

Managing fine when future is up in the air

4:00AM Saturday Aug 22, 2009

By Angela McCarthy

There are three primary areas in aviation management; fixed-based operation management (FBO), general airport management and financial management. FBO covers business practices involved in operating a maintenance facility at a commercial airport. General airport management revolves around the practices and policies of planning and management within a commercial airport. Corporate financial management focuses on the principles and techniques of financial analysis and long-term financing, capital management and budgeting within the aviation industry. There are also many opportunities in research and development.



Karan Ladkani is committed to the aviation industry. Photo / Supplied

The Bachelor of Aviation Management prepares people for work in these areas with graduates entering roles such as airport planning, transportation and logistics, aviation security, flight operations, air traffic control and aviation business analysis.

The degree has eight compulsory papers, including aviation human factors, which looks at basic concepts of human performance and issues relating to judgment and decision-making in the high-risk aviation environment. Other papers include airport operations and planning. There is also an elective internship paper that involves students sourcing a placement with an employer that must be approved by the School of Aviation.

As well as aviation specific papers, students can choose a number of general business papers.

The Graduate

Karan Ladkani

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* Aviation consultant for Airbiz Aviation Strategies Ltd

* Starting salary: \$40,000–\$45,000

* Graduated in 2008

As an aviation consultant – with a long-term career goal of becoming an airport planner – my job involves liaising and working with airports to help develop their business and operational strategies. This includes preparing Master Plan reports for airports, generating 15–20 year passenger and air traffic movement projections and planning airfield layouts which includes designing runways and taxiways, noise contours and noise management controls.

I've had an abiding fascination for a long time with the entire aviation industry. I chose to do the Bachelor of Aviation Management because it offered a wide spectrum of aviation papers covering all facets of the industry, from airline to airport management – with a bit of aviation psychology thrown in for good measure.

There was also a pool of other papers to choose from, including marketing, information technology and business management.

I found the tutors very supportive and highly knowledgeable about the stuff they put forward. They were always up for a chat with us about the industry in general.

By the time I completed my last year of study I was convinced that working as an airport planner would be an ideal career opportunity for me.

Currently I work under the direction of an airport planner. An airport planner generally has an overall vision of a project, make high-level decisions, and guide the project to its goal.

The Employer

Iain Munro

* General manager NZ/Pacific of Airbiz Aviation Strategies Ltd

Airbiz is an independent international specialist aviation consultancy. Our clients include airport owners, operators, investors, airlines, government agencies and other aviation stakeholders. The Airbiz team comprises airport and terminal planners, retail planners, financial and business analysts and strategists and computer simulation specialists.

We assist our clients with airport master planning, terminal building planning, aviation business development, forecasting of future levels and characteristics of activity so that airports can be prepared in advance, as well as planning and promotion for new airline services. We employ approximately 25 specialist consultants, located in offices in Melbourne, Auckland, Sydney, Vancouver and Montreal.

We want people with good spatial, conceptual and analytical capabilities. We also want people with excellent communication skills, both oral and written, who are well organised, able to consistently provide quality work and meet agreed deadlines.

Because we train and develop people on the job, previous experience in the aviation industry or airport planning is not a prerequisite, although it is helpful.

Karan's aviation management degree is a well-rounded business degree that shows his capacity for self-application and achievement. It provides a general level of appreciation and understanding of the industry, including the jargon and how it functions. Although it doesn't provide much specific background for the work Airbiz does, it did indicate Karan's commitment and interest in the aviation industry.

The global economic conditions have created short-term uncertainties and slightly reduced the numbers of air travellers for most airlines and airports. However, the industry remains fundamentally strong and can be expected to recover well in the near future.

TRAINING PLACE

Qualification: Bachelor of Aviation Management (level 7).

Where: Massey University, Palmerston North and extramurally (or through a mix of internal and external study). The degree is also offered via Singapore Aviation Academy.

Contact: 0800 627 739 or (06) 350 5323; aviation@massey.ac.nz or contact@massey.ac.nz;
<http://aviation.massey.ac.nz>.

Course duration: Three years full-time study or part-time equivalent.

Entry requirements: NCEA university entrance or recognised equivalent. Industry experience, professional qualifications, and licences can be cross-credited into the degree.

Application closure dates: February 13 at the latest, preferably earlier to ensure a place.

2009 tertiary fees: Approx \$4500 per year for internal and external domestic students, with administrative costs differing for external. International fees are higher.