

# 1887



The Working Men's College (WMC) is founded by Francis Ormond, Victorian Parliamentarian, Pastoralist and Philanthropist.

# 1901



Australian pioneer aviator J.R. Duigan MC, matriculates from the WMC.

# 1910



The first sustained flight in an Australian built machine is achieved by J.R. Duigan and J.E. Tilley, who both studied and worked at the WMC.

# 1923 - 1925



R.R. Mackay becomes a demonstrator, then lecturer of radio communications, at the WMC.

# 1917 - 1919



The WMC provides vocational training to over 1,500 returned WWI servicemen, to reintegrate them into civilian life.

1934



The WMC becomes the Melbourne Technical College (MTC).

1936



The Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation (CAC), founded by Lawrence Wackett, commences manufacturing aircraft at Fisherman's Bend.

1939



R.R. Mackay is commissioned to the Australian Military Forces, joining the RAAF as a temporary Flight Lieutenant and taking charge of Defence training at MTC.

Approximately 2,000 Defence personnel are trained in munitions production, and a further 20,000 in radio communications.

The MTC trains most of the WWII RAAF communication officers, and overall training equalling a sixth of Australia's military personnel.

1937 - 1938



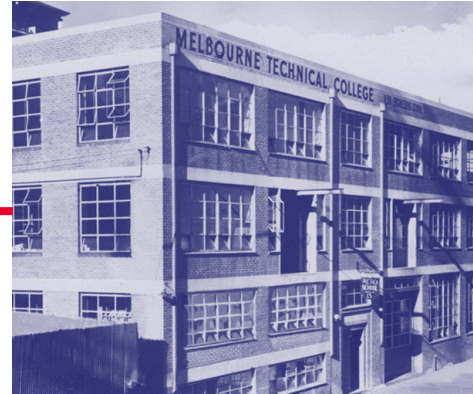
MTC introduces courses in Air Navigation, Aircraft Engineering and Aircraft Structures

# 1939



Development begins on CAC's first locally designed and made aircraft, the CA-2 Wackett Trainer and the CA-4 Woomera (pictured). Government Aircraft Factories is established.

# 1941



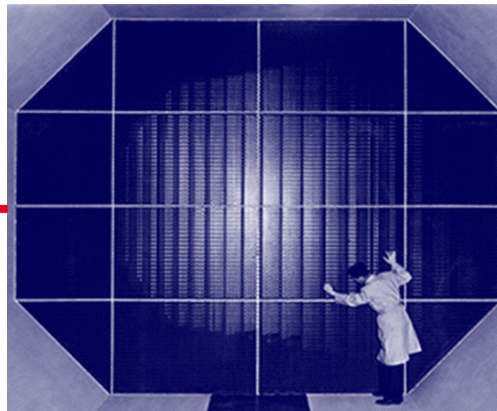
Australia's first Aeronautical Engineering program is offered at MTC. RMIT Building 15 delivered aeronautical workshops at a time when this expertise was desperately needed for the war effort.

# 1941 - 1942



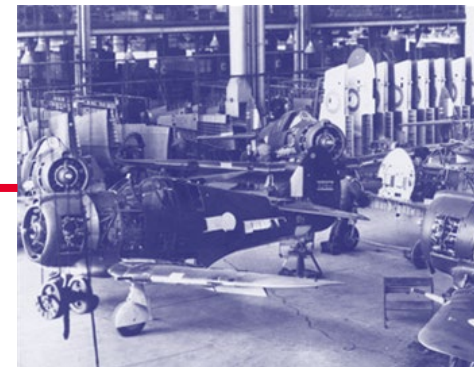
The CA-12 Boomerang, developed and produced by CAC's Chief Designer F. David, makes its maiden flight in May 1942. Boomerang squadrons serve in operations from Northern Australia, to New Guinea and Borneo.

# 1945



Australia's first subsonic, variable wind tunnel is constructed at Fisherman's Bend. R.R. Mackay supervises diploma courses at MTC following WWII, under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme.

