

Royal Canadian Air Force

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The **Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF)** (French: *Aviation royale canadienne*, **ARC**) is the air force of Canada whose role is to "provide the Canadian Forces with relevant, responsive and effective airpower".^[3] The RCAF is one of three environmental commands within the unified Canadian Armed Forces. As of 2013, operating 258 manned aircraft and 9 unmanned aerial vehicles, the Royal Canadian Air Force consists of 14,500 Regular Force and 2,600 Primary Reserve personnel, supported by 2,500 civilians.^{[1][4]} Lieutenant-General Michael J. Hood, CMM CD, is the current Commander of the Royal Canadian Air Force and Chief of the Air Force Staff.

The Royal Canadian Air Force is responsible for all aircraft operations of the Canadian Forces, enforcing the security of Canada's airspace and providing aircraft to support the missions of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Canadian Army. The RCAF is a partner with the United States Air Force in protecting continental airspace under the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). The RCAF also provides all primary air resources to and is responsible for the National Search and Rescue Program.

The RCAF traces its history to the Canadian Air Force which was formed in 1920. The Canadian Air Force was incorporated in 1923 and granted royal sanction in 1924 by King George V.

In 1968 the RCAF was amalgamated with the Royal Canadian Navy, and the Canadian Army, as part of the unification of the Canadian Forces. Air units were split between several different commands: Air Defence Command (interceptors), Air Transport Command (airlift, search and rescue), Mobile Command (tactical fighters, helicopters), Maritime Command (anti-submarine warfare, maritime patrol), as well as Training Command.

In 1975 some commands were dissolved (ADC, ATC, TC), and all air units were placed under a new environmental command called simply Air Command (AIRCOM). Air Command reverted to its historic name the "Royal Canadian Air Force" in August 2011.^[5] The Royal Canadian Air Force has served in the Second World War, the Korean War, the Persian Gulf War, as well as several United Nations peacekeeping missions and NATO operations. As a NATO member, the force maintained a presence in Europe during the second half of the 20th century.

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Royal Canadian Air Force

Aviation royale canadienne



Active	1 April 1924 – present (92 years, 3 months)
Country	 Canada
Type	Air force
Role	"To generate and maintain combat capable, multi-purpose, air forces to meet Canada's defence objectives."
Size	Regular Force personnel: 14,500 Reserve Force: 2,600 Civilians: 2,500 ^[1]
Part of	Canadian Armed Forces
Headquarters	National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Ontario
Motto(s)	<i>Sic itur ad astra</i> "Such is the pathway to the stars" ^[2] <i>Per ardua ad astra</i> "Through adversity to the stars" – (1924 to 1968)
March	"RCAF March Past"
Anniversaries	Armed Forces Day (first Sunday of June)
Engagements	- Second World War - Battle of Britain - Battle of the Atlantic - European Bombing campaign - Western Front - Korean War - Gulf War - Operation Friction - Operation Deliberate Force - Kosovo War

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History

1920–68

The Canadian Air Force (CAF) was established in 1920 as the successor to a short-lived two-squadron Canadian Air Force formed during the First World War in Europe. The new Canadian Air Force was a branch of the Air Board and was chiefly a training militia that provided refresher training to veteran pilots.^{[6][7]} Many CAF members also worked with the Air Board's Civil Operations Branch on operations that included forestry, surveying and anti-smuggling patrols.^[8] In 1923, the CAF became responsible for all flying operations in Canada, including civil aviation. In 1924, the Canadian Air Force, was granted the royal title, becoming the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). Most of its work was civil in nature; however, in the late 1920s the RCAF evolved into more of a military organization. After budget cuts in the early 1930s, the air force began to rebuild. During the Second World War the RCAF was a major contributor to the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan and was involved in operations in Great Britain, Europe, the north Atlantic, north Africa, southern Asia, and with home defence. By the end of the war, the RCAF had become the fourth largest allied air force.^[9]

After the war, the RCAF reduced its strength. Because of the rising Soviet threat to the security of Europe, Canada joined NATO in 1949, and the RCAF established No. 1 Air Division RCAF consisting of four wings with three fighter squadrons each, based in France and West Germany. In 1950, the RCAF became involved with the transport of troops and supplies to the Korean War; however, it did not provide RCAF combat units. Members of the RCAF served in USAF units as exchange officers and several flew in combat. Both auxiliary and regular air defence squadrons were run by Air Defence Command. At the same time, the Pinetree Line, the Mid-Canada Line and the DEW Line radar stations, largely operated by the RCAF, were built across Canada because of the growing Soviet nuclear threat. In 1957, Canada and the United States created the joint North American Air Defense Command (NORAD). Coastal defence and peacekeeping also became priorities during the 1950s and 1960s.

