

peacetime force will be short-service commission officers. Under this plan, qualified high school graduates and airmen selected from the ranks train as pilots or radio-navigators, the two post-war aircrew trades, being commissioned in the RCAF (Regular) upon completion of their initial training period, covering about one year. Upon finishing a total six-year period as aircrew, including the initial training, they are appointed to the Auxiliary or Reserve, with substantial gratuities, and stand ready to serve in emergency. A certain number may be retained in the Regular Force with long-service commissions. The scheme is aimed at keeping average age of aircrew at a low figure and furnishing a constant flow of trained personnel to the Auxiliary or Reserve Forces. Long-service aircrew commissions are offered to selected university graduates, and long-service technical commissions are open to qualified university graduates in science or engineering courses.

In addition to fitting itself to serve as an efficient defence force, ready to defend Canada at any time, the RCAF has various "peacetime" tasks, which serve the public interest and which at the same time give personnel operational training.

Most important of these is the aerial photographic coverage of Canada, being carried out by 22 Photo Wing, Rockcliffe. Its two squadrons leave their home base each spring and summer to range from coast to coast, and from the border to the Arctic, covering the Dominion by means of aerial photos. More than two million square miles have been covered since the RCAF began the job in 1921, the first season seeing 280 square miles completed. In 1947 over 400,000 square miles was chalked up, and the figure may go higher in 1948. The photos are used for mapping and for development of Canada's natural resources, and have proved a vital factor in pushing back the Dominion's frontiers.

Search and Rescue is also a responsibility of the RCAF, which co-ordinates and largely operates the organization. Designed to handle Canada's commitments under ICAO, Search and Rescue has in the last two years set up a thrilling record of mercy flights in various parts of the country. Search and Rescue does not displace existing means of lending aid to distressed persons in isolated areas, but steps in only when the job is too big for anyone else.

The RCAF is vitally interested in research and development, and the work being carried out in this line is aiding not only the Air Force but aviation in general. The Experimental and Proving Establishment at Rockcliffe, Ont., and the Winter Experimental Establishment, at Edmonton, Alta., are both carrying on many important jobs.

The RCAF is also involved in the study of the propagation of radio signals, a special section having been set up to study this in co-operation with other government departments. Their investigations are co-ordinated through the Canadian Radio-Wave Propagation Committee, which in turn co-operates closely with similar organizations in the United States and Britain.

The part played by the RCAF in the Second World War is well known. From a pre-war Force of fewer than 5,000, the RCAF reached a peak of more than 215,000 in January, 1944. Forty-eight operational squadrons-- bomber, fighter, coastal command and transport--served overseas, and many more served in the western hemisphere. RCAF fighter planes fought in the Battle of Britain, and Canadian bombers flew through the thick of the