# 1943 - 1944



CA-12 Boomerang enters production. CA-15 Boomerang project commences, but is side lined as the U.S P-51 Mustang is selected to be the next fighter plane produced by the CAC.

# 1946



RAAF Radschool (RADS) is established in Ballarat. Apprentices complete two years of training at MTC before returning to Ballarat for advanced electronics training.

# 1947



Radio Apprentice School formed at RAAF Frognall. MTC instructs formal radio training for the School over the next 26 years.  
F. David leaves CAC as Chief Designer, takes up senior position with Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

# 1948 - 1949



CSIR Division of Aeronautics transferred to the Department of Supply and renamed Aeronautical Research Laboratories (ARL), focussing on defence research.  
ARL is part of the design and development of Jindivik, a subsonic uncrewed jet propelled target plane designed to measure missile performance.  
ARL begins designing the first Australian manned jet used as a target drone.  
The Pika, manually piloted proof of concept, is developed for guided missile testing.  
The Jindivik, manually controlled by radio commands, is used by Australia, U.K., U.S. and Sweden.

# 1954



MTC receives Royal Patronage in recognition of its service to education and contribution to the war efforts.  
MTC is renamed as the Royal Melbourne Technical College (RMTC).

# 1950 - 1952



H.K. Millicer becomes Chief Aerodynamicist with Government Aircraft Factories (GAF), working on the Jindivik and Malkara programs.  
R.R. Mackay becomes Principal of the Melbourne Technical College.

1960



RMTC is renamed as the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT).  
RMIT matures quickly in the quality of its core engineering programs and in new disciplines like architecture, surveying, photography, marine and air navigation and business studies.

1961



RAAF RADS relocates from Ballarat to Laverton, along with the Radio Apprentice School that reformed as the Radio Apprentice Squadron.  
The six month common course at RMIT is abolished.  
RAAF apprentices of RMIT's Radio and Electronics Technician Certificate course (ETC) go onto RADS.

1964



Supported by the Australian Government, GAF begins design work of the Nomad, a twin turboprop, high wing aircraft with retractable gear.  
Available in two variants: the initial N22, followed by the stretched N24.

1974



The Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) is established to foster closer relations between the nation's defence scientists and the armed services.

1967



H.K. Millicer becomes principal lecturer at RMIT, with the discipline becoming the leading aerospace school in Australia.  
H.K. Millicer designs the Victa Airtrainer, the design is used for the RAAF CT4 Airtrainer. F. David becomes lecturer at RMIT.

## 1975 - 1990

- The RAAF's long association with RMIT ended, since then all Radio Trade Apprentice training has been conducted at RADS.
- RMIT provides technology upgrade courses for ten years, to a Defence Force specific curriculum. RMIT modifies the curriculum to create a nationally accredited civilian Associate Diploma in Engineering (Aerospace Systems).
- A fellow of both the Institution of Engineers, Australia, and the Royal Aeronautical Society, H.K. Millicer is awarded an honorary doctorate by RMIT in 1984 and appointed AM in 1992.
- In 1984 RMIT opens the Micro-electronics and Materials Technology Centre (MMTC). Research foci include integrated optics, lab-on-a-chip devices, nanotechnology enabled devices, sensors, functional materials, microsystems, microelectronic devices, and RF/microwave technologies.
- Hawker de Havilland (HdH) and CAC merge in 1986.
- GAF is reorganised and renamed as Aerospace Technologies of Australia (ASTA) in 1987 and privatised. ASTA is purchased by Rockwell International, that is then purchased a few years later by Boeing. ASTA subsequently forms the nucleus of Boeing Australia.
- The last RAAF Frognall/RMIT ECS graduation takes place in 1988 at Point Cook, noting ADFA engineering courses commence in 1986.
- The National Aerospace Resource Centre (NARC) opens, a joint venture of the Australian Division of The Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) and RMIT Aerospace Engineering.





RMIT establishes the Sir Lawrence Wackett Centre (SLWC) for Aerospace Design Technology, as a joint initiative of Aerospace Engineering and Mathematics.