1968–present

In 1968 the Royal Canadian Navy, Royal Canadian Air Force and Canadian Army were amalgamated to form the unified Canadian Forces. This initiative was overseen by then Liberal Defence Minister, Paul Hellyer. The controversial merger maintained several existing organizations and created some new ones: In Europe, No. 1 Air Division, operated Canadair CF-104 Starfighter nuclear strike/attack and reconnaissance under NATO's 4 ATAF; Air Defence Command: operated McDonnell CF-101 Voodoo interceptors, CIM-10 Bomarc missiles and the SAGE radar system within NORAD; Air Transport Command: provided strategic airlift for the NATO and UN Peacekeeping missions; and Training Command. Aviation assets of the Royal Canadian Navy were combined with the RCAF Canadair CP-107 Argus long-range patrol aircraft under Maritime Command. In 1975, the different commands, and the scattered aviation assets, were consolidated under Air Command (AIRCOM).

In the early 1990s, Canada provided a detachment of CF-18 Hornets for the air defence mission in Operation Desert Shield. The force performed combat air patrols over operations in Kuwait and Iraq, undertook a number of air-to-ground bombing missions, and, on one occasion, attacked an Iraqi patrol boat in the Persian Gulf.

In the late 1990s, Air Command's CF-188 Hornets took part in the Operation Allied Force in Yugoslavia, and in the 2000s, AIRCOM was heavily involved in the Afghanistan War, transporting troops and assets to Kandahar. Later in the decade-long war, AIRCOM set up a purpose-specific air wing, Joint Task Force Afghanistan Air Wing, equipped with several CH-146 Griffon and CH-147 Chinook helicopters, CC-130 Hercules and leased CU-170 Heron UAVs in support of the Canadian Forces and ISAF mission. The wing stood down on 18 August 2011.

- War in Afghanistan
- Intervention in Libya
 - Operation Unified Protector
 - Operation Mobile
- Iraqi Civil War
 - Operation Impact
- Syrian Civil War

Website	www.rcaf-arc.forces.gc.ca (http://www.rcaf-arc.forces.gc.ca)
Commanders-in-chief	Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, represented by Governor General, David Johnston
Commander of the Royal Canadian Air Force	Lieutenant-General Michael Hood
Insignia	
Ensign	
Roundels	
Fin flashes	
Aircraft flown	
Fighter	CF-18 Hornet
Helicopter	CH-124 Sea King, CH-139 JetRanger, CH-146 Griffon, CH-147 Chinook, CH-148 Cyclone, CH-149 Cormorant
Patrol	CP-140 Aurora, CP-140A Arcturus
Reconnaissance	CU-170 Heron,
Trainer	CT-114 Tutor, CT-142 Dash-8, CT-155 Hawk, CT-156 Harvard II
Transport	CC-115 Buffalo, CC-130 Hercules, CC-130J Super Hercules, CC-138 Twin Otter, CC-144 Challenger, CC-150 Polaris, CC-177 Globemaster III

From 18 March to 1 November 2011 the RCAF was engaged in Operation Mobile, Canada's contribution to Operation Unified Protector in Libya. Seven CF-18 Hornet fighter aircraft and several other aircraft served under Task Force Libeccio as part of the military intervention.

On 16 August 2011, the Government of Canada announced that the name "Air Command" was being changed to the air force's original historic name: Royal Canadian Air Force (along with the change of name of Maritime Command to Royal Canadian Navy and Land Force Command to Canadian Army). The change was made to better reflect Canada's military heritage and align Canada with other key Commonwealth countries whose military units use the royal designation.^[10] The new RCAF adopted a new badge in 2013, which is similar to the pre-unification RCAF badge (although placed in the modern frame used for command badges). The Latin motto of Air Command – *Sic itur ad astra* – which was the motto of the Canadian Air Force when first formed after the First World War (before it became the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1924) was retained. Though traditional insignia for the RCAF was restored in 2015, there has been no restoration of the traditional uniforms or rank structure of the historical service (apart from a rank of "Aviator" which replaced that of "Private" in 2015).^[11]

On 17 April 2014, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced that Canada was dispatching six CF-18s and military personnel to assist NATO in operations in Eastern Europe.^[12]



Badge of Air Command, replaced by new RCAF badge in 2013

Aircraft

The Royal Canadian Air Force has approximately 391 aircraft in service, which is the sixth largest air force in the Americas, after the United States Air Force, United States Navy, United States Army, United States Marine Corps and Brazilian Air Force.

