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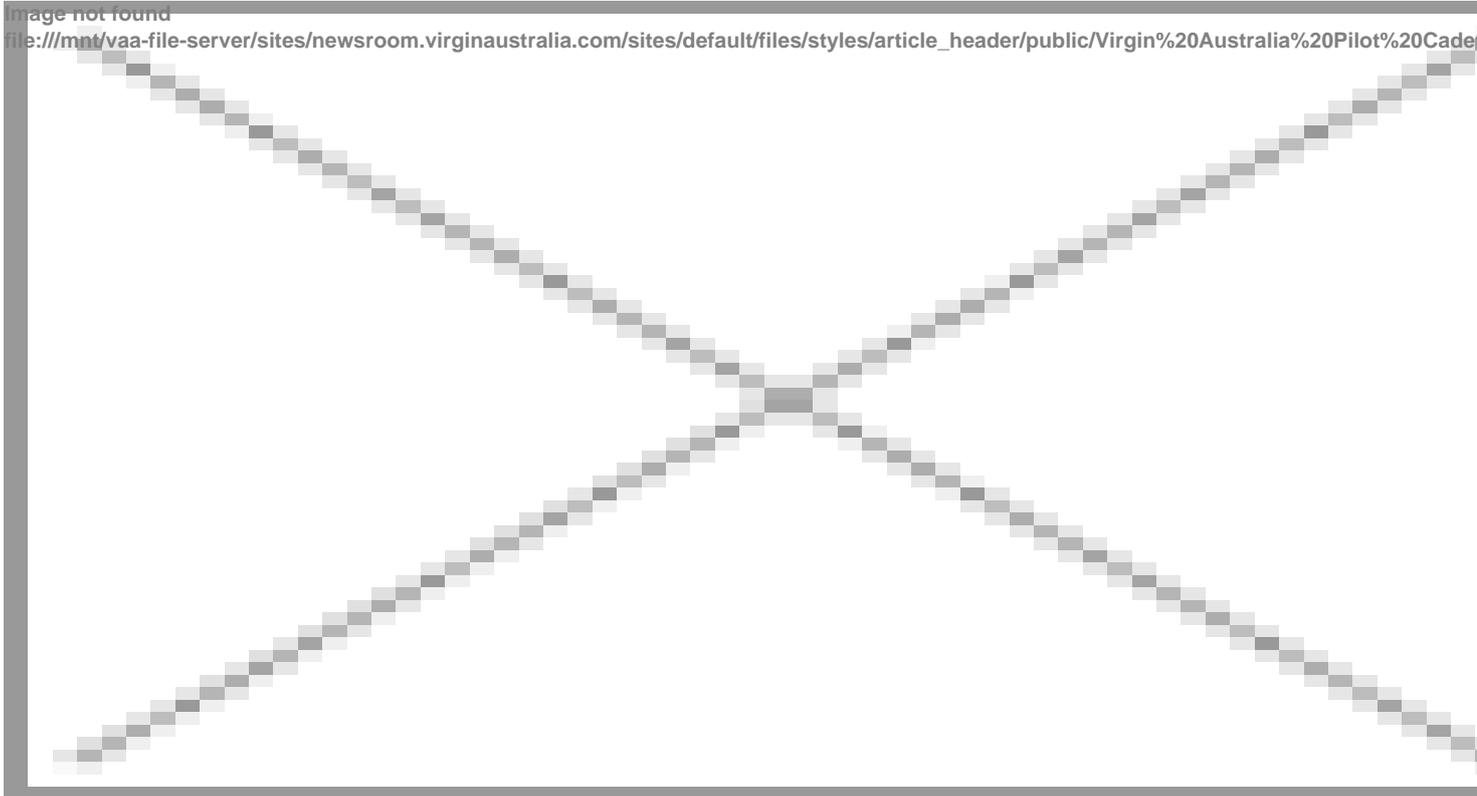
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Virgin Australia's newest pilot cadets ready for take-off ^[2]



Virgin Australia's latest group of pilot cadets are celebrating their graduation, after an extensive 54-week course conducted at Flight Training Adelaide in South Australia.

The graduating group of ab initio pilots have secured flying positions with Virgin Australia and will now move onto the ATR 72 and Boeing 777 aircraft types as certified First and Second Officers.

Virgin Australia Director of Group Flight Operations, Stuart Aggs said: "The cadets have worked extremely hard throughout the program.

"They've reached a major milestone and they should be very proud of how far they've come. We look forward to welcoming the group into Virgin Australia operations," Mr Aggs said.

Graduating cadet James Skordas said: "The Virgin Australia Pilot Cadetship program has been a great stepping stone and experience for me.

"I'm so grateful to have been given the opportunity to enter the program without having flown before, and to be able to learn from some of the best instructors in the industry. My experience has been invaluable and I'm so excited to start my career with Virgin Australia alongside my fellow cadets," he said.

The cadet's graduation comes just weeks after the 2019 intake was announced with 16 new cadets to join the program next year, and after Virgin Australia announced it had been selected by Tamworth Regional Council as the preferred airline group to establish a world-class pilot training centre in the New South Wales city.

"We're part of an industry that is facing a global pilot shortage, which is why it's very important that we continue to invest in our pilot development. With the Virgin Australia Pilot Cadetship program and a new pilot training centre on the horizon, we are committed to continued development and support for Australian pilots," Mr Aggs said.

Virgin Australia has been running its pilot cadetship in conjunction with Flight Training Adelaide since 2012. The next ab initio courses will commence in January and June 2019.

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