SLWC is opened by R. Perkins, grandson of the late Sir Lawrence James Wackett.

SLWC joins the CRC for Aerospace Structures (ACS) (1991-1996).

SLWC appoints its first Director, Lincoln Wood (1991-1997).



RMIT becomes a public university by an Act of the Victorian Government and changes its name to RMIT University.

RMIT begins the International Industry Experience and Research Program (RIIERP). Students undertake work placements in global organisations like Airbus, Bosch, Audi, BMW and Siemens.

RMIT amalgamates with the Melbourne College of Decoration and Design, and the Brunswick campus is formed.

**1994**

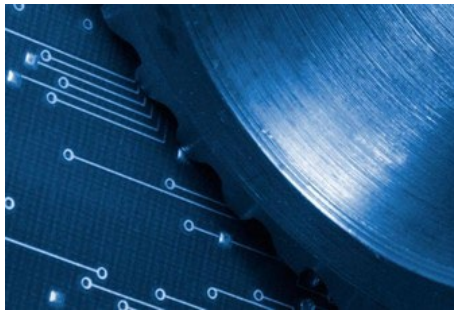


RMIT Flight Training finds a home at RAAF Williams, birthplace of the RAAF and the World's oldest continually operating military airfield.

SLWC and RMIT's Department of Aerospace Engineering move to Fishermans Bend within GKN Aerospace Engineering Services premises. The move places RMIT in the heart of Victoria's thriving aerospace industry alongside Boeing and HdH.

SLWC creates an extensive network of formal partnerships with Australian and international aerospace organisations, conducting research for major companies including GKN Aerospace, HdH, Tenix, BAE Systems, DSTO, Australian Defence Force, National Aerospace Laboratories (India), NASA and the European Space Agency.

**1997**



First Space Engineering Courses offered at RMIT.

ASTA – Boeing 737 aileron is development by CRC – ACS, with significant input from SLWC engineering team.

SLWC Director: Murray Scott (1997-2002)

**1995**



SLWC Aircraft Design Office achieves authorisation as an approved design organisation by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

DSTO's largest fatigue project commences at Fisherman's Bend with full scale testing of major components of the F/A-18 Hornet.

DSTO conducts over 24,000 hours of test flying in an especially designed rig that simulated the stresses and loads an F/A-18 Hornet experiences in real flight.

RMIT Bundoora Campus opens.

1998



RMIT becomes the contracted provider of services in development and conduct stages for the Training System, Australian Army Logistic Training Centre near Wodonga. RMIT delivers these services in conjunction with Defence Materiel Support Division staff, providing training modules leading to trade qualification and certificates.

1999



A Royal Australian Navy (RAN) student trials the Associate Diploma of Engineering, Aerospace Systems RMIT TAFE Department of Aircraft Technology, for its suitability to Aviation and Avionic Technician career progression. SLWC expands significantly to a team of 43 staff and industry collaborations including HdH, British Aerospace Australia and ASTA/Boeing.

2000



RAN commences training at RMIT's Vocational Education and Training Department, Aerospace Engineering. Students graduate with the Diploma/Advanced Diploma of Engineering, Aerospace, (Maintenance).

2002



RMIT commences delivering the MBA in Aviation Management to senior staff of China Airlines, in Singapore  
SLWC Director: Arvind Sinha (2002-2007).

2001



RMIT launches its first international branch campus in Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam.  
SLWC is a finalist in the National Engineering Innovation Competition for an innovative propeller.



# 2003



RMIT's aerospace technology programs move from Fishermans Bend to its Bundoora East Campus.  
 GKN AES wins a Northrop Grumman contract to support the design, analysis and manufacture of F-35 centre fuselage parts.  
 Over the next three years, the contract expands to over 220 GKN AES designers and engineers, of which more than 90% were based in Australia and 60% had graduated from RMIT.

