



Aircraft Maintenance Personnel Training

Why are vocational trained aircraft maintenance personnel NOT accepted by CASA for the purpose of licencing like most other trade based licencing system in Australia?

1. Civil aviation maintenance personnel regulatory standards do not require a person to hold vocational education qualifications to perform work or apply for a licence from CASA.
2. Civil aviation maintenance personnel regulatory standards do set vocational standards to be met to attain a licence from CASA.
3. The National Vocational Education Training System (NVET) only provides training and funding for large aeroplane avionic and mechanical training courses leading to licences.
4. CASA duplicates approval of ASQA approved and funded RTOs as Part 147 MTOs to provide non-NVET courses for CASA issued AME licences.
5. This has not produced NVET career pathways to attract and retain trade-based AME and LAMEs.

THIS IS THE REASON FOR SHORTAGE OF LAME'S

The problem is not CASA issued licences; it is not having specific NVET courses and qualifications available to underpin each licence. Qualifications that can be regulatory accepted by CASA for the purpose of issuing an A or B licence.

Until government provide regulatory requirements that identifies NVET qualifications as the basis to issuing each AME licences, like they do in other civil aviation regulatory systems, then the shortage crisis will continue.

Every civil aviation maintenance personnel working on a commercial aircraft should hold a NVET/AQF qualification.

To attain a licence from CASA, the aircraft maintenance engineer should preferably hold specific NVET qualifications, plus recorded minimum experience, to apply for the specific AME licence.

To manage a maintenance business, employers prefer staff holding NVET qualifications, or equivalent, for those staff holding licences and certifying aircraft as airworthy on behalf of the business in the interest of safety.

CASR Part 66 AME licences have not been the problem, it has been inappropriate training, or lack of training available, provided by both RTOs and MTOs for AME licences other than large aeroplanes.

Ken R Cannane
AMROBA
www.amroba.org.au
Safety All Around.

WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH REQUIRED

The inability of CASA and ASQA to cooperatively work together to provide the civil aviation maintenance personnel training and qualifications that comply with the Australian Qualifications Framework, specific for each AME licence issued, has to be overcome.

It is in the interest of government, industry, passengers and public, these AME licence holders should have Australian NVET AQF qualifications, or equivalents, appropriate to the scope of each licence issued by CASA. All AME licences; A1 to A4 licences, B1.1 to B1.4 licences and a B2 licence should be AQF supported.

‘B’ licence holders are para-professionals performing very important airworthy safety inspections and certification functions.

*“Aircraft Maintenance Engineers (AMEs) play a **critical role in ensuring the safety and reliability of aircrafts**. They are responsible for conducting regular inspections, repairs, and maintenance of aircraft to ensure they meet stringent safety standards. AMEs play a vital role in identifying and rectifying potential safety issues, minimizing the risks associated with aircraft operations, and ensuring the overall safety of passengers and crew. Through their detailed inspections, and the subsequent repairs, **they help in guaranteeing the safety of passengers and crew members.**”*

The days of only having workplace experience, self-study and pass CASA examinations to obtain an AME licence must be replaced with specific NVET trade/licence courses with AQF qualifications to ensure these critical aviation safety personnel provide the safest tradespersons/licence holders in the interest of civil aviation safety.

Scope of CASA AME Licences

Basically, the CASR Part 66 AME licences are split between line maintenance and base maintenance. Aeroplane/helicopter mechanical and avionics systems. B1.1/1.2 mechanical aeroplanes, B1.3/1.4 mechanical aeroplanes and B2 avionics aeroplanes & helicopters systems.

Very Basic Description of Part 66 Licences and Scope						
A/C Types	Rating	Line	Course	Rating	Line/Base	Course
Part 25 Large Aeroplanes	A1	X	None	B1.1	X	NVET
Part 23 Aeroplanes	A2	X	None	B1.2	X	None
Part 29 Complex Helicopters	A3	X	None	B1.3	X	None
Part 27 Helicopters	A4	X	None	B1.4	X	None
Avionic Systems	N/A	N/A	N/A	B2	X	NVET

Note: The B1.1 & B2 NVET course are applicable to large aeroplanes mechanical and avionic systems to support mechanical and an avionic licence.

CASA stated Scope of each licence

“The A Category licence includes minor scheduled line maintenance and simple defect rectification, and is further divided into the following subcategories:

- A1 turbine-engined fixed wing aeroplane.
- A2 piston-engined fixed wing aeroplane.
- A3 turbine-engined helicopter.
- A4 piston-engined helicopter.

The **B1 Category licence** includes maintenance of aircraft structures (airframe), powerplant and mechanical and electrical systems, and is further divided into the following subcategories:

- B1.1 turbine-engined fixed wing aeroplanes.
- B1.2 piston-engined fixed wing aeroplanes.
- B1.3 turbine-engined helicopters.
- B1.4 piston-engined helicopters.

The **B2 Category licence** includes maintenance of avionics and electrical systems, and applies to all aircraft.”

Action Required by Government Departments/Agencies.

Develop AME NVET & AQF qualifications for each licence and include in civil aviation maintenance personnel regulations.

Without DITRDCA/CASA and DEWR/ASQA collaborating to produce VET competency-based courses and AQF qualifications for each of the AME Part 66 licences and sub-licences, overcoming the shortage of AMEs/LAMEs will need to continue to rely on foreign LAMEs.

Back Issue: Pre CASR-Parts 66/147 some State VET RTOs had removed helicopters and piston-powered aircraft subjects from their industry AME trade training as their students came mainly from airlines and large MROs.

National trade training in Australia leading to a licence is a shared responsibility between the education sector and the licencing authority. In this case, DEWR/ASQA and CASA. Obviously, no intergovernmental teamwork.

Back Issue: CASR Parts 66/147 introduced the European knowledge-based AME licencing training standards that are not compatible with Australia’s CBT system standards.

Action: CASRs must be amended to accept CBT by the VET sector and also recognise Australia’s AQF qualifications issued by ASQA approved training organisations so they can issue licences. Aviation regulatory requirements must include the AQF qualification that meets the requirement to issue a licence. This will formalise the qualifications required by industry employees, employers and CASA with a resultant improvement to safety.

Note: The multiple licences introduced is not the problem, it is the training to support each licence that hasn’t eventuated.

Action: Government must define the responsibilities of each Government Department Agencies with regards to CASA to set licensing personnel standards (not education standards) and ASQA to approve AME courses and issue qualifications to support each licence to attract and retain civil aviation maintenance personnel.

The seemingly brick wall between ASQA and CASA prevents development of licence applicable NVET training courses producing AQF qualifications applicable to each of the CASA licences.