Fixed-wing

Airbus CC-150 Polaris

Second-hand Airbus A310 transports purchased in 1992 for use as a strategic transports and air-to-air tankers to replace the Boeing CC-137. Two have been converted to tankers and are designated the CC-150T. One is permanently configured for VIP transport; five aircraft operated by 437 Squadron based at 8 Wing Trenton, Ontario.

BAe CT-155 Hawk

Single-engined lead-in fighter trainer leased in 2000. 16 aircraft in service, based at 15 Wing Moose Jaw, SK and 4 Wing Cold Lake, Alberta.

Beechcraft King Air C-90B

Multi-engine training aircraft. Leased to RCAF by Allied Wings, 7 aircraft are based at Portage la Prairie, MB.

Boeing CC-177 Globemaster III

Five strategic airlifters operated by 429 (T) Squadron based at 8 Wing Trenton, Ontario. Four were delivered from 2007 to 2008, a fifth was delivered in 2015.^[13]

Bombardier CC-144 Challenger

Utility and VIP transport aircraft first delivered in 1982. Early Challenger 600 and 601 models were supplemented by 604 models in 2002. Four aircraft are operated by 412(T) Sqn and based in Ottawa, but belong to 8 Wing Trenton.

Canadair CT-114 Tutor

Entered service in 1962 as a basic and advanced jet trainer with 190 originally ordered, replaced by the CT-156 Harvard II and CT-155 Hawk in 2000. A total of 27 aircraft remain in service, 24 of which are used by 431 Air Demonstration Squadron, "The Snowbirds".

DHC CC-115 Buffalo

A Twin-engined utility/cargo transport now used for search and rescue. Six used by 442 Transport and Rescue Sqn. at 19 Wing Comox, BC.

DHC CC-138 Twin Otter

A twin-engined utility transport operated since the 1970s, Four remain based at Yellowknife, NT.

DHC CT-142 Dash 8

Twin-engined converted regional airliner entered service in 1987 as an aerial navigation and tactics trainer, Four are operated by 402 "City of Winnipeg" Sqn and stationed at 17 Wing, Winnipeg, MB

Grob 120A

Single engine primary trainer used to train pilot candidates before they move onto the Harvard II. Leased to RCAF by Allied Wings, 11



CC-177 Globemaster III

aircraft are based at Portage la Prairie, MB.

Lockheed CC-130E/H Hercules

Four-engined tactical transport. Several versions have been operated since 1960. Remaining CC-130Hs used for search and rescue and air-to-air refuelling. 9 aircraft remain in service, five of which have been converted to air-to-air tankers. Based at 14 Wing Greenwood, NS, 8 Wing Trenton, ON and 17 Wing, Winnipeg, MB.

Lockheed CP-140 Aurora

Four-engined maritime patrol aircraft based on the American Lockheed P-3 Orion; entered service in 1980, 14 aircraft now based at 19 Wing Comox, BC and 14 Wing Greenwood, NS

Lockheed Martin CC-130J Super Hercules

Four-engined tactical airlifter replacing earlier Hercules variants in that role.^[14] A total of 17 are in service operated by 436 (T) Squadron based at 8 Wing Trenton.^[15]

McDonnell Douglas CF-18 Hornet

Fighter entered service in 1982 when 98 single-seat CF-18As and 40 two-seat CF-18Bs were ordered. Seventeen have been lost since 1984.^[16] Stationed at 3 Wing Bagotville, Quebec and 4 Wing Cold Lake, Alberta; 73 CF-18s remain in active service.^[17]

Raytheon CT-156 Harvard II

Single-engined trainer leased from 2000 to replace the Canadair CT-114 Tutor. 25 aircraft based at 15 Wing Moose Jaw, SK

Rotary wing

Bell CH-139 JetRanger

Single-engined utility and training helicopter. Ordered for 3 Canadian Forces Flying Training School at CFB Portage la Prairie, MB; used by Regular Forces in CFB Lahr in Germany and in Canada during the 1980s; replaced by CH-146 Griffons. 12 aircraft remain, leased from Allied Wings, used for flight training in Portage la Prairie, MB.

