

# Training aircraft maintenance engineers

TODAY, more people are travelling, be it for work or leisure and many of us dream of a globe-trotting lifestyle. Have you ever thought about the airworthiness of each flight you board? Has flight safety ever been at the forefront of your mind?

Besides the pilots, stewards, stewardess and ticketing personal whom we encounter, there are also many those who remain in the background.

Yes, these are the men and women known as aircraft maintenance technicians in the aviation industry.

Many of them go through rigorous physical and mental training. Each step undertaken requires mindfulness, even under extreme weather.

## Gaining the right perspective

"Many students think a career with an airline is a bed of roses. However, I classify this profession

as AWO – All Weather Operations Engineers.

"If you are working in Europe, then it's very likely that you will work under frigid weather," said Nilai University senior instructor Selvarajah Chelliah.

Baskaran Chitraveloo, another Nilai University senior instructor added, "It is always easier to learn when one has passion. Students who have passion are more receptive and are always hungry for knowledge."

In total, graduates will take at least six to eight years to become a licensed aircraft engineer. Basically, students should complete a Diploma in Aircraft Maintenance Engineer in two and a half years which includes a six-month on-the-job training with Nilai University's industry partners.

After graduating, they are yet to qualify. Students will need to accumulate another five years of work



Aircraft Maintenance programme lecturers and instructors (from left) Suresh Kumar Subramaniam, Juha Markko R.Buan, J. James Joseph, Dr Louie, Baskaran, Selvarajah, Laxamanan Kurappa and Mohd Zohdi.

experience before applying for EASA Part 66 Basic Licence.

"The Department of Aircraft Maintenance at Nilai University incorporates industry-related knowledge, code of ethics and practical skills into the programmes.

"The school will keep tab on technology trends because aircraft systems and components are constantly upgraded," shared Dr Louie Longasa Timajo, Nilai University's Faculty Engineering, Science and Technology Department of Aircraft Maintenance principal lecturer.

"The advancement of aircraft systems – the engine and component systems have progressed from mechanical, hydro-mechanical, electromechanical and now fly-by-wire with 60% to 70% of the system relying on automation technology," said Nilai University senior lecturer Mohd Zohdi Mat Zali.

## Employment opportunities

"Other employment options for graduates may include quality engineer, quality inspector, project engineer, planning engineer and gas turbine mechanics in the oil pump industry too," said Dr Louie.

"The Malaysia Aviation Industry is rapidly changing. Malaysian Aerospace Industry Blueprint (2015) forecasted by 2030, the industry will generate an estimated annual revenue of US\$14.3bil (RM59.1bil). Hence, there will be good career prospects in Malaysia too. Globally, airlines may require 24,000 aircraft. Thus, there will be demand for skilled professionals to maintain the airworthiness of these aircraft. China itself, will require 210,000 aircraft maintenance professionals and by 2030, Malaysia's aerospace industry will require 20,000 professionals including aircraft maintenance engineers," explained Dr Louie.

## Basic entry requirement

The Diploma in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering at Nilai University is open to both Science stream and non-Science stream students who achieve the following scores in their SPM results:

- 1) Three credits in English, Mathematics, and Physics or Science
- 2) Passed Bahasa Malaysia
- 3) Passed Sejarah

Students should be medically fit and have excellent eyesight and hearing with no colour blindness or hearing impairment.

Nilai University offers up to 100% scholarship to students.

■ Visit Nilai University on July 13 and 14 to find out more about scholarships available. The university is open daily except on public holidays. To make an appointment, call 06-850 2308 or log on to [www.nilai.edu.my](http://www.nilai.edu.my).