# 2004



RMIT launches its second international branch campus in Hanoi, Vietnam.  
 Army Engineering Alignment course for Army non-aviation engineering graduates commences, the Graduate Certificate (Aerospace).  
 RMIT School of Aerospace, Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering provides workplace training and assessment at Avalon Airport for Tenix staff working for the RAAF AP - 3C Orion Sea Sentinel configuration modification project.

# 2005 - 2006



RMIT joins the CRC for Advanced Automotive Technology, an integral part of the Australian automotive industry's R&D sector.  
 RMIT establishes a student chapter of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA).  
 Army Aviation Artificer Course commences at the RMIT's Vocational Education and Training School of Aerospace, Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering. Students graduate with the Diploma of Engineering, Aerospace, (Maintenance).  
 RMIT launches the Bachelor of Applied Science (Aviation).

# 2007



SLWC moves to RMIT's Bundoora East Campus.  
 SLWC partners on research programs with CRC-ACS, DSTO CoE-AL, Boeing/HdH, AIR9000, Parallel Evolution Programming, ONR, AFOSR.  
 SLWC Director: Chris Guy (2007 – 2008)  
 RMIT launches the Graduate Certificate in Aviation Supply Chain Management.

# 2008



RMIT joins DMTC, established under the Australian Government's Defence Future Capability Technology Centre Program.  
 SLWC Director: Adrian Mouritz (2008 – 2009)

2009



RMIT is named as a focal university for Boeing operations in Australia and is among an elite list of 22 universities world-wide that receive grants through the Boeing CyberGrants system.  
SLWC Director: Chun Wang (2009-2016)

2010



RMIT led consortium receives Australian Government Space Research Program funding to develop advanced satellite based technologies for in space tracking and navigation, precise positioning, space weather, atmospheric modelling and climate monitoring.

2011



RMIT becomes a member of the Defence Science Institute (DSI), an agency jointly funded by the Victoria Government and DSTG.  
Thirteen new Cessna aircraft from Airflite arrive at RMIT Flight Training School, giving the university the most modern training fleet available.  
The Advanced Manufacturing Precinct opens, with RMIT widely recognised as Australia's leading institution for research and skills development in advanced manufacturing.

2013



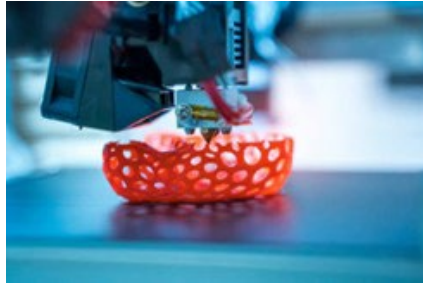
RMIT aerospace engineering students win second prize in the Airbus Fly Your Ideas competition, from a field of 618 teams worldwide.  
RMIT Europe officially opens its campus in Barcelona, Spain.

2012

**BAE SYSTEMS**

BAE Systems Australia partners with Pennant Training Systems and RMIT to offer a leading edge aviation technical training to the Australian Defence Force.  
More than 950 students per year will be trained at the RAAF Base in Wagga, NSW over the 5 year contract.

# 2014



RMIT launches the Centre for Additive Manufacturing to deliver innovative solutions to industry and conduct research in digital additive manufacturing.

RMIT launches the Master of Engineering (Airworthiness), developed with the ADF to provide additional qualifications to defence personnel and support transition to a new regulation framework.

RMIT invests in a state-of-the-art laboratory for researchers to work with the aviation industry to develop and test a wide range of new technologies.

# 2015



RMIT launches the Bachelor of Applied Science (Aviation) in Hong Kong.

RMIT Aerospace Engineering is ranked as an Australian leader for research by the Excellence in Research for Australia, Australian Research Council.

# 2016



RMIT launches the Master of Science (Aviation) in Melbourne. Boeing and RMIT expand Joint Research in Design and Advanced Manufacturing with a new multi year agreement, fuelling innovation and a strong pipeline of graduates seeking careers in Aerospace.

Acting SLWC Director: Pier Marzocca (2016 – 2017).