Bell CH-146 Griffon

A utility transport tactical helicopter (UTTH) that entered service between 1995 and 1997. Original purchase of 100 aircraft to replace the CH-136 Kiowa (Bell 206), CH-135 Twin Huey (Bell 212), CH-118 Iroquois (Bell 205), and Boeing C-Model Chinooks CH-47C. Based at Bagotville, Quebec (439 Squadron), St. Hubert, Quebec (438 Squadron), Cold Lake, Alberta (417 Squadron), Gagetown, New Brunswick (403 Squadron), Valcartier, Quebec (430 Squadron), Goose Bay, Newfoundland (444 Squadron), Edmonton, Alberta (408 Squadron), Petawawa, Ontario (427 Squadron) and Borden, Ontario (400 Squadron); also perform search and rescue duties at 8 Wing Trenton (424 Squadron). Deployed to Afghanistan to provide escorts for the Chinooks, armed with a combination of 7.62mm C-6 machine gun, 7.62mm Dillon Aero M134D Gatling gun, and GAU-21 .50 caliber machine gun on one or both doors.^{[18][19][20]} 9 ex-RCAF Griffons, designated CT-146, are leased from Allied Wings for pilot training at Portage la Prairie, MB.

Sikorsky CH-124 Sea King

A ship-based transport/anti-submarine helicopter that entered service between 1963 and 1969. Based at 12 Wing Shearwater (406 & 423 Squadrons), NS and Patricia Bay (443 Squadron), BC and due to be replaced by the Sikorsky CH-148 Cyclone.

AgustaWestland CH-149 Cormorant

Triple-engined search and rescue helicopter that replaced the CH-113 Labrador. Fourteen delivered between 2000 and 2002. Based at (103 Squadron) 9 Wing Gander, Newfoundland, (413 Squadron) 14 Wing Greenwood, Nova Scotia and (442 Squadron) 19 Wing Comox, British Columbia. One aircraft has been lost in a training accident.

Sikorsky CH-148 Cyclone

Ship-based transport/anti-submarine helicopter based on the Sikorsky H-92 Superhawk. Twenty-eight ordered to replace the Sea King from 2009. Delays pushed the delivery date to 2015 when six were delivered. They are expected to enter service in 2016.

Boeing CH-147F Chinook

The CH-147F Chinook is an advanced, multi-mission, medium to heavy-lift helicopter. Its primary mission is the tactical transport of equipment and personnel during domestic or deployed operations. 450 Tactical Helicopter Squadron, under the command of 1 Wing Kingston, Ont., and based in CFB Petawawa, Ont., was re-established as the home of Canada's fleet of 15 CH-147F Chinooks. The first two airframes underwent intensive operational test and evaluation in the United States for several months before Canada received the first airframe 147303 at an official acceptance ceremony at the Ottawa International Airport on 27 June 2013.^{[21][22][23]}



A CF-18 Hornet fires an AIM-7 Sparrow air-to-air missile at a MQM-107E Streaker aerial target drone during a "Combat Archer" mission



CC-130H Hercules on approach to Winnipeg Airport



CH-124 Sea King



A Soviet Tupolev Tu-95 Bear-H bomber being escorted by a CF-18A Hornet in 1987

Leased and contractor aircraft

The Canadian Forces have leased aircraft from vendors to help transport troops and equipment from Canada and other locations in the past decade. Transport aircraft have been leased as required.

Beechcraft B200 Super King Air

- Two aircraft leased from Aero Support Canada Inc.. Used by the Multi-Engine Utility Flight (MEUF) out of CFB Trenton. Flown by RCAF pilots, they are used for light transport of personnel and equipment within North America.

Dornier Alpha Jet Type A

- Twelve civil aircraft are operated by Discovery Air Defence Services for CATS (Contracted Airborne Training Services) and are based at CFB Bagotville; ex-Luftwaffe trainers

Hawker Hunter F.58

- Twelve civil aircraft are operated by Lortie Aviation, formerly Northern Lights International Airlines Ltd.. Based out of CFB Cold Lake,^[24] ex-Swiss Air Force jets

Weapons and other equipment

Weapons systems are used by the CF-18 Hornet, CP-140 Aurora, CH-146 Griffon and the CH-124 Sea King helicopters (the latter to be replaced by CH-148 Cyclone).

