



Australian
Air League

Australian Air League Inc.

OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Stage 1 – Introduction

(For Officers and Candidates)



June 2019

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Comr. Tom Short, Federal Training Commissioner, September 2016

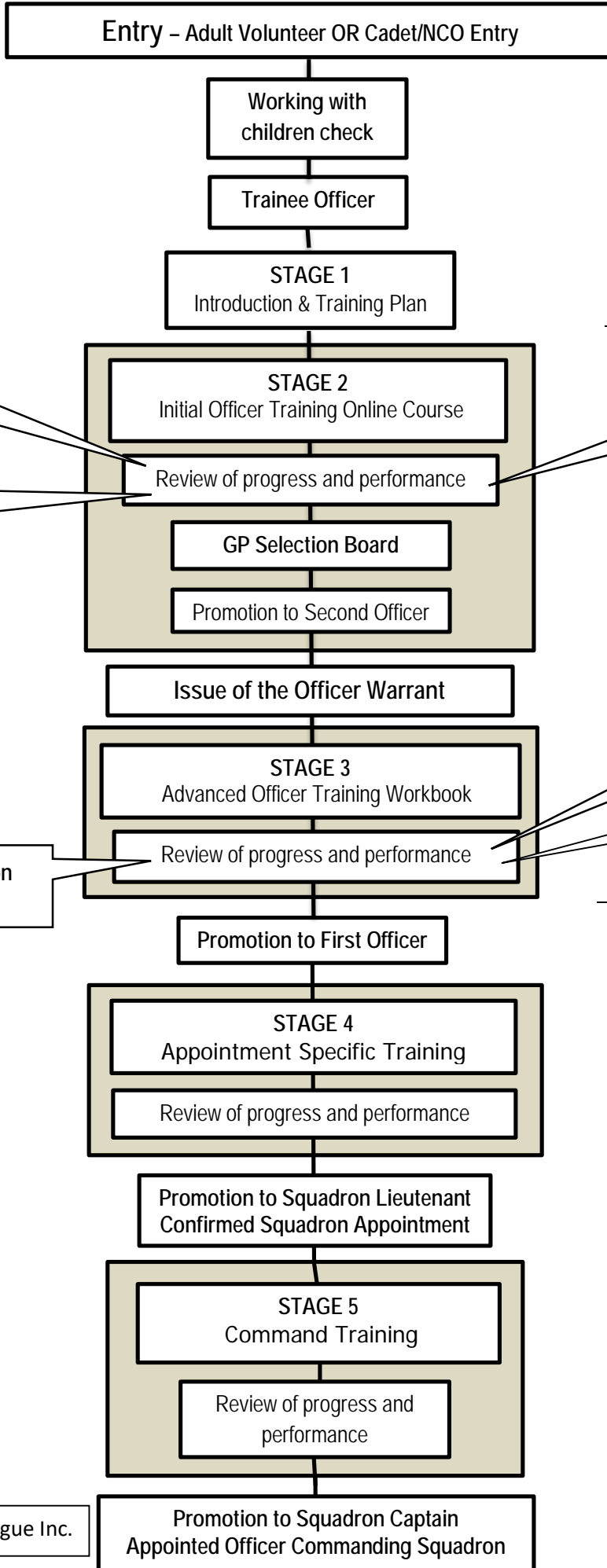
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Stage 1 – Introduction

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OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY



Approx. 4-6 weeks

Drill Proficiency
Class 3 (DP3)

Instructor Handbook
and Skills Assessment

General Proficiency
Class 6 (GP6)

Recommend 26 weeks

General Proficiency
Class 5

First Aid
Class 4

Administration
Class 3

Recommend 52 weeks

1. WELCOME

You may be reading this page because you're interested in becoming an Officer in the Australian Air League. Alternatively, you could be Squadron or Wing Officer who has a keen interest in supervising a new Candidate to achieve promotion, or a Group Officer preparing for a General Purpose (GP) Selection Board.

The Officer Development Program is a structure process divided into five stages and each stage is described in the following sections. Before you begin it is important to understand the key terminology used in the ODP.

