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## [Virgin Australia's first Pilot Cadets graduate from inaugural training program](#) [2]

Virgin Australia today welcomed its first group of graduating pilot cadets to its ranks. After 55 weeks of intensive training, the fully qualified pilots will be deployed around the country as First Officers on Virgin Australia's fleet of turboprop aircraft.

The pilots are the first graduating class of cadets to complete the airline's industry leading pilot training program. Unlike any other Australian airline pilot cadet program, Virgin Australia employs the cadets from day one, and advances upfront training course costs as well as a salary for the duration of the program at Flight Training Adelaide.

The group of seven First Officers will initially be sent to Brisbane and Perth, and will operate Fokker 50 or ATR-72 aircraft in the airlines growing fleet.

Virgin Australia Acting Chief Operating Officer Lawrie Turner said the program has delivered on its promise to invest in the future of pilots in this country.

"When we launched the program in 2012, we were responding to the increasing global demand for well trained and experienced pilots.

"As Virgin Australia Group continues to grow its fleet of 148 aircraft, we are investing in developing skills and capabilities in Australia, to ensure a strong future for aviation in this country and support Australian jobs.

"The last 55 weeks have been challenging for these cadets and they have demonstrated their professionalism and skills to the highest levels. I congratulate them on their achievements and look forward to seeing them take to the skies on their first commercial flights in the coming weeks." Mr Turner said.

The program included 183 hours of flight training and 74 hours of simulator training as well as visits to maintenance hangars, aircraft inspections and even a test flight with Sir Richard Branson when he was in Australia in May.

The cadets graduate with a Private Pilots Licence (PPL), Commercial Pilot License (CPL); Multi Engine Command Instrument Rating (MECIR), Air Transport Pilots License (ATPL) subjects; Multi-Crew Training and Jet Conversion Training.

The cadets were selected from a group of more than 1100 applications following an extensive interview and testing process.

The next class of cadets has commenced training with graduation expected around November 2014.

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