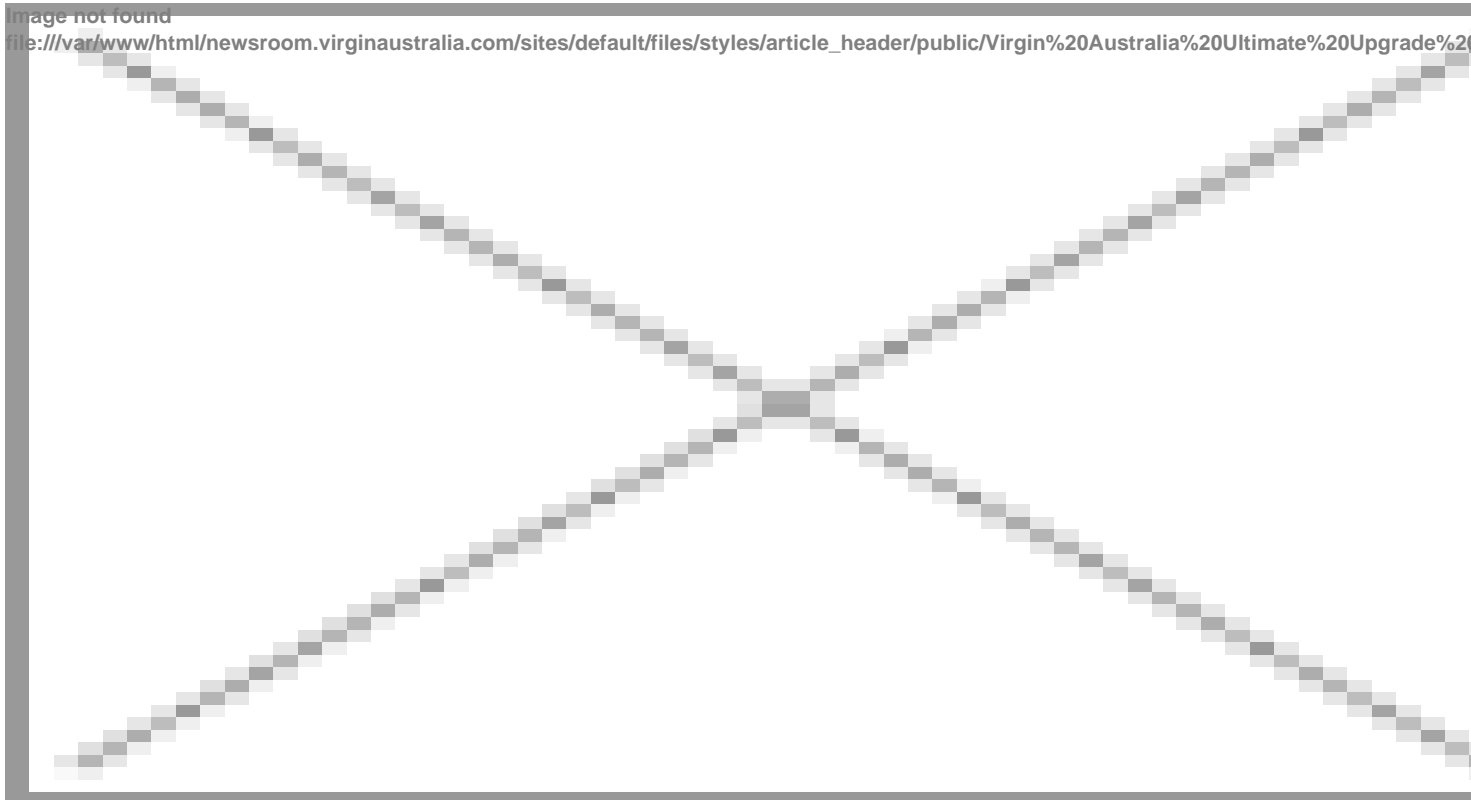




12 July 2021 | [Customer](#) ^[1]

Rocketman a reality for Velocity Frequent Flyer member ^[2]



- Velocity Frequent Flyer member on track to fly to space
- Virgin Australia CEO statement following Virgin Galactic's world-first passenger spaceflight
- 100,000 bonus Velocity Points on future Virgin Galactic bookings

The dream of flying to space is one giant leap closer to reality for Velocity Frequent Flyer member, Scott Copeland from Melbourne, following the success of Sir Richard Branson and Virgin Galactic's world-first passenger spaceflight, Unity 22.