Potential Officer	Is a new adult volunteer or Warrant Officer who wishes to become an Officer
Candidate	Is a Trainee Officer, or Warrant Officer, under training to become a Second Officer
Junior Officer	Refers to a Squadron Officer holding the rank of Second Officer
Experienced Officer	Refers to a Squadron Lieutenant with Squadron experience in an appointment (such as Squadron Education Officer or Adjutant etc.)
OC Squadron	The most senior Officer in command of a Squadron - distinguished by a maroon lanyard worn on the left shoulder.
OC Wing	The most senior Officer in command of a Wing - distinguished by maroon Wing Staff tabs and a maroon lanyard worn on the left shoulder.
Supervisor	A Squadron or Wing Officer who assists a Candidate or Junior Officer to achieve promotion.
GP Board	A selection panel of at least three senior Officers from the Group General Purpose Board which is comprised of the Group Executive Commissioner as Chairman plus all Officers holding Group Commissioner / Officer appointments.

Whatever your role in the Officer Development Program (ODP), please take time to read the following sections carefully. Above all, please make sure you prepare fully for each stage of the ODP pathway. Becoming an Officer in the Australian Air League is a major decision and something that should not be taken lightly. Well trained Officers are highly valued and contribute greatly to the success of our organisation. Moreover, Officers are charged with the responsibility to plan, organise and lead activities in line with the Organisation's aims, objectives and strategic plan.

2. POLICY

What it means to become an Officer

When an adult joins the Air League as a volunteer, the decision to progress and become an Officer is a major step. Air League Officers are required not only to engage in the management and leadership of squadron operations, but also position themselves as respectable role models in the wider community. Air League Officers have a duty of care and are expected to behave in a way that never compromises the safety or wellbeing of those in their charge.

Standards and Performance

Air League policy and Federal Training Instruction No.4 (F/TI 01/08) emphasises that Officers are expected to uphold the highest standards of personal integrity and have a special obligation to provide moral leadership. Nowadays, parents expect Air League Officers to work closely with cadets, but they also require adults to set a good example and be positive role models to their children.

Personal integrity

On very rare occasions, some Air League Officers fall short of the mark because they cannot resist or moderate the temptations associated with living in an open and free society. In doing so, they abdicate their special duty of care and fail to uphold the highest standards of personal behaviour, both inside and outside of the Organisation. Maintaining personal integrity is therefore an essential part of an Officer's character.

Helping others

The accountability and protocols in the Air League are very important. Senior members have a responsibility to lead juniors, older members have a duty to look after younger members and Australian citizens should assist new residents from overseas. At the same time, those members with knowledge, insight and experience have a special responsibility to educate members who have gaps in learning. These are the basic building blocks of a decent and caring society in which the Australian Air League is located. It is therefore incumbent on all adult members to uphold these high standards and safeguard the reputation of the Organisation.

3. INTRODUCTION

This learning site contains key information relating to Stage 1 of the Air League's five-stage procedure for recruiting, training and selecting Officers. Stage 1 refers to the administrative procedures of introducing and welcoming prospective adult volunteers into the Air League, plus finding out about their background and motivations for getting involved. At the same time, basic information should be provided about the Air League before a decision is made as to the Potential Officer's suitability for admission as a Trainee Officer.

Snapshot of the five-stage Officer Development Program

<p>Stage 1</p> <p>Introduction</p>	<p>Introduction to the Australian Air League</p> <p>Undergo pre-enrolment procedures</p> <p>Briefing on the Stage 2 process</p> <p>Undergo assessment of learning needs and develop training plan</p>
<p>Stage 2</p> <p>Initial Officer Training (IOT)</p>	<p>Complete Stage 2 online course</p> <p>Complete GP6 and Drill Proficiency 3 badges</p> <p>Complete Instructors Handbook and peer-assessment of teaching</p> <p>Attend Selection Board and attain promotion to Second Officer</p>
<p>Stage 3</p> <p>Officer Consolidation Training</p>	<p>Complete Stage 3 online course</p> <p>Complete Administration Class 3</p> <p>Complete GP5 badge</p> <p>Complete First Aid Class 4 badge</p> <p>Complete progress review and attain promotion to First Officer</p>
<p>Stage 4</p> <p>Appointment Training</p>	<p>Complete appointment specific training</p> <p>Attain proficiency in the duties and responsibilities associated with a squadron appointment</p> <p>Complete progress review and attain promotion to Squadron Lieutenant and confirmation in a squadron appointment</p>
<p>Stage 5</p> <p>Command Training</p>	<p>Complete command training</p> <p>Demonstrate capability in planning, organisation and leadership</p> <p>Gain promotion to Squadron Captain with appointment of Officer Commanding Squadron</p>

4. AIMS OF THE OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The three aims of Stage 1 are to:

1. Provide relevant background knowledge of the Air League, build a positive attitude towards the organisation and promote its relevance to the community and to the needs of young people.
2. Create and strengthen for the Trainee Officer and Candidate a belief in the principles and objects of the Air League.
3. Assist the Trainee Officer and Candidate in recognising his/her leadership potential and to understand the commitment required of an Officer in the Air League.