Manufacturer	Origin	Weapon	Type	In Service	Notes
Lockheed Martin	US	GBU-10 Paveway II (12, 16 and 24)	laser-guided bomb	1980s	used by CF-18
General Dynamics	US	Mark 82 bomb	low drag general-purpose bomb (500 lb)	1970s	used by CF-18
General Dynamics	US	Mark 83 bomb	low drag general-purpose bomb (1,000 lb)	1980s	used by CF-18
General Dynamics	US	Mark 84 bomb	low drag general-purpose bomb (2,000 lb)	1980s	used by CF-18
Boeing	US	Joint Direct Attack Munition ^[25]	a kit to convert a regular bomb into precision-guided munition	2011	used by CF-18
Raytheon/Hughes	US	AGM-65G Maverick Missile	air-to-surface missile	1990s	used by CF-18
Bristol	Canada	CRV 7 Rocket	folding-fin ground attack rocket	1970s	used by CF-18
Douglas	US	AIM-7 Sparrow	medium-range semi-active radar homing air-to-air missile	1980s	used by CF-18
Raytheon/Hughes	US	AIM-120 AMRAAM	Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air missile	2000s	used by CF-18
Raytheon/Ford/Loral Corp.	US	AIM-9 Sidewinder	heat-seeking, short-range, air-to-air missile	1980s	used by CF-18
General Dynamics/General Electric	US	M61 20mm Vulcan cannon	air-cooled gatling-style cannon	1980s	used by CF-18
Alliant	US	Mark 46 torpedo	air and ship-launched lightweight torpedo	1970s	used by CP-140 Aurora and CH-124 Sea King (but not by CP-140A Arcturus)
FN Herstal	Belgium	FN MAG C6	7.62 mm self-defence machine gun	1980s	used by CH-124 Sea King, CH-146 Griffon and CH-147 Chinook; likely to be used by Cyclones
Dillon Aero		M134	7.62 mm self-defence machine gun	2011	used by CH-146 Griffon
		M3M	0.50 cal machine gun	2013	used by CH-146 Griffon

Manufacturer	Origin	Name	Type	In Service	Notes
Systems & Electronics, Inc.	US	60K Tunner	material handling equipment	2008	used with CC-177 transport
JBT AeroTech	US	Halvorsen 44K Loaders	Truck Aircraft Side Load Unload (TASLU) Loader	2008	4 for use with CC-177; licensed from Static Engineering of Australia
			Mobile Arrestor Gear		
FMC Corp.	US	B-1200	aircraft towing tractor	2008	used to tow CC-177 and CC-130

Retired weapons

Weapon	Country of manufacture	Type	In service	#
CIM-10 Bomarc-B	USA	supersonic missile equipped with a 10 kt W40 (nuclear warhead)	1962 to 1972	N/A
AIR-2 Genie	USA	air-to-air rocket with a 1.5 kt W25 (nuclear warhead).	1965 to 1984	N/A
MK-20 "Rockeye"	USA	cluster bomb	1980s to 1997 ^[26]	~1000

Current structure

The commander of the Royal Canadian Air Force, located at National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa, commands and provides strategic direction to the Air Force. The commander of 1 Canadian Air Division and Canadian NORAD Region, based in Winnipeg, is responsible for the operational command and control of Air Force activities throughout Canada and worldwide. 2 Canadian Air Division, established in June 2009, consists of training establishments.

There are 13 wings across Canada, 11 operational and 2 used for training. Wings represent the grouping of various squadrons, both operational and support, under a single tactical commander reporting to the operational commander. Ten wings also include a Canadian Forces base along with other operational and support units.

The rank of general is held when an air officer is serving as Chief of the Defence Staff. The Chief of the Air Force Staff holds the rank of lieutenant-general. Divisions are commanded by major-generals. Brigadier-generals are typically second-in-command of a division. Wings are commanded by colonels. Squadrons are commanded by lieutenant-colonels. Majors are typically second-in-command of squadrons, or flight commanders. Captains, lieutenants and second lieutenants are the junior level leaders in RCAF squadrons and headquarters.

1 Canadian Air Division

1 Wing Kingston

Headquartered at CFB Kingston, 1 Wing provides airlift support of troops and equipment anywhere in the world. Its tactical helicopter squadrons are spread out across Canada; six operate the CH-146 Griffon helicopter and one operates the CH-147F Chinook helicopter.

