

**MR. BRIAN MARTIN**

**STRUCTURES REPAIR ENGINEER,  
AIRBUS, TOULOUSE, FRANCE**

[www.airbus.com](http://www.airbus.com)



### **Education and Training**

→ B. Eng. (Hons) Aeronautical Eng, University of Limerick, Ireland, 1998

### **Current Position**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Employer</b>
Structures Repair Engineer	2008-Present	AIRBUS, Toulouse, France

### **Previous Positions**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Employer</b>
Liaison Engineer, A320 Final Assembly Line	2003-2008	AIRBUS, Toulouse, France
Engineer	2001-2003	AIRBUS, Broughton, UK
Engineer	1998-2001	FLS Aerospace, Dublin, Ireland

### **"Home" Town(s)/County(s)**

GALWAY

### **Please describe your current job**

A large civil aircraft can be in operation for up to 30 years. Sometimes during its operation the aircraft can get damaged. The damage can range from small dents caused by hail stones to large amounts of damage when aircraft collide during parking or taxiing. Luckily this does not happen very often but when it does occur the repair of the aircraft can be complicated and expensive. Airlines will normally try and contact the manufacturer of the aircraft for their advice on the repair of the aircraft.

My role is to respond to the airlines. I am the technical expert who responds to the questions from the airline. Normally, I am based in Toulouse, France, but I deal with queries from around the world. I liaise with other engineers in order to supply suitable instructions to an airline to repair their aircraft. Not alone

are the airlines I deal with located around the world but the team I work in is very international. I have colleagues from the UK, Germany, Spain, France, Mali, Madagascar, Chile and Colombia.

Sometimes due to type of damage or the amount of assistance needed by the airline, I will travel to the airport where the aircraft is located. This can be anywhere in the world and we generally try to be at the aircraft within 24 hours of being requested by an airline. Travel like this can be very sporadic but when it happens it is often interesting but challenging.

**Please describe your career path since graduating with your B.Eng. Aeronautical Eng.**

When I left UL I started working in an aircraft maintenance company in Dublin. The job was a good first job as I was lucky to get an exposure to machine workshops and aircraft overhaul. Back then I probably did not think the experience I had gained as being useful. Later working in other roles I understood the difference between what can be drawn on computer screen and actually how feasible it is to make the part/ component. This understanding is due to my work experience in Dublin.

Later I saw an opportunity to move to the UK to work for Airbus. I worked as an engineer providing technical liaison for Airbus with major component suppliers. The suppliers were located in Australia, Canada, United States and Korea. In this role I learnt a great deal about modern manufacturing and global supply chain management. In that role clear communications and the understanding of different cultures could be just as important as the technical issues.

In 2003 I was offered a position as a liaison engineer working in the Airbus A320 Final Assembly Line in Toulouse. There I was a 'trouble shooter' with regards technical issues' encountered during the production of aircraft. As this was in a production environment I learnt quickly to deal with tight targets. I also had to learn to work in a new culture and language. I arrived in France not speaking a single word of French. I had to learn the technical French used by my colleagues in the factory. I really did learn by 'jumping in at the deep end'.

After 5 years working in the production environment I decided to change job but stay within Airbus. Due to my previous experience I was offered a position within the company's Customer Services Division. Here I provide technical

solutions/ repairs to airlines. The role requires a detailed knowledge of aircraft structures in order to provide instructions to airlines. However in this role the 'soft skills' of presentation, negotiation and project management are as important as the technical knowledge.

**What made you decide to study Aeronautical Engineering at UL?**

As a child I was always curious about how things work. I also had an interest in aircraft and aviation therefore it seemed that the Aeronautical Engineering course was the one for me.

When I was filling out the CAO form back in 1994 I did think that that the chances of getting an aviation job in Ireland would be slim on leaving university. I always thought I would be emigrating but I wanted to have studied something that interested me. Eventually I did emigrate but I have been working in an area that interests me.

**Are you glad you did?**

Yes.

**What did you most enjoy about studying at UL - academically, and also non-academically?**

**Where did you do your COOP?**

I did my COOP at Boeing in Seattle. It was a great experience for me personally and professionally. I was very lucky and I learnt a great deal on my COOP thanks to the engineers who mentored me. They were keen to pass on their knowledge and experience.

When I started looking for a job after graduating the fact that I had already worked in a company such as Boeing was a great advantage. Indeed it is still being commented upon 14 years later!

**What advice would you give school-goers considering choosing Aeronautical Engineering?**

If you are interested in engineering *and* aircraft this might be the course for you. Though I think that it is important that you should be interested in engineering first and aircraft secondly.

**What advice would you give future graduates of Aeronautical Engineering?**

When leaving UL remember this is only the start. Aviation is a very small business in Ireland but there are many opportunities around the world. Aviation is a global business.

As an engineer it is important to be curious, always pay attention to details and keep training. At the start of your career it is important to build up a strong technical knowledge and problem solving skills.

As your career progresses the skills of negotiation, presentations and meetings will become more important but without the technical knowledge it will be difficult to be taken seriously as an engineer.