5. PURPOSES OF STAGE 1

The six purposes of Stage 1 are to:

1. Provide Potential Officers with an understanding of the Air League and its contribution to the development of young people.
2. Explain the Aims and Objects of the Air League.
3. Explain an Officer's role and level of commitment.
4. Detail the financial costs of becoming an Officer in the Air League.
5. Explain to members who have previous service with the Air League (such as Branch members or cadets) the role of an Officer.
6. Complete the enrolment procedure and join the Air League as a Potential Officer. (This status will advance the Candidate to Trainee Officer once the Potential Officer has obtained clearance to work with children and received an information pack.

6. INFORMATION FOR OFFICER CANDIDATES

Why training and development is important

Becoming an Officer in the Australian Air League is a planned and systematic process that aims to ensure the Candidate and Squadron Officers to get to know each other in a progressive way. A large number of senior Air League Officers have decades of membership experience and their accumulated knowledge is invaluable to new adult volunteers. For this reason, the Officer Development Program allows time for coaching and mentoring opportunities in addition to more formalised programs of learning.

There is much to learn, so new Officers are advised to resist the temptation of completing their training program too quickly. However, prior learning and competence will be recognised. Experience has shown that the most effective way of accumulating new knowledge, skill and experience is through on-the-job learning at the Squadron meeting hall. The Air League complements this learning with self-paced study booklets, training workshops and an online study option. All new Officer Candidates are encouraged to embrace these training programs, which are designed to make adult membership of the Air League a rewarding and positive experience.

Stage 1 - Introduction

This stage can take between 4-6 weeks and is aimed at introducing adult volunteers to the organisation. Stage 1 concentrates on what it means to become an Officer in the Air League and new Potential Officers will be made fully aware of the legal requirements associated with child protection. Each State in Australia has different requirements on child protection and the Officer Commanding Squadron or Wing will acquaint Potential Officers with the procedures in their State. Some Groups have detailed administrative instructions to manage this process and approval can take several weeks. Importantly, Potential Officers will not be allowed to work with cadets unsupervised until the official clearance has been received and sighted. Membership will automatically lapse if clearance is not received within three months. After an application form (Form 20) has been processed, the Potential Officer will receive a Certificate of Membership and membership card with a unique membership number.

Stage 2 – Initial Officer Training (IOT)

After the requirements of Stage 1 have been completed, the Potential Officer will become a Trainee Officer and commence Stage 2 - the learning process sometimes called Initial Officer Training (IOT). In most situations, Stage 2 can be completed within two school terms (or 26 weeks) and during this time the trainee will be entitled to wear the appropriate Officer uniform and rank epaulettes.

Trainees are required to complete the Stage 2 online course through the AAL online Training Portal. Trainees will receive login details for the AAL online Training Portal at the completion

of Stage 1. Candidates will have access to several resources to help them complete their online Stage 2 course. These resources include;

- The Australian Air League Manual
- The Australian Air League Information Book

Links to both of these publications are included in the resources area of the online Stage 2 course. Also, two educational books will be issued for completion:

- Instructor Handbook
- General Proficiency Class 6 Workbook (GP6)

These workbooks contain essential knowledge and background information that is helpful to Officer Candidates when carrying out Squadron duties. Each workbook is designed to be studied as a self-paced program, though some Candidates may find it beneficial to work with another Squadron Officer who has been assigned as their training supervisor in a coaching or mentoring capacity. The supervising officer will also conduct regular reviews of progress to ascertain the candidate's readiness for promotion.

Supervision during training

Upon completion of the education workbooks a knowledge test or skills assessment may be undertaken to ensure learning has taken place. The Squadron Education Officer (SEO) will advise trainees of the assessment requirements and help them prepare. The Air League recognises that some Candidates may not have studied or undertaken formal assessment processes for some time. Completing the workbooks is not intended to be a test of the trainee's academic prowess - it is a practical assessment of their readiness to become an Air League Officer.

