

Mercy flights are an allied field that call for thousands of flying hours by the Air Force every year. A week seldom goes by without at least one call on the R.C.A.F. to pick up a sick Eskimo child or injured trapper. Besides the humanitarian aspect, mercy flights provide good training for service pilots in flying in the difficult Canadian bush country.

Enlistment.—The R.C.A.F. offers enlistment to skilled or unskilled men. Veterans who were on Active Service may enlist if they meet the physical requirements and are under the age of 30 plus their number of years on Active Service. Applicants who were not on Active Service may be accepted if they meet the physical requirements, are unmarried, and are over 17 but not over 29 years of age. Applicants under 18 years of age must have the written consent of parent or guardian. Educational requirements for ground crew vary according to individual trades.

Commissions.—Graduation from either of the Canadian Services Colleges (Royal Military College, Kingston, Ont., or Royal Roads, near Victoria, B.C.) qualifies young men for acceptance in the R.C.A.F. as officers. Technical officer positions are granted to selected university graduates, and are open to qualified serving airmen. Six-year short-service commissions are available to qualified high-school graduates and selected serving airmen.

Training.—The Royal Canadian Air Force Staff College at Armour Heights, Toronto, Ont., trains officers for command and staff positions. At the Institute of Aviation Medicine, Toronto, there are facilities for consultant and specialist officers, laboratories for nutritional research, a human centrifuge, a cold low-pressure chamber, a tropical room, a statistical section, and well-equipped laboratories for the study of all branches of aviation medicine.

Ground training establishments for airmen are located in Ontario at Trenton, Aylmer, Camp Borden, Rockcliffe and Clinton. In addition, specialist training units such as the School of Survival, which operates at Fort Nelson in northern British Columbia and at Cambridge Bay in the Arctic, and the Para-Rescue School near Jasper, Alta., were in operation during 1950.

Basic flying training was given during 1950 at Centralia and Trenton, Ont., and Summerside, P.E.I. In addition to training its own aircrew, the R.C.A.F. in 1950 began training aircrew from France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Norway. It was also announced that pilots and navigators from the R.A.F. were to be trained in Canada by the R.C.A.F. Shortly before the close of the year a second basic training school was opened at Gimli, Man.

During 1950 the R.C.A.F. carried out the largest reserve summer training program in its history. Reserve personnel from the auxiliary squadrons and from reserve ground units attended summer camp for two-week periods. In addition, hundreds of university undergraduates spent varying periods at Air Force stations, taking either formal or contact training. A considerable number of high-school youths also attended camp with the auxiliary squadrons, under a new reserve scheme.

Refresher flying training for selected wartime pilot veterans also was to begin under the general reserve training program. Under this scheme, up to 600 wartime veterans are to be given refresher flying training annually. Aircraft and funds will be provided by the R.C.A.F., and actual training handled by flying clubs across Canada. The purpose of the plan is to maintain a pool of trained pilots able to serve as flying instructors or staff pilots in event of war.