

CHAPTER 14

RFA RECRUITING PROCESSES

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CHAPTER 14**RFA RECRUITING PROCESSES****1401. RFA General Information and Background**

- a. The Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) is a civilian manned flotilla owned by the MoD and operated by the Royal Navy; its task is to support the UK armed forces around the world.
- b. It was formed in 1905 to ensure that the Navy could operate anywhere in the world without fixed operating bases. The RFA has served in every major campaign of the 20th Century; including: WW1, WW2, Falklands, Gulf War, Op Telic, Kosovo, Bosnia and Afghanistan. RFA personnel have served with distinction, many being decorated for their bravery and gallantry.
- c. The policy of the RFA Service is to achieve and maintain a largely all Company Service Contract workforce. All direct external recruitment will be conducted in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioner's Recruitment Code, embracing the principles of equality of opportunity and open and fair competition.
- d. Recruitment will be undertaken through whichever facet of the open labour market can provide the numbers and quality of personnel required. All personnel recruited into the RFA Service must, in general, meet the normal conditions for the employment of civilian staff into the Ministry of Defence.

1402. RFA Recruitment - Purpose and CNR Responsibilities

- a. Recruitment into the RFA Service is based on the need to achieve projected manpower requirements in order to maintain efficiency and meet operational commitments.
- b. CNR is responsible for RFA recruiting and provides marketing support and processes RFA candidates as follows:
 - (1) Provide marketing advice and support in designing suitable advertisements for use by RFA units.
 - (2) In consultation with Cdre RFA, design and produce recruiting publications, posters and publicity material on similar lines to those produced for the regular Service.
 - (3) Include RFA in national and regional 'spotlight' advertising campaigns where appropriate.
 - (4) Include information on the RFA on the CNR Website.
 - (5) Refer any enquiries concerning the RFA – via the Contact Centre, AFCOs or other means – to CNR RFA Recruitment/RFA Direct (Lateral) Entry Cell.

- (6) Conduct RT for RFA rating and officer cadet candidates iaw **ROM Ch 4 - RT.**

1403. RFA - Applications for Reinstatement by Former Employees

a. The basic eligibility criteria are:

- (1) Must be British citizen and resident in UK or Ireland.
- (2) Must pass an ENG1 seafarers medical.
- (3) Must have a MoD Security Clearance.
- (4) Ratings - RT (Comms 58; Stewards 49; and Others 53).
- (5) Deck Officer Cadets – minimum 5 GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade 9-4/A-C; Including English Language at Grade 6/B, Mathematics at Grade 6/B and either Physics, Chemistry or Dual Science at Grade 6/B (or equivalent).
- (6) Engineer Officer Cadets – minimum 5 GCSEs (or equivalent) at Grade 9-4/A-C; including English Language at Grade 4/C, Mathematics at Grade 6/B and either Physics, Chemistry or Dual Science at Grade 6/B (or equivalent).
- (7) Other qualifications including Advanced Diplomas will be considered on a case-by-case basis for both Deck and Engineer Office Cadets if the minimum GCSE (or equivalent) has not been met.

b. All officer cadets will normally be entered on an HND Course, candidates with a minimum of 64 UCAS points in relevant subjects will be assessed and may be allowed to follow a Foundation Degree study programme. An RT test is mandatory. The minimum pass for RT part score for RFA Officers is:

- (1) Literacy (RT2) 20.
- (2) Numeracy (RT3) 18.

1404. RFA Company Service Contract (including Sponsored Reservist status)

a. Recruitments will be conducted in accordance with the published policy and regulations. It is a pre-requisite of employment that all direct entrants agree to the conditions of and sign an RFA Company Service Contract (CSC) effective from their first day of service.

b. Officer Cadets will normally be awarded their CSC upon satisfactory completion of training. Cadets are covered by the terms of their Cadet Agreement during their cadetship. The CSC and probationary period will commence from the date of advancement to Officer status.

c. As part of the terms and conditions, from 1 Jul 07 all new entrants are required to sign an agreement to become a special member of the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR), termed Sponsored Reservist, this status to be activated when serving on board RFA units required to provide military afloat support during a conflict. Failure to sign the Sponsored Reservist agreement will negate all clauses of the contract and any offer of employment will be withdrawn.

1405. RFA Recruiting Process - New Entries (Ratings)

a. **ACTION: AFCO.** AFCOs are to direct enquirers who make first contact to the Contact Centre (TPUK).

b. **RFA Candidates.** After receipt of an ICARAS handoff, CNR RFA will transfer eligible RFA candidates to the appropriate AFCO via MIS for them to arrange an RT at a mutually convenient time. Once the test is complete the results are entered into the MIS and the candidate is transferred back to CNR RFA. The test results are not to be conveyed to the candidate by AFCO Staff. CNR RFA will debrief candidates.

1406. RFA Officer Recruiting - Direct Entry (Lateral Entry)/Cadets

a. There are two routes for Deck and Engineer Officers to enter the RFA:

(1) **Direct Entry (Lateral Entry).** Direct Entry (Lateral Entry) is the normal method of officer extraction from the Merchant Service, for qualified officers with relevant MCA certification. Candidates will undergo the following:

(a) Sift of application and qualification check for suitability by departmental subject matter expert.

(b) RT testing at their local AFCO at a mutually convenient time.

(c) Interview at Portsmouth.

(d) Review to assess suitability for employment based on experience, academic qualifications, RT and interview results or, if required, forward to AIB.

(e) If successful, offer of employment followed by induction training prior to seagoing appointment and attendance at AIB.

(2) **Officer Cadets.** Officer Cadet is a means of direct entry as trainee officers. This will entail a 3-year training course split between a civilian nautical college and service onboard RFA ships, qualifying as a Third Officer upon successful completion.

b. Direct Entry Systems Engineer or Logistics Supply (Trainee) Officers will be externally recruited to meet demand. Appropriate academic qualifications are essential – normally to HND standard in a relevant subject.

c. All direct entry officers and officer cadets will be required to pass a 1½ day assessment and interview board (RFAIB) and will attend a 6-week course at BRNC Dartmouth before commencement of any vocational training. Exceptionally, a waiver may be granted in accordance with Para 1406.a.(1) [sub para \(e\)](#).

1407. RFA - Post-interview Medical and Security Clearance

a. **ACTION: CNR RFA.** CNR RFA is to arrange ENG 1 Seafarers Medical for candidates successful at interview.

b. **ACTION: CNR RFA.** On completion of a successful medical examination, References are to be obtained, the BPSS completed and the NSV 001 forwarded to NSV for Security Clearance.

1408. RFA Entry

a. NSV will inform CNR RFA once SC has been given. SC details are to be noted.

b. **ACTION: CNR RFA.** CNR RFA will arrange an entry date for New Entry Training.

1409. Disability and Learning Difficulties Policy

a. RFA candidates who declare disability or learning difficulties will receive no adjustment to the assessment process or recruiting standards¹ and will be required to meet the basic criteria. No additional allowance is to be made during the recruiting process for any declared disability or learning difficulties and each candidate's suitability for employment in the RFA measured against the current standards.

b. Details of declared disability or learning difficulty are to be recorded in the candidate's application.

c. For successful candidates, who are offered employment with the RFA, reasonable adjustment will be made during training and in employment following assessment of the type and degree of disability or learning difficulty at the training establishment.

d. Candidates who declare a disability or learning difficulty are to be informed verbally of this policy.

1. Recruiting standards refers to both medical and academic standards.