WHY! A new candidate might easily ask why they need to learn about aircraft parts, shapes and aviation terminology in order for them to serve effectively as an Officer. The reasons are obvious! Firstly, the organisation is air-minded and in most cases our young boys and girls join because they have a passion for flying. Therefore, it is essential that adult members are able to communicate with cadets in a language they enjoy and value. Secondly, new Officers can help with the Squadron education program and many are called upon to instruct a wide range of aviation-related topics. GP6 and GP5 workbooks provide a basic grounding for the educational syllabus and the learning content enables new Officers and Cadets to contribute quickly to the ethos of the Organisation. Finally, the Air League wants its Officers to understand what it feels like to study from an Air League education workbook. This short period of study will enable new Officers to see learning through the eyes of cadets and may shape their future actions as Squadron instructors.

Progress review

Upon completion of Stage 2 Initial Officer Training, the Candidate will undergo a progress review with their supervising Squadron Officer. The review process is detailed in Appendix C. When the trainee is deemed ready for promotion, arrangements will be made for the Candidate to attend a General Purpose (GP) Board selection interview.

How can Officer Candidates prepare for the Officer Selection Board?

At the beginning the ODP may seem overwhelming, but regular attendance at the Squadron and progressive learning through the workbooks can soon reduce the workload to a manageable level. We hope the five-stage training program is the start of a lifelong relationship with the Air League and we want our new Officers to get the best possible start. There are nine simple steps Trainee Officers can undertake to ensure success:

1. Take time to complete the Stage 2 process thoroughly
2. Get involved at the Squadron, participate fully and ask others for help
3. Get involved in the Squadron education program as an Instructor
4. Become acquainted with the Air League Manual and its contents
5. Know your strengths and limitations – self-awareness helps during an interview
6. Take part in Squadron parades and learn the drill at a practical level
7. Seek feedback from your allocated supervisor and fellow Officers
8. Get to know the cadets and find out what motivates them
9. Maintain a positive outlook, spot opportunities and recognise success

GP Selection Board

The GP Broad is a formal interview setting with three senior officers. Trainee Officers will be given advanced notice of the meeting and must attend in uniform. The interview will last for approximately one hour, during which time the Candidate will be asked a series of questions relating to their future role as an Air League Officer. The selection panel will have full details of the previous assessments and this information will inform the promotion decision.

GP Board decisions

At the end of a GP Board interview, the selection panel will make on one of five decisions and the Candidate will be advised in accordance with Group policy. The five decisions will be:

Promote forthwith	Candidate is considered suitable to be offered immediate promotion to Second Officer.
Promote, with minor training	Candidate is suitable to be offered immediate promotion, but <u>minor</u> training is recommended as advised.
Promote, after major training	Candidate may be promoted after <u>major</u> training as advised to the satisfaction of a designated Group Officer.
Become a Warrant Officer	Candidate is not considered ready for promotion to Second Officer and should be offered the rank of Warrant Officer
Promotion is deferred	Candidate is declined promotion and invited to remain in post as a Trainee Officer for a period of 12 months, after which a reapplication can be made.

Success

Following a successful review of progress, and the recommendation of the Group GP Board, the Candidate will be promoted to the rank of Second Officer and the Officer Warrant issued.

What happens when a Candidate is unsuccessful?

In the rare event that a Trainee Officer is considered unsuitable for promotion to Second Officer, or simply not ready, the Trainee Officer will be offered an opportunity to extend their training program or accept an alternative appointment as Warrant Officer. Unsuccessful Warrant Officer Candidates will remain in the current rank.

Stage 3 – Officer Consolidation Training

On completion of Stage 2, Second Officers are well on their way to serving in the Air League as valuable adult leaders. It is recommended that Second Officers serve for at least one school term, ideally two or more, before they consider promotion to the next rank – First Officer.

First Officers are the backbone of Squadron operations, not only because they have valuable experience to help new trainees but also they provide support to the Officer Commanding Squadron. Becoming a First Officer also means training towards taking-on additional functional responsibilities and appointments such as Squadron Adjutant or Education Officer.

Stage 3 is the training and development process that prepares Second Officers for promotion to First Officer and prepare the Officer for training to fulfil a Squadron appointment. The Stage 3 online course details key learning content for self-study, but there are other segments of training that are better undertaken in a formal learning environment. For example, it is difficult to learn drill, marching and leadership in a self-taught environment because all of these skills require cooperation from other people.

