



AUSTRALIAN
Helicopter
ACADEMY

**LEARN TO
FLY IN THE
KIMBERLEY**



ABOUT AUSTRALIAN HELICOPTER ACADEMY

Australian Helicopter Academy (AHA) is a specialised helicopter flight training facility located in Kununurra, Western Australia. Affiliated with HeliSpirit, the Australian Helicopter Academy provides Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) training with the aim of employing students on completion. Training is conducted alongside the day-to-day operations of HeliSpirit, with students gaining a first-hand insight into one of Australia's most successful and exciting helicopter businesses.

With new facilities, including a study room and modern classroom which overlooks the busy maintenance facility of HeliSpirit, it is an exciting place to learn to fly. The Australian Helicopter Academy operates a fleet of immaculate training helicopters including the Robinson R22 and R44.

The Australian Helicopter Academy is very fortunate to have one of the most spectacular training environments anywhere in Australia with a great diversity of terrain and an unlimited number of off-field landing sites right on the doorstep of the airport.

Australian Helicopter Academy instructors are experienced professional helicopter pilots whose daily work includes; check & training, aerial survey, aerial-ignition/firefighting, remote charter inc. various government departments, VIP multi-day adventure flights, tourism, and much more. They will share their industry knowledge with students through quality instruction as a result of the thousands of flight hours under their belts.

The Australian Helicopter Academy use only highly experienced instructor pilots to train students in one of the most spectacular yet challenging environments in Australia, with the intention of offering employment to them at the completion of their training.





ABOUT HELISPIRIT

HeliSpirit currently operates 25 helicopters from the Robinson R22 to the Airbus Helicopters (formerly Eurocopter) AS350 Squirrel. It employs approximately 35 helicopter pilots each tourist season (from March to October) to primarily conduct scenic flights from remote bases around the Northern Territory and Western Australia, making it one of the largest employers of new pilots in Australia.

For more information on the wide range of services offered and locations, visit www.helispirit.com.au

HeliSpirit's selection criteria is based on flying skills, attitude, professionalism, teamwork and an overarching commitment to high levels of safety. Well developed people skills and friendly customer service are attributes necessary in HeliSpirit commercial pilots. Australian Helicopter Academy will shape you into a safe and skilled pilot in a very rewarding and satisfying environment.

