

Graduate Profile, Aeronautical Engineering, University of Limerick, Ireland
JAMES DRUDY

MR. JAMES DRUDY

**ENGINEERING SERVICES MANAGER
CAE PARC AVIATION, SINGAPORE**

www.caeparcaviation.com



Education and Training

→ B. Eng. (Hons) Aeronautical Eng, University of Limerick, Ireland, 2007

Current Position

Title	Dates	Employer
Engineering Service Manager	Jan 2014-	CAE Parc Aviation, Singapore

Previous Positions

Title	Dates	Employer
Lead Stress Engineer	Sept 2011 - Dec 2013	Airbus, Toulouse, France
Stress Engineer	July 2009 - Sept 2011	Airbus, Filton, Bristol, UK
Direct Entry Graduate - Structures	Sept 2007 - July 2009	Airbus, Filton, Bristol, UK
Maintenance Engineer	May 2006 - Sept 2006	Westair Aviation Ltd, Shannon, Ireland
Student Engineer	June 2005 - Jan 2006	Irish Air Corps, Baldonnel, Dublin 22, Ireland

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

Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland

Please describe your current job

Four years have passed since I first compiled one of these graduate profiles. My life and my job have changed quite significantly.

Having spent over 6 years working with Airbus in a technical role, I jumped at an opportunity to work with CAE Parc Aviation in a multi-disciplinary role. I joined

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CAE Parc Aviation at the start of 2014 and moved to Singapore to establish our new engineering services office in support of lessors and airlines in Asia Pacific. This office is complementary to our engineering services office located at our Dublin HQ. I wear a variety of different hats in this new role.

From a technical perspective, my focus is on the Part 21 Design Approved Organisation and the CAMO (Continuing Airworthiness Management Organisation) parts of our business with a bias towards the Part 21 Design work based on my previous experience.

Our EASA DOA approval means we are approved to assist lessors and airlines with a variety of changes and repairs to large aeroplanes related to structure, electrical systems, installation of avionics equipment, cabin interiors, galleys and other interior equipment. While our EASA CAMO approval means we can act as a CAMO organisation on behalf of lessors when an aircraft is, for example, in transition or in storage.

However, I also have a more general responsibility for sales, marketing, business development and customer support in Asia Pacific, where my focus is on generating new business; identify potential business opportunities and increasing the company profile in the region. My aim here is to promote all the services offered by CAE Parc Aviation which in addition to the services mentioned already include flight crew, ferry flights and the provision of technical personnel amongst others.

I'm really enjoying my new role. Every day is different and it is really refreshing to be able to mix dealing with technical problems with some of the more commercial aspects of engineering and aviation. Getting to do all of this in a cosmopolitan city like Singapore is another huge positive. Aviation in Asia is thriving and Singapore is at the forefront of that, particularly within leasing.

Oh... the weather isn't too shabby either!

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

I joined Airbus on the DEG scheme in September 2007 and enjoyed a variety of placements in different departments over two years. These included stress, design, repair and manufacturing engineering roles both internal to Airbus and on secondment to a customer, Aveos in Montreal, Canada.

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Between 2009 and 2011, my focus was stressing wing structures in the future programmes team where we were looking at different options for a single aisle replacement aircraft to follow on from the A320 family. Company strategy switched during this time and my focus turned to A320neo. I was one of the first people working on the A320neo wing team. My activities varied from completing detailed static or fatigue and damage tolerance stress work to integrating the work of some of our external suppliers to liaising with other teams in the UK and abroad in relations to requirements in terms of loads and GFEMs.

In September 2011, I moved to Broughton in North Wales to join the A350XWB MAP team. The MAP team was responsible enabling the build of the first wings (and all following wings) of the A350XWB. We were the face of design engineering for manufacturing engineering & production. I followed the first wing sets from Broughton (wing structural assembly) to Bremen (majority of wing systems installation) to Toulouse (final assembly line) where I transferred to Airbus France.

As lead stress engineer for systems installation, I was responsible items related to systems installation which impacted stress such as concessions, design query notes and special instructions for flight test. However, during my time with A350XWB MAP I found myself, along with many of my colleagues, completing a variety of tasks unrelated to my job title to ensure deadlines were met in the flight test programme.