Typically, Stage 3 is referred to as Officer Consolidation Training and parts of the program may be undertaken as training courses or weekend camps. Many Groups and Wings have developed bespoke programs to structure this learning in a local context, but generally the training content includes:

- Ceremonial Drill and marching
- Legal and social obligations of an Officer
- Safety and welfare of members
- Discipline and maintenance of standards
- Insurance and financial obligations
- Approval of activities
- Leadership and communications
- Planning, organising and problem solving
- Officer responsibilities and appointments
- Role of Wing, Region and Federal Officers
- Officer promotion processes

- Councils and committees
- System of orders, circulars and memos
- How to use the Air League Manual

Upon completion of Stage 3 the Second Officer will be assessed for promotion. The officers recommending promotion will have full details of the previous assessments completed during Stage 2 and Stage 3 and this information will inform the promotion decision. As with Stage 2, First Officers are advised to prepare for this important meeting and afterwards candidates will be told of the outcome, once the panel has convened and made a final decision.

Stage 4 – Appointment Specific Training

This stage is intended to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for First Officers to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of a squadron appointment such as Adjutant, Drill Officer and Education Officer. A formal suite of training courses is currently under development by Federal, however First Officers can still pursue training towards a confirmed appointment pending its completion by completing a number of badges relevant to their appointment. Federal Training Instruction No. 8 gives further detail as to what badges are specifically required for each appointment.

Stage 5 – Command Training

This stage is the final part of the Air League ODP pathway and is known as Command Training (OCT). As the name implies, Stage 5 aims to prepare experienced Squadron Officer for a command position – typically Officer Commanding Squadron, or OC Squadron.

In most cases, experienced Officers progress to become an OC Squadron but this appointment may not be achievable in less than 12 months from the completion of Stage 2. It is anticipated that new OC Squadrons will gain knowledge and capability within the role during a prolonged period of on-job experience.

Measures of capability and performance indicators for training

- OC Squadrons will be expected to have knowledge and skills to Administration Class 3, 2 and 1.
- OC Squadrons should be able to demonstrate sustained competence in:
 - Organising and leading meetings
 - Contributing to Squadron Branch and Wing Council meetings
 - Leading and managing weekly parades
 - Completing month-end administration processes
 - Fundraising and financial awareness

- Organising promotional events and marketing
- Facilitating Officer and NCO development
- Planning and organising ceremonial parades, camps and/or sir activities
- Maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for the wellbeing of Squadron members
- Acting in a collegial way to build and maintain productive working relationships

Supervision and review processes

While preparing for command, the potential OC Squadron should work alongside a supervising Wing or Group Staff Officer/ Commissioner. Candidates with prior experience, will be expected to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the Organisation in relation to the responsibilities associated with Command. This information is contained in the Stage 2 and Stage 3 learning programs. As with the previous four stages, Stage 5 includes:

1. Supervision from an experienced Officer
2. Regular reviews of progress (with supervisor)
3. A promotion or appointment interview

7. INFORMATION FOR SELECTION BOARDS

Leadership responsibility

Wing and Squadron OCs are responsible for ensuring that pre-enrolment processes are carried out during the recruitment phase. The Stage 1 Interview process allows Air League Officers and the prospective adult volunteer (or candidate) to gain useful information about each other in an interview setting and then make sound recruitment decisions based on the discussions. The Stage 1 interview guide is to be used as a framework when selecting new officers and outlines how valuable background information can be obtained and communicated during the early stages of becoming a new member.

The initial interview with a prospective Officer should last for approximately one hour and take place within a few weeks of the enquiry. The interview is undertaken to obtain personal information from the candidate and provide background information that will enable them to make an informed decision on whether or not to join the Air League. Normally the interview will be held by an OC Squadron, but senior squadron staff and/or Wing Staff Officers can assist where required. Importantly, interviewing Officers should have sufficient experience in the Air League and enough background knowledge to provide the prospective member with all the necessary information they need.

First interview

During the first interview, candidates should be made aware of the aims and objects of the Air League and the responsibilities they will undertake - should they decide to join.

The first interview provides a good opportunity for an initial assessment of the candidate's suitability, especially for youth leadership in a uniformed organisation such as the Air League. However, the shortage of good people means there can be a tendency to recruit almost anyone who shows an interest. Moreover, experience has shown this short-term gain can all too frequently give way to longer term problems when dealing with inappropriate and/or ineffective performance. Therefore, it is vital the selection process is not rushed and care should be taken to ensure only appropriate adults are recruited.

The Air League recognises that some Squadron and Wing Staff Officers may not have experience in personnel-related activities. Therefore, where any doubt as to a candidate's suitability as an Air League officer exists, then this doubt should be communicated to a senior officer such as the OC Wing or Group Staff Officer.

