AIRCRAFT SURFACE FINISHER

ALSO KNOWN AS: AIRCRAFT PAINTER | AEROSPACE FINISHER | AVIATION COATING SPECIALIST | AIRCRAFT REFINISHER

BRING THE SHINE TO THE SKIES.

Aircraft Surface Finishers are the masters of makeovers for flying machines. They transform dull metal into gleaming works of art, ensuring aircraft not only look their best but are protected from the elements.

KEY SKILLS

Skills which may benefit anyone considering a job as a aircraft surface finisher include:

- Attention to detail
- Colour matching
- Hand-eye coordination
- Precision
- Technical knowledge

VALUES & ATTRIBUTES

Values and attributes of anyone considering a job as a aircraft surface finisher include:

- Patience
- Perfectionism
- Safety-conscious
- Team Player
- Adaptable
- Investigative – "Thinker"

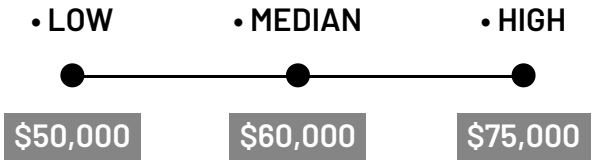
CAREER PROGRESSION

In this role, you may have the opportunity to progress to other positions. Career progression opportunities include:

- Team Leader
- Surface Preparation and Coating Operator
- Aerospace Engineer
- Chief Engineering Officer

SALARY EXPECTATION

The expected salary for a Aircraft Surface Finisher can vary across different areas of manufacturing and may vary as you become more experienced.



RELATED INDUSTRIES

▸ Aerospace and Defence ▸ Transport Equipment and Machinery

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL SUBJECTS

- Aerospace Systems
- Chemistry
- Engineering
- Engineering Skills
- Visual Arts

CORE SCHOOL SUBJECTS

- Essential Mathematics
- Essential English
- Visual Arts in Practice

JOB OVERVIEW

Aircraft Surface Finishers play a crucial role in the aerospace industry, applying protective coatings and decorative finishes to aircraft exteriors and components. Their work is essential for both aesthetic appeal and functional durability, contributing significantly to the longevity and performance of aircraft.

These skilled professionals use a variety of specialised equipment, including spray guns, sanders, and masking tools. They must have a keen eye for detail, steady hands, and a thorough understanding of different coating materials and application techniques. Safety is paramount in this role, as they often work with potentially hazardous chemicals and in confined spaces.

In a typical day, an Aircraft Surface Finisher might prepare surfaces for painting, mix and match colours, apply primers and topcoats, and inspect their work for quality and consistency. They may also be involved in stripping old paint, repairing surface damage, and applying decals or specialised coatings for aerodynamic efficiency.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Your role may include duties as follows:

1. Prepare aircraft surfaces by cleaning, sanding, and masking
2. Mix and apply primers, paints, and other protective coatings
3. Operate spray painting equipment and other finishing tools
4. Inspect completed work for defects and ensure quality standards are met
5. Maintain a clean and safe work environment, adhering to safety protocols

HOW TO BECOME A AIRCRAFT SURFACE FINISHER

To become an Aircraft Surface Finisher, you typically don't need a formal qualification to start, but relevant training and certifications will be important to your work. Entry into this occupation is generally through an apprenticeship. Here are steps you might take to enter this field:

1. Complete Year 12 or equivalent, focusing on subjects like Chemistry and Visual Arts.
2. You may find it useful to undertake a Certificate II in Aircraft Surface Finishing (MEA20622) while you are at school or before commencing an apprenticeship.
3. Undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship in aircraft surface finishing
4. Obtain relevant industry certifications, such as those offered by CASA (Civil Aviation Safety Authority)
5. Consider specialised training in aerospace coatings from manufacturers or industry bodies

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

Vocational education and training are crucial for aspiring Aircraft Surface Finisher. These programs provide the specialised knowledge and skills required in this high-tech field. An apprenticeship is the best pathway to gain employment in this role.

- Certificate III in Aircraft Surface Finishing (MEA30118)

As an apprentice you will combine work with formal training, allowing you to gain practical skills and knowledge in a specific trade while earning a salary.

Duration: Apprenticeships typically last up to 3 years for full-time participants. Part-time apprenticeships may take longer, depending on the individual's work schedule and training progress.

Work and study combination: As an apprentice, you will work either full-time or part-time while receiving formal training from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). School-based apprenticeships may be available.

Eligibility: Generally, apprenticeships do not require any formal qualifications to enter, making them accessible to a wide range of individuals, including if you are a school leaver or someone looking to change careers. There are minimum age requirements and there may be other eligibility criteria.

Completion: On completion you will receive a nationally recognised trade qualification, showcasing your skill and experience.

ADVANCING YOUR CAREER

For those looking to advance into leadership roles or deepen their expertise:

- Certificate IV in Aircraft Surface Finishing (MEA40922)
- Diploma of Aviation Maintenance Management (MEA50422)
- Advanced Diploma of Aviation Maintenance Management (MEA60222)

UNIVERSITY & HIGHER EDUCATION

While not always required, university education can provide advanced knowledge and open up opportunities for career progression. Relevant degree programs might include:

- Bachelor of Engineering specialising in aerospace mechanical
- Bachelor of Aviation Maintenance Management

These programs would provide a broader understanding of aircraft systems and materials, which could be beneficial for career progression in the aerospace industry.