- 400 Tactical Helicopter Squadron (based out of CFB Borden, Ontario)
- 403 Helicopter Operational Training Squadron (based out of CFB Gagetown, New Brunswick)
- 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron (based out of CFB Edmonton, Alberta)
- 427 Special Operations Aviation Squadron (based out of CFB Petawawa, Ontario)
- 430 Tactical Helicopter Squadron (based out of CFB Valcartier, Quebec)
- 438 Tactical Helicopter Squadron (based out of Montréal/Saint-Hubert Airport, Quebec)
- 450 Tactical Helicopter Squadron (based out of CFB Petawawa, Ontario)

3 Wing Bagotville

Located in Quebec's Saguenay region, 3 Wing provides general purpose, multi-role, combat-capable forces in support of domestic and international roles of Canada's air force. It also provides search and rescue missions.

- 3 Air Maintenance Squadron
- 414 Electronic Warfare Support Squadron (based out of Gatineau Airport, Quebec, to operate the Dassault/Dornier Alpha Jet provided by Discovery Air Defence Services)
- 425 Tactical Fighter Squadron
- 433 Tactical Fighter Squadron
- 439 Combat Support Squadron

4 Wing Cold Lake

The busiest fighter base in Canada, 4 Wing provides general purpose, multi-role, combat-capable forces in support of domestic and international roles of Canada's air force. Home of fighter pilot training for the Canadian Forces, 4 Wing attracts top gun crews from all over the world to its annual air combat exercise, Maple Flag. Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (CLAWR), north of the base, is the only tactical bombing range in western Canada. The one million hectare (11,600 square km) range includes the Primrose Lake Evaluation

Range, 4 Wing's primary test range.^[27]

- 1 Air Maintenance Squadron
- 401 Tactical Fighter Squadron
- 409 Tactical Fighter Squadron
- 410 Tactical Fighter Operational Training Squadron
- 417 Combat Support Squadron
- 419 Tactical Fighter Training Squadron
- Aerospace Engineering Test Establishment

5 Wing Goose Bay

The site of NATO tactical ultra-low-level flight training in Canada, 5 Wing, located in Labrador, hosts temporary detachments from several NATO nations. Goose Bay Weapons Range is the only tactical bombing range in eastern Canada. The thirteen million hectare (130,000 square km) range includes ultra-low-level flying training to 100 feet above ground level, supersonic flight areas, and an inert conventional and precision guided (laser) munitions bombing range. 5 Wing is the home of 444 Combat Support Squadron and serves as a NORAD CF-18 Hornet deployed operating base and airfield supporting a mix of aviation activities, military and civilian, in eastern Canada.^[28]

- 444 Combat Support Squadron



5 Wing Goose Bay

8 Wing Trenton

8 Wing is the heart of Canada's air mobility forces, from delivering supplies to the high Arctic (CFS Alert) to airlifting troops and equipment worldwide. It is also responsible for search and rescue in central Canada and home to the Skyhawks Parachute Team with the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre.

- 8 Air Maintenance Squadron
- 412 Transport Squadron (based out of Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport, Ontario)
- 424 Transport and Rescue Squadron
- 426 Transport Training Squadron
- 429 Transport Squadron
- 436 Transport Squadron
- 437 Transport Squadron
- Canadian Forces Aerospace Warfare Centre (CFAWC)

9 Wing Gander

Providing search and rescue (SAR) services to eastern Canada and the western Atlantic Ocean. SAR crews at 9 Wing Gander fly the AgustaWestland CH-149 Cormorant helicopter and are responsible for a huge area, covering the lower Arctic, Labrador, Newfoundland, the Maritimes and the North Atlantic from the shores of Newfoundland to 30° west.

- 103 Search and Rescue Squadron

12 Wing Shearwater

The centre of naval aviation in Canada, 12 Wing operates CH-124 Sea King helicopters, and supports the Royal Canadian Navy with helicopter air detachments for surface warships in the Atlantic and Pacific fleets.

- 12 Air Maintenance Squadron
- 406 Maritime Operational Training Squadron
- 423 Maritime Helicopter Squadron
- 443 Maritime Helicopter Squadron (based out of Victoria International Airport in Patricia Bay, BC)

14 Wing Greenwood

Located in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley, 14 Wing's CP-140 Aurora crews conduct sovereignty and surveillance missions over the Atlantic Ocean routinely, while SAR capabilities for the Maritimes, eastern Quebec and the eastern Arctic are provided by CH-149 Cormorant helicopters and CC-130 Hercules fixed-wing aircraft.

- 14 Air Maintenance Squadron
- 404 Maritime Patrol and Training Squadron
- 405 Maritime Patrol Squadron
- 413 Transport and Rescue Squadron

17 Wing Winnipeg

Comprising three squadrons and six schools, 17 Wing also provides support to the Central Flying School, as well as headquarters and administration support for NORAD operations.