Safeguards are provided throughout the Officer Selection process and candidates are assessed as the training progresses over a period of several months. In the early stages, a potential Officer will commence as a Candidate and Trainee Officer and work under the supervision of a warranted Squadron Officer(s) until a Police check or Working with Children Check has been verified and the candidate is deemed safe to work with children (WWC). The time this process takes will vary from State to State. On successful completion of the probationary period, a candidate will be promoted to the supernumerary rank of Trainee Officer and commence Stage 2 of the learning program. Later, following completion of the Stage 3 training workshop, the candidate will be assessed for promotion to the rank of Second Officer or alternatively Warrant Officer.

8. INFORMATION FOR SUPERVISING OFFICERS

Why Trainee Officers and Warrant Officer (Officer Candidates) need supervision

In the Air League ODP, a training supervisor is normally an experienced Officer who is able to act as a trusted guide and mentor in the training and development process. Supervision can be undertaken in a formal and informal way at any time to suit to both supervisor and trainee. Supervisors are an important part of the ODP process because they:

- Ensure the Officer Candidate have access to training resources and learning opportunities
- Monitor progress and ensure problems are overcome
- Act as a sounding board with learning questions, issues and problems
- Prepare the Officer Candidate for the GP Selection Board interview

9. PLANNING THE INTERVIEW

Plan ahead

To obtain maximum effectiveness from the Stage 1 initial interview process, the Officer(s) conducting the interview should:

- Allow at least one hour of uninterrupted time
- Provide a quiet, comfortable location where all involved can be seated
- Use the checklist of items and ensure documents/forms are at hand

Squadron parade nights rarely provide the accommodation and interruption free time required for an effective interview - so it may be preferable to arrange your meeting on another day and time.

Preparation is vital to the success of an interview and will help to create a professional environment. Use an interview room free from noise and distractions. The Air League wants to look professional so ensure mobile phones are turned-off.

The initial enquiry will probably occur by phone, email or by turning up on a parade night. If this happens, Squadron officers should engage in polite discussion and make the candidate feel welcome. A genuine applicant will be happy to return on another day/time and will understand the need for a formal recruitment procedure.

The initial interview should be conducted in a relaxed and comfortable environment where all parties feel unpressured and free to talk openly. The first meeting is a fact-finding and information process that needs to be completed in a professional and competent manner. Above all, we want the Potential Officer to form a good first impression of the Air League.

For many years' recruitment professions have used a simple interview process referred to as W.A.S.P. (Welcome, Acquire, Supply and Part).

Welcome

- Meet and greet, thanks for coming and introduce yourself (and your colleague/s)
- Put the Potential Officer at ease, use humour or general chat
- Explain the process and how the hour will be used
- Ask the Potential Officer if he/she needs drinking water ... is the room too hot or cold
- Icebreaker – Ask why the Potential Officer wants to join the Air League

Acquire (information to be obtained)

- Stress the need to secure three character references
- Ensure the Form 20 is completed correctly and signed
- Ensure the Form 41 is completed correctly and signed; check for a minimum of three references (cannot be family or AAL members), details of any relevant experience such as volunteer work in other youth Organisations.
- Ensure the respective State Authority Form to conduct a criminal record or Working With Children Check is completed or a Police check form is issued
- Establish any experience or expertise the Potential Officer may be able to offer the Air League; to assist the interview panel make later decisions about appointments or teaching roles
- Establish Potential Officer's previous experiences in similar environments to the Air League

Supply (information to be given)

- The following items represent the minimum information a Potential Officer should receive during the interview/information session. The interviewing Officer(s) may add local information or expand on this list of topics:
- Brief history of the Australian Air League, Air League Motto and objects
- Squadron structure (flights, sections, flag party and band (if one exists))
- Functional areas within the squadron (Field, Education, Physical Activities, Air Activities, Administration)
- Typical Squadron activities and commitments
- Age span of cadets, three age groups
- Overview of Officer roles (OC, Squadron Officer, NCO and Branch)
- The five Stages of Officer Development
- The need to complete Forms 20 and 41 and Police check/Working With Children forms.
- Sight any supporting ID documents, driver license, passport, training portfolio
- The financial costs of becoming an Officer (fees, parade fees and uniform costs)

- The obligations of an Officer:
 - Loyalty
 - Commitment
 - Reliability
 - Trustworthy
 - Respectful
 - Non-judgmental

Federal Training Instruction No.4 dated 31 May 2008 (updated 31 May 2011)

Part (closing information)

- Ask the Potential Officer if he/she has any final questions
- Check the Potential Officer is still interested in joining
- Explain the next steps (what and when)
- Thank the Potential Officer for attending
- Close and farewell Potential Officer from the building

10. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questioning technique

When asking interview questions, it is important to discover as much information as possible from the interviewee. For this reason, divergent (or open) questions are much better because they require a fuller response than convergent (or closed) questions which require a simple 'yes or 'no' answer. Also, many of the following questions are focussed on asking the interviewee what they have done in the past. This technique is called 'behavioural event' questioning and is based on the principle that finding out how an interviewee has behaved in the past might provide a good indication of how they would respond to a similar situation in the future.