# 2018



RMIT teams with Adelaide's Hartwig Air to offer a new pilot training pathway in South Australia.

RMIT joins the Trusted Autonomous Systems Defence Cooperative Research Centre (TAS-DCRC) as a founding member.

The Department of Defence enters into a contract with RMIT/SLWC and the University of Maryland to deliver a Master of Engineering (Reliability). RMIT receives the Outstanding Leadership in Training Award by Aviation/Aerospace Australia.

# 2017



RMIT launches the ARC Training Centre in Lightweight Automotive Structures (ATLAS) with Ford.

Intellectual Property developed by RMIT PhD students lead to three patent applications being supported by Boeing.

SLWC Director: Michelle Gee (2017-2022).

2020



RAAF retires the Pilatus PC-9/A, DSTG donates two Flying Training School heritage A23-056 planes to RMIT.

Towers, RMIT and QinetiQ Hawk Commercial Full Scale Fatigue Test Team, named runner up in the DSTG Achievement Awards.

RMIT research supporting the production of an industry technology demonstrator sponsored by RAAF, is credited as a key factor in securing a major design and manufacturing contract worth over \$100m.

2021



SLWDAC-RMIT wins Academic Institution of the Year Award, at the Defence Connect Australian Defence Industry Awards.

RMIT and Boeing sign an agreement to collaborate on advancing Australia's local space capabilities.

RMIT partners with Safeskies Australia to deliver educational programs.

RMIT launches the Bachelor of Applied Science (Aviation) in Vietnam and the Space Industry Hub, hosting the SmartSat CRC Victorian node (Director: Brian Falzon).

2019



### Sir Lawrence Wackett Defence & Aerospace Centre

RMIT announces a strategic partnership with the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) for the delivery of Transport Safety Investigator qualifications.

Sir Lawrence Wackett Centre is re-launched at Avalon International Airshow 2019, as the Sir Lawrence Wackett Defence & Aerospace Centre (SLWDAC) to become a university wide Centre representing all defence priorities and disciplines.

DSTG & RMIT establishes a Joint Chair for Defence Structures and Materials Experimentation Collaborative Program  
RMIT Flight Training School opens in Bendigo.

2022



- DSTG & RMIT establish the Joint Chair for Supersonic Propulsion and Flight Technologies Program.
- Charles Darwin Uni. & RMIT create the Industry 4.0 TestLab-Aerospace and Defence.
- RMIT is a founding member of The Sovereign Manufacturing Automation for Composites CRC (SoMAC).
- RMIT's Advanced Manufacturing Precinct expands to include; Digital Manufacturing Facility, Micro-nano Research Facility and the Microscopy and Microanalysis Facility.
- RMIT takes delivery of 24 additional aircraft for the new RMIT Aviation Academy under its Director Lea Vesic (2022-present)
- RMIT Europe to lead a €15.7 million Australia-France doctoral training network that includes 37 universities across France and Australia.
- The Australian Defence Logistics College is established at RMIT, in partnership with the Joint Logistics Command of the Australian Defence Force.

- The Defence Space Command is established to achieve Australia's strategic space ambitions and ensure access to space, under the leadership of RMIT alumnus Air Vice-Marshal Catherine Roberts.
- RMIT awarded a Data61-CSIRO Next Generation Graduate Program on Applied AI and Digital Twin Innovation for Defence and Aerospace Application.
- RMIT Aerospace Engineering and Aviation ranked #1 nationally by The Australian.
- For the second time RMIT receives the Outstanding Leadership in Training Award by Aviation/Aerospace Australia.
- SLWDAC Director: Pier Marzocca (2022-Present).

# 2023



The RMIT Aviation Academy is officially launched at the 2023 Avalon International Airshow.

The Sir Lawrence Wackett Defence & Aerospace Centre continues its mission to support the transformation and growth of Australia's defence, aerospace, and transport systems industries.

We will continue our work with organisations to build globally competitive and sustainable Australian industries by delivering trusted technology, business solutions, and workforce skills development.

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