A Canadian CC-177 Globemaster III on the tarmac in New Orleans, Louisiana, assisting in the evacuation during Hurricane Gustav.

- 402 City of Winnipeg Squadron
- 435 Transport and Rescue Squadron
- 440 Transport Squadron (based out of Yellowknife, NT)

19 Wing Comox

Located on Vancouver Island, its Aurora crews provide surveillance of the Pacific Ocean and western and Arctic regions. The Buffalo and Cormorant crews are responsible for search and rescue in British Columbia, Yukon and the North Pacific Ocean. The base is also used for training fighter pilots in tactical procedures on nearby ranges.

- 19 Air Maintenance Squadron
- 407 Long Range Patrol Squadron
- 442 Transport and Rescue Squadron

22 Wing North Bay

22 Wing represents one of Canada's major contributions to the North American Aerospace Defence (NORAD) agreement. Personnel watch over Canada's airspace 24 hours a day, using state-of-the-art sensors, computer and communications equipment.

- 21 Aerospace Control and Warning Squadron is the unit in CADS that carries out the air sovereignty of Canada.
- 51 Aerospace Control and Warning Operational Training Squadron

2 Canadian Air Division

2 Canadian Air Division is commanded by Brigadier-General Bruce Ploughman.^[29] From 2011 to 2013 the commanding officer was Brigadier-General Martin Galvin.^[30] The initial announcement of the Division, published after it was created on June 25, 2009, said:^[31]

Brigadier-General Rick Pitre assumed command of the Canadian Force's most recent formation, the newly established 2 Canadian Air Division/Air Force Doctrine and Training Division in a formal ceremony at 17 Wing, Winnipeg on Thursday, June 25. The Air Force has embarked on what Brig. Gen. Pitre calls "a new and exciting chapter in our rich air force history." Commander 2 Canadian Air Division is now responsible for all Air Force doctrine, individual training and education. In addition to the Canadian Aerospace Warfare Centre located at 8 Wing Trenton, Brigadier General Pitre will oversee the conduct and management of training establishments at: 15 Wing Moose Jaw, 16 Wing Borden, and a new Air Force Training Centre comprising several Air Force schools and training institutions. In addition, he will have oversight of training conducted by the Prairie Cadet Region.

15 Wing Moose Jaw

The site of the NATO Flying Training Program in Canada which is supported by 2 Canadian Forces Flying Training School (2CFFTS), 15 Wing is also home to the Snowbirds, the air force's aerobatic team.

- 431 Air Demonstration Squadron

16 Wing Borden

This base is the location of the largest training facility in the Canadian Forces. 16 Wing's schools provide air force technical training and professional development and is the historic birthplace of the RCAF. 400 Tactical Helicopter Squadron is a lodger unit based at Borden's airfield.

Other units

Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Technology and Engineering

The Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Technology and Engineering (CFSATE), located in Borden, Ontario, delivers Aerospace Engineering Officers and conducts apprentice level training for various trades, including Avionics, Aviation, Aircraft Structures and Imagery technicians. The role of CFSATE is to provide the Air Force with qualified personnel to ensure Aircraft serviceability. CFSATE develops and carries out individual aerospace engineering training in accordance with approved doctrine and standards.^[32]

Former units

- 2 Wing Toronto – closed 1996; part of the base is now 4th Canadian Division HQ
- 7 Wing Ottawa – closed 1995
- 18 Wing Edmonton: Located in Edmonton, Alberta, it was the base for 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron, 418 "City of Edmonton" Air Reserve Squadron, 435 Transport Squadron, 440 Transport and Rescue Squadron and 447 Transport Helicopter Squadron. It closed in 1994 and transferred to Land Force Command as army base CFB Edmonton, where 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron is the sole remaining air unit.^[33]

Joint Task Force Afghanistan Air Wing

- Air Wing Kandahar, Afghanistan (stood up 6 December 2008, flew first mission 6 January 2009). The organization was composed of

- four units:
- Canadian Helicopter Force (Afghanistan):
 - Six – CH-147D Chinook heavy-lift helicopters
 - Eight – CH-146 Griffon tactical support helicopters – armed
 - (Six – Mi-8 medium-lift helicopters – see below)
 - Theatre Support Element
 - CC-130 Hercules tactical transport aircraft;
 - Canadian Heron UAV Detachment
 - Heron unmanned aerial vehicle
 - Canadian TUAV Squadron
 - CU-161 Sperwer unmanned aerial vehicle

As the tasking authority responsible for the Canadian Contracted Air Transport Unit, the wing commander provided advice, co-ordination and supervision over its six leased Mi-8 medium lift helicopters. The air wing had about 450 personnel, serving with the Theatre Support Element in the Persian Gulf region and the Tactical UAV Flight at Kandahar Airfield. The wing officially stood down on 18 August 2011.