Mr Copeland, 52, who won the Virgin Australia [Ultimate Upgrade to Space](#) ^[3] competition in 2014 and a seat on a future Virgin Galactic mission, is now officially part of the spaceline's Future Astronaut Community. The father of three adult children will follow in Sir Richard's footsteps and is set to fly to space as one of Virgin Galactic's early customers.

Speaking from his home in Templestowe in Melbourne's North East, Mr Copeland, a senior banker come astronaut, who has been dreaming of entering space since he was in primary school said that dreams do become a reality.

'I still pinch myself every day that my dream of entering space is close to reality,' said Mr Copeland.

When I won the Virgin Australia competition in 2014, I committed to finding my primary school teacher from 1979 who at the time said I should reconsider my dream of flying to space. Remarkably, I was able to locate her 35 years later to share this incredible story.

Dreams really do become a reality and my story is a testament to that. I can't thank Virgin Australia and Virgin Galactic enough for changing my life," he said.

Since winning the competition, Mr Copeland, who is a self-confessed "space enthusiast" has travelled to the Mojave Desert in California to tour the Virgin Galactic facility with other future astronauts and see the spaceship VSS Unity. To further indulge in his passion for space travel, he has also visited the Johnson Space Centre in Houston, Texas, as well as the Kennedy Space Centre in Cape Canaveral, Florida.

Virgin Australia Group CEO Jayne Hrdlicka congratulated the Virgin Galactic Unity 22 mission team.

"Congratulations to our founder Sir Richard Branson, Virgin Galactic, and the Unity 22 Mission Specialists on successfully opening space travel for all mankind," said Ms Hrdlicka.

"Sir Richard's success presents so much hope for all people around the world at a time where we need it most. Hope for humanity, hope for the future and hope to dream big."

Speaking of the Virgin Australia *Ultimate Upgrade to Space* competition, Ms Hrdlicka said: "Velocity is the only frequent flyer program in Australia to award a member a ticket to space. We're so proud that working with Virgin Galactic we have been able to make Scott's childhood dream a reality for simply joining Velocity and flying with Virgin Australia," she said.

People from all across the globe witnessed the Unity 22 spaceflight mission which saw Sir Richard Branson rocket through the atmosphere into space on VSS Unity, before safely returning to Earth, along with his fellow crew members, at the early hours of this morning.

600 people have independently purchased tickets on Virgin Galactic future passenger spaceflight missions with more tickets expected to go on sale soon.

Research shows that one in two people have a strong desire to fly to space with Virgin Galactic now opening the possibility to all.

Velocity Frequent Flyer, the loyalty program of Virgin Australia, boasts more than 10 million members, and is offering **100,000 bonus Velocity Points** on future Virgin Galactic bookings.

For more information on Virgin Galactic, visit: virgingalactic.com [4].

DOWNLOAD [5] VNR of Scott Copeland (includes I/V and b-roll)

DOWNLOAD [6] Virgin Galactic press assets.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Competition

To win the Ultimate Upgrade to Space, Velocity members were required to book and fly on Virgin Australia between 1 May to 30 June 2014, plus register and outline what they would do for a seat to space.

Following thousands of entries, Scott won the competition with the following response:

?I would seek out my Primary School Grade 5 teacher from 1979 who never believed I would be an astronaut and tell her in no uncertain terms that ?I told you so!!??

More information on the Virgin Australia *Ultimate Upgrade to Space* competition can be found [here](#) [3].

Virgin Galactic spaceflight experience

Duration of a Virgin Galactic flight experience

The Virgin Galactic flight experience is designed to be approximately 90-minutes long with several minutes of weightlessness - starting with launch, reaching apogee and experiencing the euphoria of space, before finally gliding back to Earth.

The training

The Virgin Galactic Chief Astronaut Instructor, Beth Moses, has designed a three-day training program tailored to the crew's specific mission at Spaceport America in New Mexico. This includes practice and simulations to run through every phase of the 90-minute journey - from take-off, to being released from the mothership, through boost, to moving around the cabin at weightlessness, re-entry and gliding back to the runway.

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