

## **ROLE OF THE SNCO**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. This document is written for the newly appointed Sergeant undergoing training to perform that role. The rank of Sergeant is a Senior Non Commissioned Officer (SNCO) in the Air Training Corps. You will have earned the rank of Sergeant by demonstrating to your Commanding Officer that:

- You have successfully performed in the role of Corporal in the ATC.
- You have the ability to perform in the role of Sergeant

2. It is stressed that promotion is given on ability and the existence of a suitable vacancy and not on the length of service or seniority.

### **WHAT A SNCO DOES**

3. To help you develop your skills and knowledge a job specification for the SNCO is given in ACO 20 A, ACTI 7, Annex B and is repeated here in Table 1.1. The SNCO job specification describes what a fully trained Sergeant should be capable of doing on a Squadron. As a SNCO you have been granted the authority to perform these tasks by your Commanding Officer. You should read this job specification now before continuing.

4. You now have a more senior role in the "management team" of the Air Training Corps. Your role is not only to lead cadets but to organise and control JNCOs who report to you. As JNCOs are leaders themselves they will expect more ability and professionalism from you as a Sergeant. Although you are a leader you are still a member of the NCO team and you are expected to support the other NCOs in your Squadron and Wing.

### **WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A SNCO**

5. A SNCO must be able to do everything a JNCO can do plus more. You are now in a position to help train cadets and also the JNCOs. You know from experience what being a Corporal is like and also hat things you disliked or found difficult. Use this experience to help make the life of the newly appointed Corporal, who filled your last position, easier in the first three months. It is in your own interests to make them a useful member of the team as quickly as possible.

6. On every occasion you should ask yourself "is this the example a SNCO should be setting?" Remember you are now setting standards against which the JNCOs will be measuring themselves.

7. Many cadets will ask you questions about ATC activities and the requirements for taking part in them. They will expect you to know the answer because of your experience and length of service in the ATC. The list of activities and the ages for taking part are published periodically in HQ AC Routine Orders. As an exercise you should get together with the other JNCOs and produce a list of activities which should include the following information:

- The activity Category (eg Sport, Flying, Camps, etc).
- The activity itself (eg AEF, AEG, IGT, BGT, etc)
- Minimum or maximum age
- Cadet classification.
- Cadet rank.
- Previous experience necessary.
- Length of service to date or remaining.

**Job Title: Senior NCO**

**Responsible to: FS, CWO**

<b>Main Responsibilities and Activities performed by a fully trained SNCO</b>	<b>Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes Required</b>
<p>Perform the responsibilities and activities of a JNCO</p> <p>Manage and control a Flight of cadets under his/her direct supervision.</p>	<p>As for JNCO</p> <p>2.1 Be able to instruct second class cadets in drill to first class cadet examination standard.</p> <p>2.2 Show competence in the command of a flight in foot drill.</p> <p>2.3 Possess written and oral communication skills sufficient to be clearly understood.</p>
<p>Assist the Squadron staff in the management of the Squadron and the development of junior cadets and NCOs.</p> <p>Participate in the planning and organisation of Squadron activities.</p>	<p>3.1 Be able to give and receive constructive feedback on performance.</p> <p>3.2 Know and apply the principles of Functional Leadership.</p> <p>4.1 Be able to apply problem solving techniques to specified problems.</p> <p>4.2 Know and apply principles of appreciation, planning and briefing and control in execution.</p> <p>4.3 Possess written and oral communication skills sufficient to be clearly understood.</p>
<p>Be able to recognise potential welfare problems.</p>	<p>5.1 Be aware of potential welfare problems and take the appropriate course of action.</p>
<p>Possess a general Service knowledge of the ATC.</p>	<p>6.1 Be aware of, and promote, cadet opportunities and the appropriate sources of information.</p> <p>6.2 Have a knowledge of the structure of their own Wing and Region.</p>

Table 1.1 - SNCO Job Specification

**WELFARE OF CADETS**

8. The SNCO Job Specification requires that you are able to recognise potential welfare problems and "exercise appropriate responsibility for the welfare of cadets". Cadets experience many pressures from life in general, occasionally one or more of these pressures may adversely affect a cadet. Sometimes circumstances are beyond the control of the cadet. Cadets may experience problems from many sources, for example:

- **Family.** A break up of family relationships or the illness of a close relative may well confuse or distract a cadet from their normal commitment to the ATC.

