

A FLYING START

What do you think of when you hear the word 'Aerospace'? Well, if you're like me or the majority of people out there, images of pilots flying planes would fill your mind. Luckily, I was fortunate enough to experience what the Australian Defence Industry, aerospace sector *really* looks like and I was very surprised with what I found.

While at a Careers Expo with my class earlier this year, I was informed about a competition being run by the campaign, 'There's More to It than You Think' in which students would get the chance to win an ultimate workplace visit. I thought it would be great to visit a place not many people get the chance to experience and was so excited that I decided to enter straight away.

I then went home and submitted my entry on www.theresmoresoit.com.au which included a short paragraph about what future career I want to pursue and how that ties into winning one of these prizes. Shortly after, I was informed that I was one of the winners and would receive the opportunity to spend a day at Australian Aerospace, at the Royal Australian Air Force Base Edinburgh. I was extremely happy that I had succeeded but I didn't know what to expect as I knew little about the Defence industry.

When I arrived on the big day, Tony from the company, Australian Aerospace took me on a tour of the base which felt like a small community. There was a hospital, a gymnasium, a few eateries, a golf course and even a mini cinema complex! I was also able to meet some pilots on base and gain an insight into what their daily tasks included.

I was fortunate enough to have a go at flying an AP-3C Orion flight simulator which is only ever used by pilots in training. It was a very thrilling and realistic experience and the rough landings could really be felt. I found turning the plane a little difficult because due to the accuracy and precision in making the simulator, the aircraft had a small delay, similar to the real one. One of the locations programmed into the simulator was Sydney, so I had a great time flying around the city. At times, I was terrified of crashing the plane but luckily, I only collided with a few buildings and managed to spare the Sydney Harbor Bridge!

After this amazing experience, I was taken behind the scenes to one of the Hangars, where the planes are maintained and modified. This is where I discovered the many career prospects available within the Defence Industry such as technicians, Aerospace engineers, planners and supply chain personnel.

During my visit, I also was able to explore the inside of an AP-3C Orion and learn all about their different functions. When observing the inside of the AP-3C, I found that it was identical to the simulator, down to the last detail, which really amazed me!

I also learnt about the diversity of Australian Aerospace and found out that it sells, assembles and maintains both military and civil aircraft.

Overall, I discovered that the Defence Industry aerospace sector is not only made up of aviators but also the people who manufacture and maintain helicopters, maintain aircraft and those who provide the essential services to support this industry and keep it going.

To find out more information about Australian Aerospace, feel free to visit www.ausaero.com.au and remember, there's more to it than you think!