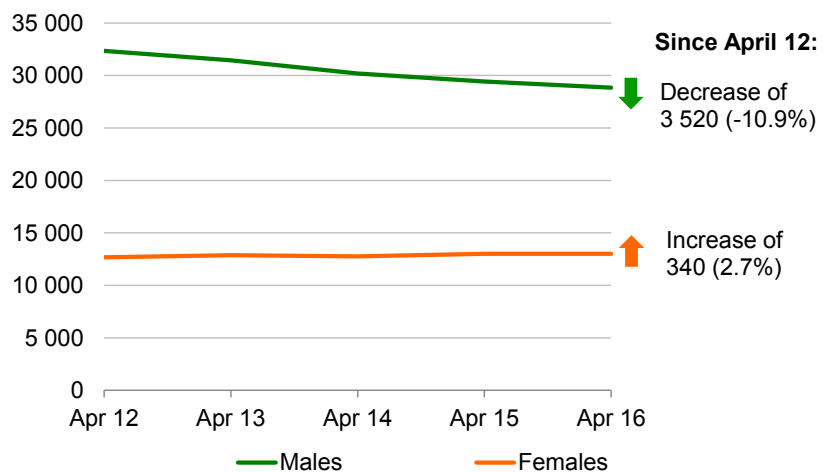
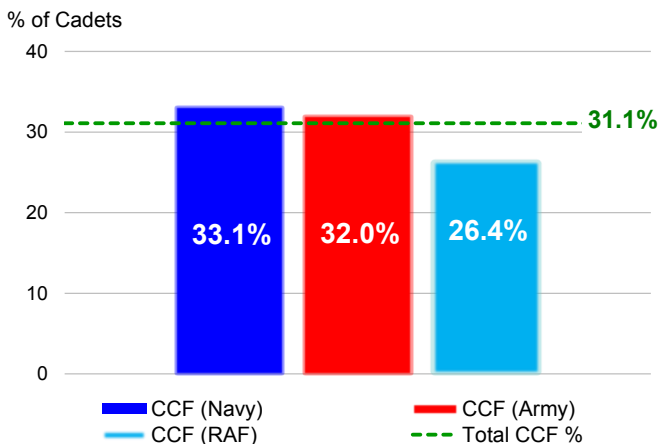


Figure 9: Proportion of Female Cadets in the Combined Cadet Force as at 1 Apr 16



While the overall number of female cadets has increased since 2012, 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 8).

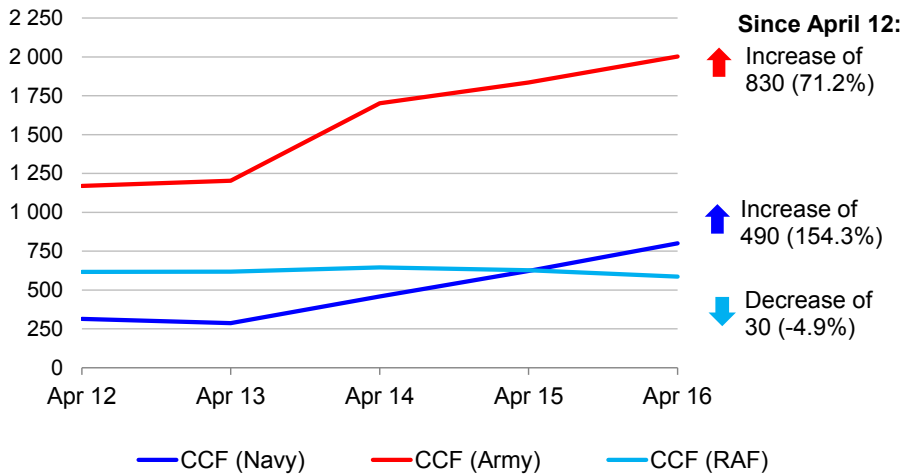
At 1 April 2016, the CCF Naval sections had the highest proportion of female cadets (33.1%) compared with the Army sections (32%) and the RAF sections (26.4%).

Combined Cadet Force

Adult Volunteers

As at 1 April 2016, there were 3,390 Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), made up of 800 in the Naval sections (23.6%), 2,000 in the Army sections (59.1%) and 590 in the RAF sections (17.3%). Figure 10 shows the changes in CFAV numbers across the CCF since April 2012.

Figure 10: Number of Adult Volunteers in the Combined Cadet Force



Combined Cadet Force (CCF) is a school-based youth organisation, comprising sections from one or more of the Navy, Army and RAF (see [glossary](#)).

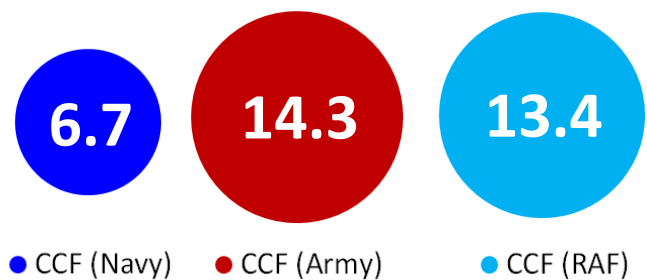
Adult Volunteers Gender

The RAF sections had the highest proportion of female CFAVs at 1 April 2016 (28.4%) compared with the Navy (27.3%) and the Army sections (26.2%). 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 (75.0% male) compared with Non-Uniformed Volunteers (63.1% male).

Adult to Cadet Ratio

The overall number of CCF Cadets to each Adult Volunteer at 1 April 2016 was 12.3, with variations between the sections as seen in Figure 11. Please note that this ratio may differ across individual cadet units.

Figure 11: Number of Cadets to each Adult Volunteer in the Combined Cadet Force as at 1 Apr 16



Key Comparisons of the Community Cadet Forces 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 Forces (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 no regular planned revisions of this Bulletin.

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.

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

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For more information, see:

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

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Glossary

Air Training Corps (ATC) aims to promote and encourage an interest in aviation and the Royal Air Force among young people up to the age of 20, by providing training which may be useful in the services and civilian life. The ATC is a voluntary youth organisation that encourages and develops qualities of leadership and good citizenship.

Army Cadet Force (ACF) is one of the country's largest voluntary youth organisations. It is also one of the oldest, having celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2010. The ACF offers young people up to the age of 18 years a broad range of challenging, educational and adventurous activities which help them develop physically, mentally and socially.

Cadets The Ministry of Defence sponsors and supports four cadet forces (voluntary youth organisations). They offer challenging activities for young people and prepare them to play an active part in the community while developing valuable life skills. No member of the cadet forces is liable for military call up. The cadet forces comprise the Sea Cadet Corps (SCC), Army Cadet Force (ACF), Air Training Corps (ATC) and Combined Cadet Force (CCF).

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. They give cadets the chance to get involved in activities ranging from canoeing to rock climbing, navigation to flying, and first aid to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. No previous military experience is necessary and adult volunteers are not liable for military call up. Includes Uniformed and Non-Uniformed volunteers.

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 Army, Royal Navy, Royal Marines or the Royal Air Force, and promote the aims and values of the Services they represent.

Community Cadet Forces include Sea Cadet Corps, Army Cadet Force and Air Training Corps.

Ministry of Defence (MOD) 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 up to the age of 18 the best possible start in life through nautical adventure and fun. 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