

AVIATOR

MAGAZINE



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COMMERCIAL ♦ FEATURED

A Top End Entrée

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It's where Baz Luhrmann filmed his epic Australia. where cane toads are devouring the land and where

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You've just finished your CPL, you may even have some extra endorse [Privacy & Cookies Policy](#) g (if you had so extra cash or generous relatives) and now it's time to go out into the world and snap up that elusive first job ^ v now? You've probably been scouring the internet and online forums and thinking of any tenuous link you have to : airline.

This is a great place to start and no doubt you will encounter those rogue leads that go nowhere and serve only to infuriate you: "yeah, I know a pilot who can help you out they work for ...". Don't be too discouraged – they are tryi help you out or at least trying to boost their own ego with elevated claims of an expansive network.

Most pilots will head up north and scatter across Darwin, Jabiru, Katherine, Alice Springs, Lake Eyre, Kununurra an Broome with a few places in-between. Small regional airlines are spread across these areas and you will probably yourself driving/flying there, often trying to be in multiple places at once. Some pilots will be lucky to score a job in Darwin, though generally you need over 1000 hours to have any success there, most pilots will find jobs in the sm: more remote towns.

How to Do It

During the process of finding that first job, countless pilots will be weeded out within the first few frustrating mont you can stick it out, here are some tips to get you flying sooner:

1. Do your research on where to go and spread those networking fingers wide. Read the forums but listen to your intuition – there'll always be a few faux comrades who are trying to lead you astray and keep the competition, i.e. y away!
2. If you are driving from a larger city be prepared for some long stretches. A 4WD is not essential but useful.
3. Take some smart clothes and make sure you iron them! (Steer away from uniform and opt for smart and professional).
4. Keep your CV short and succinct, one page, nothing fluffy and easy to read. Chief pilots are busy, important peo
5. Make yourself known in person, and don't be afraid of reappearing at intervals to make yourself remembered, p move on and you never know when a position may become available.
6. Be nice to reception staff – they're your ticket in!
7. Don't leave it later than March; by then the dry season has well and truly started. Ideally be there as early as you

You're in! What to Expect and How to Survive

You get one of the most exciting phone calls you'll ever receive – the check flight, your big moment. Chances are it

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you've passed your check flight you might not necessarily be flying. De Privacy & Cookies Policy the season is vo
may be working as a ground crew in the hangar anywhere from three weeks to a year. ^

It's not an ideal situation but it's a good chance to get to know the industry, get chummy with the engineers and fir
what really goes on at an airline and, as Buddha says, it's all part of the rich tapestry of life.

Once You're Flying

Once you're flying, the airline you're working for will most likely do some ICUS hours with you. These are basically
training hours you do with the chief pilot or the check and training pilot to ensure you are up to the airline's stand:
Generally speaking the better the airline the more ICUS hours they require and the more time they will put into tra
you.

Ensure you apply the same high standard to ICUS as you did to your original training. At this stage you are still
expendable, regardless of that year you spent in the hangar sweeping floors. Harsh but true.



Sussing Out the Culture and Your Limits

Working at an airline can be a tricky business; like any work place, it can be anything from a supportive fun
environment to a competitive and sometimes dangerous environment. Most of the airlines are trving to keep cost

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It can be difficult to strike a balance between getting those hours up a [Privacy & Cookies Policy](#) your integrity. Never put your life or your license on the line. It's simply not worth it.

^
*Never put
your life or
your license
on the line*

How to survive the first job:

1. Suss out the culture and think about the best way for you to fit in without compromising who you are. Be friendly but take the wool out of your ears and put it in your mouth for a while and take some time to observe.
2. Spend some time getting to know the organisational structure, the people and where they fit into the organisati
3. Don't let a pilot or anyone on a power trip bring you down, don't lose your cool or your confidence, be assertive professional.
4. Pay attention to detail, repeated mistakes like not cancelling your SARTIME can really grind your colleagues gear cost you your job.
5. Don't jump on the bandwagon by gossiping about other pilots or their poor performance – just be friendly and be one of the team.
6. If you can, seek out a positive mentor in the team and try and learn as much as you can, and always offer to help where you can.

Wherever you are, good luck on your flying adventure and the next step into a brilliant career. It can be a tough road but stay positive and you'll be in the air soon.

About the Author: Nathalie Cattaneo is a freelance journalist and recently spent six months in the Top End working for a regional airline.

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