- a) Why do you want to join the Air League?
- b) Tell us about your interest in aviation?
- c) Tell us about your experiences of working with children?
- d) Can you think of anything in your past history that would make you unsuitable for working with children?
- e) Tell us about a time when you disagreed with a decision someone else made, what you did and how you dealt with the disagreement.
- f) Tell us about teaching experience as a tutor, trainer, instructor or coach
- g) How do parents get involved in squadron activities?
- h) Tell us about your recent experiences in fundraising activities
- i) How can adult Officers act as good role models for cadets?
- j) Tell us about an event you have organised recently and how you went about it
- k) How would you deal with an aggressive parent who disagreed with your approach to their cadet?
- l) Describe your ideal boss
- m) What do you think of social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook?
- n) Should Cadets and Officers be encouraged to communicate freely on Facebook?

- o) What are your strengths in relation to the Air League and its objectives?
- p) Tell us about a recent time when you failed at something. How did you react?
- q) How would you deal with a member who was untidy or unkempt?
- r) In your view, what are the essential qualities of a leader?
- s) If you are invited to become a member, what would you expect from the League?
- t) If you were invited to become a member, what strengths do you feel you would bring to the Australian Air League?

11. REFERENCE CHECKING

Why references are important

Checking references is a critical step in managing risk during the selection process. All too frequently, a shortage of time or other distractions results in many organisations failing to take this step seriously. After interviewing a Potential Officer, there will be a lot to think about as you decide if the candidate is suitable for adult service in the Air League. Reference checking is one important activity that can help to consolidate this decision. References are taken because a Potential Officer's past performance in another organisation, or setting, is a good indicator of how they will perform in the Air League.

How to request references

Form 41 requires all candidates to provide the name and contact details of **three** referees. These people should not be related (and also cannot be AAL members), but have known the candidate for some time and be willing to verify the candidate's background, character and share organisation-related information. Sometimes people are reluctant to give a reference so it is important to explain why the reference check is required and how the information will be used.

References should be taken shortly after the initial interview by a nominated Officer at Wing or Group level. Officers involved in the selection process should use the information in a confidential way and take written notes – to be held by Wing or Group administrators who will process the application.

Mostly, references are taken over the telephone, so be careful to allow sufficient time and tell the referee how long the phone call will last (approximately). If the referee does not have time to give a meaningful reference, make alternative arrangements for another date/time.

Be consistent as you check references:

- Check **three** references or at least two if a third person cannot be found
- Always check references before the candidate is presented to an Officer Selection or GP Board
- Ask the same questions to each referee

Prepare

- Develop a set of behaviour-related questions. These can be drawn from the interview questions on page 17
- Determine if and how you're going to weigh the information in advance
- Do not allow the referee to give you 'confidential' or 'off the record' information - so prepare to stop the interview if such a disclosure is forthcoming

Conducting the reference check

- State the purpose of the call
- Confirm the relationship between the person for which the applicant has applied
- Verify basic data obtained from the candidate

- Ask role-related questions about the candidate's knowledge, skill and capabilities - as they relate to the role of an Officer in the Air League
- Ask questions that are designed to bring the referee's observations of the candidate's behaviour, especially in environments applicable to the Air League
- Document the questions and answers in writing (see Appendix B)

Sample questions:

1. What is your association with (name)?
2. Did you and (name) work in any organisation together, in what capacity?
3. Did (name) get along with people and any leaders in the organisation
4. Why did (name) leave the organisation [if relevant]
5. What would you say are (name) strengths when working with children?
6. How comfortable is (name) with rules, ethics, structure and authority?
7. Can you describe how (name) worked as a member of a team?
8. How did (name) handle conflict and disagreement with people?
9. How well was (name) organised?
10. Did (name) make sound and timely decisions?
11. How did (name) perform in any project, work role or task?
12. Can you tell me about how (name) demonstrates leadership?
13. Would you be happy to work with (name) if an opportunity arose?
14. To the best of your knowledge, is there any reason why (name) should not become an Officer in the Australian Air League

Evaluating the reference reports

After **three references** have been obtained, it is important to assimilate the information as soon as possible, while recollection of the interview discussion is fresh. Consider the sources of information and remember that the information is limited by the perceptions of the referee. Here are some tips to help make an effective evaluation:

Hesitation	Did the referee take too much time to answer what should have been a relatively easy question?
Inconsistency	Are there any gaps or widely differing opinions on the candidate's performance?
Lack of currency	Were the references obtained from people who could not remark on more recent behaviours because they knew the candidate a long time ago?
Reliability	What qualities, capabilities and attributes were repeated by the referees?
Authenticity	To what extent did the information obtained from referees align with the real experience obtained from the candidate? Does the information indicate integrity and truthfulness?