This was a great experience during which I learned a great deal. We worked in a high pressure and deadline orientated environment. It was both interesting and challenging. I look back upon that time very fondly.

What made you decide to study Aeronautical Engineering at UL?

Can't remember exactly! I know I wanted to be a pilot when I was much younger but I grew out of that! I think more than anything I thought I was suited to engineering, and aeronautical engineering seemed like an interesting specialism.

Are you glad you did?

Yes - I said yes when I first completed one of these profiles and I will reiterate my answer now. I enjoyed my time there and feel that the education and experiences I gained stood me in good stead for my working life. A good engineering degree offers you a platform on which to base your career. Regardless of the career route you take, I believe it is a great starter point.

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From my graduate year in 2007, I know there are pilots (both civil and military), army officers, technical services engineers, teachers, accountants, stress engineers, academics, composite manufacturing experts, lessors, air traffic controllers etc... These people work with a variety of different companies around the world but they all started in the same place.

Outside of that, I really like the campus in UL and enjoyed the lifestyle afforded by studying on and living near a campus university. Enjoy it while you can...

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

It might sound a bit cheesy but the friends I made and all the good things I experienced are what I enjoyed most about UL. I think the campus environment is a nice environment in which to study - something which has improved further since I've left.

From a work point of view, I enjoyed the camaraderie that existed amongst my fellow students when the proverbial had hit the fan, and deadlines or exams were fast approaching. In addition, I think the structures labs in my final year were very useful and helped to link classical theory with FEM and what was actually happening to the structure. In the years after my graduation I know that work focused on improving these labs which is a credit to the department.

Where did you do your COOP?

I spent 8 months working with the Irish Air Corps in Baldonnel, Dublin. It was a great experience. I was working on aircraft on daily basis in the maintenance environment.

I think it is hard to beat "hands-on" experience. It was really friendly place to work and most people went out of their way to help you. On top of that, the role was reasonably well paid considering I was used to the student lifestyle. Thankfully this allowed me to enjoy a fairly hectic social life in Dublin.

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

Advice for school goers... It has been less than 8 years but I have no idea what sort of advice I would have needed when I was back in school! I think the most important thing is to make sure you are studying the subjects you are good at and that you enjoy. Similarly, you should pick a University course following the same mantra.

If you do want to study Aeronautical Engineering, then subjects like Maths, Physics and Applied Maths will help make your first couple of years a bit easier in my opinion.

However, my single biggest regret from school is not leaving fluent in Irish or German, the former being a matter of pride and the latter because of the opportunities a second language can afford you. A second or third language is always a useful tool.

What advice would you give future graduates of Aeronautical Engineering?

I'm not going to change the first four points in this section because they are as relevant now as when I compiled them four years ago. Life would be easier if I paid more attention to them on a regular basis. However, I will add a few additional points:

1. It's a generic one that can be applied to every facet in life - the only things in life you'll regret are the things you don't do! There is little point in waking up at the age of 80 asking yourself why you didn't do this or that.
2. Take your time - I think we all leave University and want to take over the world, get promoted, earn money etc... I think the more sensible approach would be to focus on gaining the fundamental technical knowledge within your discipline. I think once you have technical credibility and you have a good attitude, everything else should fall into place.
3. Manage your Manager - If you're busy, then he/she is probably busier. If you have a problem or need guidance with something, don't just present them with a problem. Take ownership of the problem, come up with a number of solutions and then present your manager with the solutions. You will be adding value. You'll save their time, you'll better understand the issue and you'll actually feel like an engineer when you leave the office that day!

4. Time Management - This is very important as it impacts on your life in and out of work. The more efficient you are with your time the more free time you'll have. As you get busier you'll have to prioritise tasks and I think the two questions you need to ask yourself are: 1. What is urgent and 2. What is important? Something might be urgent but if it isn't important then why waste your time doing it!
5. There are opportunities all around the world - don't be blinkered into choosing the normal or easy option all the time. Aviation is a global business - consider opportunities in Asia, Latin America etc...
6. Hard work pays off. If you work hard and consistently perform above expectations it will be recognised.
7. Enjoy yourself! You'll be dead long enough!