Rank structure

Commander-in-Chief

Canada

Commander-in-chief

Insignia



Title

Commander-in-chief

Abbreviation

C-in-C



Officers

NATO code	Student officer	OF-1	OF-1	OF-2	OF-3	OF-4	OF-5	OF-6	OF-7	OF-8	OF-9	OF-10
												
Insignia												No equivalent
Title	Officer Cadet	Second Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant-Colonel	Colonel	Brigadier-General	Major-General	Lieutenant-General	General	
Abbreviation	OCdt	2Lt	Lt	Capt	Maj	LCol	Col	BGen	MGen	LGen	Gen	

Non-commissioned members

NATO Code	OR-1	OR-2	OR-3	OR-4	OR-5	OR-6	OR-7	OR-8	OR-9
Insignia									

5.7.2016	Royal Canadian Air Force - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia									
Title	Aviator (recruit)	Aviator (basic)	Aviator (trained)	Corporal	Master Corporal	Corporal Sergeant	Warrant Officer	Master Warrant Officer	Chief Warrant Officer	Warrant Officer
Abbreviation	Avr(R)	Avr(B)	Avr(T)	Cpl	MCpl	Sgt	WO	MWO		CWO

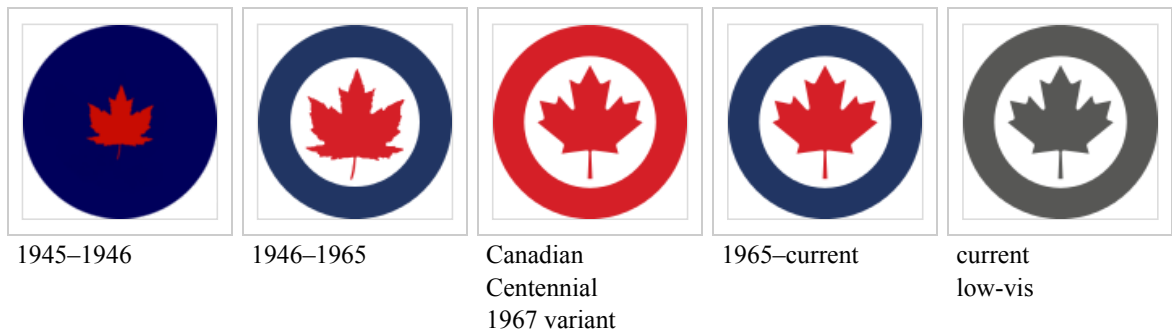
On 1 April 2015, the rank structure and insignia changed.^[34] The rank of private was replaced with that of aviator. The previously used term "leading aircraftman" was considered not to be gender neutral.^[35] Insignia was also changed from golden yellow to a pearl-grey colour similar to that worn before unification of Canada's Armed Forces in 1968.^[35] A revival of the former rank titles of the RCAF will not occur, however, as the former rank titles are considered "too confusing".^[34] Instead, the current rank titles will be retained (with the exception of Aviator). The Royal Flying Corps, considered to be a predecessor of the RCAF, used rank titles similar to the existing rank titles of the RCAF.^[35]

Recognition

On 9 November 1984, Canada Post issued "Air Force" as part of the Canadian Forces series. The stamps were designed by Ralph Tibbles, based on an illustration by William Southern. The 32¢ stamps are perforated 12 x 12.5 and were printed by Ashton-Potter Limited.^[36]

Roundels of the Royal Canadian Air Force

Roundels used from 1920 until 1945 were usually the same as Royal Air Force roundels although not all variations were used and colours were matched to locally available paints.



Badge of the Royal Canadian Air Force

The Badge of the Royal Canadian Air Force consists of:

- St. Edward's Crown
- Maple leaf Compartment
- Eagle superimposed on a circlet
- Motto *Sic Itur Ad Astra* (Such is the Pathway to the Stars)

See also

- Planned Canadian Forces projects
- Royal Canadian Air Force VIP aircraft

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