12. RESOURCES AND INTERVIEWING TIPS

Resources used during the Stage 1 process

- Form 20 (application to join)
- Receipt book (in case the adult decides to pay)
- Form 41 (application for an officer warrant including details of references)
- Federal Training Instruction No.4 (F/TI 01/08) dated 31 May 2008 (updated 31 May 2011)
- Police Check form and information on how to complete the form or Working with Children documents
- Air League Information Book
- Interview schedule of chosen questions
- Air League recruitment leaflets with reference to website
- Pen and paper for note taking
- Water and glass or other light refreshment

Interviewing tips

- If two people are conducting the interview, take turns in asking questions or describing details about the Air League – the other person can take notes without appearing to ignore the interviewee.
- In a selection interview, the ratio of who speaks most should be 30 percent you and 70 percent them – so know when to stop talking. An interview plan helps in this regard
- Avoid interrupting the interviewee when they answer a question
- Try not to contradict your fellow interviewer – it creates a bad impression
- Actively listen to the interviewee by nodding, using eye contact and paraphrasing something they said to clarify any points
- Do not make any false claims about the Air League or promises you cannot keep
- If you do not understand the interviewee's reply to a question, ask it again in another way
- Avoid using closed questions (yes or no answers) – they will not provide you with detail
- Finally – prepare in advance to save embarrassment on the night.



Australian Air League Inc.

OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Name:		Start date:	
Squadron:		End date:	

RECORD OF TRAINING – Stages 1 and 2

	Steps of training and assessment	(✓)	Date
A	Pre-enrolment interview with OC Squadron and Wing Staff Officer		
B	Submit Police Check and/or Working with Children Form (where required)		
C	Police check or Working with Children check is approved and submitted to Group		
D	Complete Form 20, Form 41, pay membership fee and check references		
E	Receive membership card, certificate and access to online resources and AAL Training Portal		
F	Complete workbook GP6 and assessment		
G	Complete Stage 2 Online Course and assessments		
H	Study Instructors Handbook		
I	Complete an assessed mini-presentation to a class of cadets		
J	Complete DP3 drill assessment		
k	Complete progress review with nominated training supervisor		
O	Attend Officer Selection or GP Board		

Appendix B



Use Form 41b

[https://manual.airleague.com.au/wiki/File:Form_41b - Officer Candidate Reference Check.pdf](https://manual.airleague.com.au/wiki/File:Form_41b_-_Officer_Candidate_Reference_Check.pdf)

Appendix C



Australian
Air League

REVIEW OF PROGRESS BY SUPERVISING OFFICER

Details

Trainees name:		Cert Number:	
Squadron:		Wing/ Group:	
Supervising Officer:		Review date:	

Has completed the requirements of Stage 1 YES / NO *(for all Potential Officers)*

Has completed the requirements of Stage 2 YES / NO *(for all Officer Candidates)*

Has completed the requirements of Stage 3 YES / NO *(for First Officer only)*

Leadership Assessment

Assessment criteria	Progress	Comments
Attendance Candidate attends regularly and is reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet satisfactory	
Uniform and appearance Well-presented in and out of uniform. Uniform is worn correctly	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet satisfactory	
Event participation Takes part in a wide range of Squadron activities and events	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet satisfactory	
Knowledge of the Air League Knowledge detailed in the information hand book and GP6	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Further training needed	
Instructor skills Able to plan, deliver, assess and evaluate instructional sessions	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Further training needed	
Communication and interaction Interacts in a positive way and communicates with members	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Further training needed	
Planning and organising Able to assist with planning and organisation of Squadron activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Further training needed	
Confidence and attitude Demonstrates a positive attitude to the organisation and its people	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet satisfactory	
Personal motivation Demonstrates a positive outlook and encourages others	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet satisfactory	
Relationship building Gets on well with Squadron and other Air League personnel	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Further training needed	

Study notes: