

Join the



**ROYAL
OBSERVER
CORPS**



Why you are needed in the

THE ROYAL OBSERVER CORPS shares with the Royal Air Force a responsibility as the first line of defence. It is a vital link in the Fighter Command Control and Reporting Organisation which is responsible for the supply of comprehensive information on the movements and identification of all aircraft flying over this country.

The R.O.C. was first established in 1925, and in its role as 'the Human Eyes and Ears of the R.A.F.' it has proved to be an essential part of United Kingdom defence.

R.O.C. Regional Groups cover the whole of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The headquarters of each Group has an Operations Room or Centre, which is in contact with a network of Posts distributed at strategic points throughout the countryside.

WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF AN R.O.C. POST?

The task of spotting and reporting aircraft movements, so essential to national defence, is done at R.O.C. Posts. The R.O.C. Observers manning these Posts have a most interesting job and derive keen satisfaction in assessing quickly and accurately the height, direction and type of every aircraft that passes. It may be merely another Anson on a training flight, or, on the other hand, a new experimental jet fighter unknown to the public, to be gazed at 'with wild surmise'. The R.O.C. is proud to have spotted the first enemy V.1 and to have correctly reported it as a pilotless missile.

There is a great deal of fun to be had in working with the R.O.C. There is the keen but friendly rivalry between Observer Posts at aircraft recognition contests, the good comradeship of evenings spent at Post meetings, and the satisfaction obtained from the skill needed and the knowledge acquired in the job itself.

Critics who assert that the Corps is no longer capable of dealing with the fast jet aircraft of today will be surprised to learn that when Meteor aircraft were used operationally for the first time in 1944

they were controlled entirely from R.O.C. reports. Fighter Command Sector Controllers took radio equipment to R.O.C. Operations Rooms and directed the jet fighters to the interception of the flying-bombs over the radio-telephone from information supplied by the R.O.C. Posts.

Despite the higher speeds of modern aircraft and the advances in radar aids, visual methods remain efficient under certain conditions and are frequently the quickest method of identification.

WHAT YOU DO IN AN R.O.C. CENTRE

Centres provide liaison between the various Posts within the Group and the Fighter Command Control and Reporting Organisation.

The focal point of the R.O.C. Group is the Operations Room. This consists of a large plotting table round three sides of which is a balcony, and on the fourth wall there is a vertically mounted table known as the Long Range Plotting Board. Working in the Operations Room are 'plotters' and 'tellers' who may be either men or women. 'Plotters' sit round the main table and each of them is linked by telephone to a cluster of Posts. When aircraft movements are reported special counters are used to indicate on the plotting table the number, height, speed and direction of any formation. This information can be seen at a glance by the 'tellers' sitting on the surrounding balcony and they communicate the details to Fighter Command and the adjacent R.O.C. Groups.

Meanwhile other 'plotters' are recording on the Long Distance Plotting Board reports of aircraft movements in adjoining R.O.C. Groups. In this way the Duty Controller of the Centre knows not only of aircraft movements in his own Group but also of activities within a radius of 100 miles.



Join a Centre or Post of the Royal Observer Corps



Observers on duty at their Post during an exercise. The instrument in use assists them to obtain the height and plan position of aircraft.

Who is Eligible ?

Men and women who are British subjects are eligible to serve in the Royal Observer Corps.

It must be noted, however, that certain restrictions are in force concerning the recruitment of some classes of reservists.

What are the Age Limits ?

The lower age limit is 16. At Centres the upper age limit is 45 and at Posts it is 55.

How fit must I be ?

Normal fitness is sufficient, and the wearing of spectacles is no bar to joining. You may, however, be asked to produce a medical certificate of fitness to undergo training and duty with the R.O.C.

For how long do I join ?

You must be prepared to join for at least three years. If, for domestic reasons, you want your release from

the Corps during this time your application will be sympathetically considered.

Shall I have to take a test ?

Not at first, but when you have served for six months at a Post or nine months at a Centre you will be required to take a Primary efficiency test. The Intermediate and Master tests which follow are voluntary. Those who pass the Master test may wear the coveted 'Spitfire' badge—the hall-mark of the aircraft recognition expert.

What spare time must I contribute ?

You will be expected to complete at least 18 hours' training every six months, including exercises.

What rank can I attain ?

You will join in the basic rank of Observer. Promotion to Leading and Chief Observer is made by the

Commandant, R.O.C., and Observers of all ranks are eligible for appointment as officers.

What allowances do I get ?

Provided you fulfil your training obligations you will qualify for annual grant at the following rates :

Chief Observer £4

Leading Observer £3

Observer £2

plus an out-of-pocket expenses allowance of 2s. 6d. for each period of duty of 2-5 hours, and 6s. for over 5 hours.

Additionally, you receive 15s. each year in which you pass the Intermediate Test and an extra £1 10s. when you also pass the Master Test.

What about uniform ?

Observers are required to wear the approved uniform when attending for R.O.C. duty or training. All uniform is supplied free of charge.

What would my position be in a National Emergency ?

Subject to liability for service in the Armed Forces, an Observer must undertake to devote not less than 12 hours weekly to R.O.C. duties during a period of National Emergency.

Do I get a travelling allowance ?

Yes. Travelling allowances are paid to cover all journeys to attend normal training meetings.



The main plotting table. Plotters receive instructions from the Controller.



The Duty Controller in an Operations Room sits with his 'tellers' on a balcony surrounding the plotting table. Information seen on the table is passed by them direct to Fighter Command and the various R.O.C. Groups concerned.



Observers at Watford, Herts, enjoy a snack in the canteen during a break between spells of duty.



R.O.C. Observers attend a lecture on aircraft recognition. The instructor explains the salient features of the various aircraft.

HIGHLIGHTS IN R.O.C. HISTORY

- 1925 Two Observer Corps Groups of Posts and Centres formed and manned by Special Constables. Raid Reporting Organisation the responsibility of a combined Air Ministry, Home Office and G.P.O. Committee.
- 1929 The Organisation taken over by the Air Ministry, but Observers remained Special Constables until 1939.
- 1939 The Corps 'stood-to'.
- 1940 First big trial came with the Battle of Britain. In recognition of the Corps' excellent work King George VI granted the title 'Royal' in 1941.
- 1941 Women joined the R.O.C. for the first time.
- 1942 The Group H.Q. system, officer ranks, Post training and the Basic Test introduced. Standard Layouts for Operations Rooms and Long Range Plotting Boards also introduced.
- 1944 R.O.C. 'Seaborne' Observers materially helped the invasion operations. First V.I identified by the R.O.C. Many V.Is destroyed by fighters working on R.O.C. directions.
- 1945 The R.O.C. 'stood-down'.
- 1947 Post-war recruiting started.
- 1950 H.M. King George VI became Air Commodore-in-Chief of the Corps.
R.O.C. Silver Jubilee celebrated.
R.O.C. Medal instituted.
- 1953 H.M. The Queen became Air Commodore-in-Chief of the Corps.

Recognition made easy! Aircraft of the Central Flying School fly in formation over London spelling out the letters 'R.A.F.'



HOW CAN I JOIN?

By applying personally to the Commandant of your local Group, whose address you will find on the back cover, or fill in this coupon and an enrolment form will be sent to you.

To: THE COMMANDANT, ROYAL OBSERVER CORPS HEADQUARTERS,
BENTLEY PRIORY, STANMORE, MIDDLESEX.

Please forward an enrolment form to:

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address

Royal Observer Corps

ROYAL OBSERVER CORPS GROUPS

ENGLAND

BEDFORDSHIRE	No. 7 Group, Day's Lane, Biddenham, Bedford
CORNWALL	No. 11 Group, Fairmantle Street, Truro
CUMBERLAND	No. 22 Group, 10 Norfolk Road, Carlisle
DERBYSHIRE	No. 15 Group, 'Highfields', Broadway, Derby
DEVONSHIRE	No. 10 Group, Poltimore Park, near Exeter
DURHAM	No. 23 Group, The Sands, Durham City
ESSEX	No. 4 Group, Errington Lodge, 22 Lexden Road, Colchester
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	No. 12 Group, King's Square Avenue, Bristol 2
HAMPSHIRE	No. 14 Group, Abbotts Road, Winchester
HERTFORDSHIRE	No. 5 Group, Cassiobury Drive, Watford
KENT	No. 1 Group, 'Dura Dene', Beckenham Park Place, Beckenham
LANCASHIRE	No. 21 Group, The Castle, Lancaster No. 19 Group, 'Danebury', Grange Avenue, Levenshulme, Manchester 19
NORFOLK	No. 6 Group, R.A.F. Station Old Catton, Norwich
OXFORDSHIRE	No. 3 Group, near G.P.O. Repeater Station, Woodstock Road, Oxford
SHROPSHIRE	No. 16 Group, London Road, Shrewsbury
SOMERSET	No. 9 Group, Braggchurch, Hendford Hill, Yeovil
SUSSEX	No. 2 Group, The Drill Hall, Denne Road, Horsham
WARWICKSHIRE	No. 8 Group, 'Broadwater', Earlsden Avenue, Coventry
YORKSHIRE	No. 18 Group, Grove House, Grosvenor Road, Hyde Park, Leeds 6 No. 20 Group, Tadcaster Road, York

SCOTLAND

ABERDEENSHIRE	No. 29 Group, Old Infirmary Buildings, Woolmanhill, Aberdeen
ANGUS	No. 28 Group, Craigie Barn, Dundee
ARGYLL	No. 27 Group, Albany Street, Oban
AYRSHIRE	No. 25 Group, Bellrock Avenue, Prestwick
INVERNESS	No. 30 Group, Raigmore, Inverness
LANARKSHIRE	No. 26 Group, R.A.F. Station Bishopbriggs, near Glasgow
MIDLOTHIAN	No. 24 Group, 14 Carlton Terrace, Edinburgh 7

WALES

CAERNARVON	No. 17 Group, Northgate Street, Caernarvon
CARMARTHEN	No. 13 Group, Parade Road, Carmarthen

NORTHERN IRELAND

BELFAST	No. 31 Group, Houston Park, Orangefield, Castlereagh, Belfast
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