- **School.** School work and family pressures to succeed may prevent a cadet attending Parade Nights on a frequent basis. Giving the cadet a hard time about attendance will only put them off attending at all. This may have a negative affect because the ATC may be their only form of relaxation and they may be looking for support rather than more pressure.
- **Medical.** Cadets may suffer symptoms caused by such medical conditions asepilepsy, diabetes and asthma.
- **Alcohol.** There is a tendency for young people to drink alcohol on a regular basis. Beware, the influences of alcohol can reduce or remove inhibitions which may allow you to do things you will later regret (sometimes harmful or illegal). Alcohol is a depressant and taken in large and regular quantities can also physically damage the body.
- **Bullying.** Occasionally a cadet who is quiet may be picked on for "fun" whether at school or occasionally at the Squadron. Bullying need not be physical. Any verbal or psychological pressure that is regular and aimed at one person or a group is bullying. The most likely place for bullying to occur is at Summer Camp. This is where bullying can be the most damaging when a cadet may be away from home for the first time and not know who to talk to about the problem. It must be made perfectly clear, physical, verbal or psychological bullying, which includes "initiation ceremonies", are not allowed in the ATC. A SNCO's job is to ensure that it does not happen. Any occurrences of bullying should be reported to the Squadron Warrant Officer immediately.
- **Drugs.** There is always the temptation for young people to try new things and drugs, including solvent abuse, are among those temptations. Drug abuse initially seems harmless but the dangers from overdose, allergic reaction, addiction and potentially AIDS are real. It is unusual for a cadet in the ATC to use drugs because the lifestyles do not match each other. However, drugs are a serious problem in society and affect the health and lives of many users and their families. The slightest suspicion that cadets may be using drugs should be reported immediately to your
- Commanding Officer.

9. There are many ways in which the above problems may show themselves. Some of the symptoms that may indicate the welfare problems listed above are listed below:

- Diminishing personal standards and poor attitude to discipline and authority.
- Uncharacteristic behaviour with exaggerated swings in mood and irritability.
- Unexplained absences from Parade Nights.
- Changes in health and sudden weight loss.
- Unusual aggression.
- Loss of appetite.

10. The above symptoms can appear individually or together, some may indicate a morale problem as well as a welfare' problem. Your JNCOs will be monitoring the cadets more closely than you are able to. It is still your responsibility to make yourself familiar with the cadets welfare. IT IS NOT YOUR JOB TO INVESTIGATE AND SOLVE THE WELFARE PROBLEM, IT IS BEYOND YOUR ABILITIES TOP DO SO. If you believe a welfare problem exists then the most appropriate course of action for you is to voice your concerns to your Squadron Warrant Officer or any other uniformed member of staff. You should continue to monitor the cadet in question to see if any of the symptoms change for the better or worse.

## **LIMITS OF DISCIPLINARY AUTHORITY OF A SNCO**

11. The disciplinary authority of a SNCO is limited to extra duties. All the points made in ACP 48 about administering discipline should be remembered. Do not threaten punishments you cannot carry out. It is also your job as a SNCO to ensure that the Corporals reporting to you are administering discipline and punishments fairly.

12. If serious or persistent breaches of discipline occur, your job is to collect the facts about the situation and report them to the Squadron Warrant Officer for consideration by the Staff.

## **SUMMARY**

13. As a Sergeant you have now taken on a more senior role in the "management team" of the ATC. You are taking on a training role as well as a management task. You should set a good example and be aware of cadet opportunities within the Corps'.

14. You must be more aware of the welfare of junior cadets and prevent such activities as bullying and "initiation" ceremonies. Be aware of the possible symptoms of a welfare problem and voice your concerns to a member of Staff if you believe a possible problem exists.

15. Ensure you know the limits of your authority.