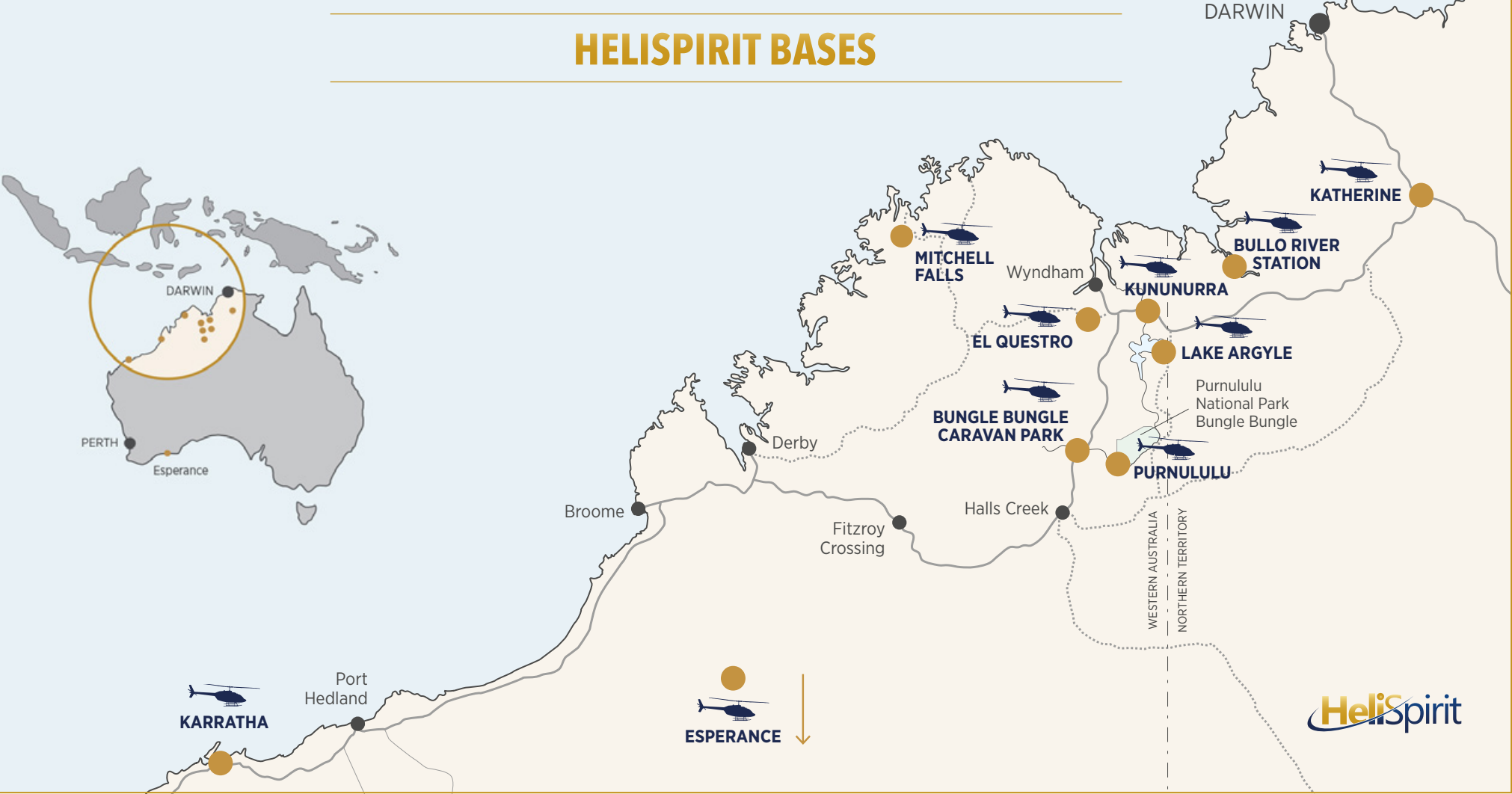
When you graduate you will be ready for employment, with a fully comprehensive skill base that will be seen by prospective employers as a cut above the rest. Our instructors also have many contacts within the helicopter industry to help you pursue other employment opportunities.

To date, 100% of students who have completed their CPL through the Australian Helicopter Academy and applied for employment with HeliSpirit have been successful.





HELISPIRIT BASES





AUSTRALIAN
Helicopter
ACADEMY

R22

Eisley



WHY TRAIN WITH THE AUSTRALIAN HELICOPTER ACADEMY?

✓ High chance of employment

One of the biggest hurdles in a pilot's career is finding their first job after leaving flight school. In Australia, it's not uncommon for prospective pilots to drive around the country, stopping at every scenic flight company on the way for a year or more before landing their first job and even then it's often a ground-based role for another year or two prior to being offered a flying role. The primary reason we have set up AHA is to increase the standard of pilots we employ in our charter business, HeliSpirit. While we can't guarantee positions every year, so far all AHA students who have completed their licence with the intention of gaining employment with HeliSpirit have achieved exactly that and are now well on their way to a successful career as a helicopter pilot.

✓ Highly experienced instructors

We have a small number of HeliSpirit instructor pilots who all have a wide range of industry experience.

Our instructors are also part of the HeliSpirit Check and Training team maintaining the high standards both AHA and HeliSpirit are recognised for throughout the industry.

✓ Training environment

We're very fortunate with the training environment we have here, with the Kimberley region offering a great diversity of terrain and unlimited number of off-field landing sites right on the doorstep of the airport. Kununurra aerodrome is non-towered, which greatly reduces time wasted waiting for clearances and traffic. For the controlled airspace portion of the flight training, some will be simulated at Kununurra but most will be conducted at Darwin which is a military-controlled Class C international airport.

✓ In-house maintenance

You'll have exposure to a large commercial helicopter company where we encourage students to interact with our company pilots and engineering staff. This allows you to gain valuable contacts and help with aircraft servicing to get a better understanding of how the helicopter works.



BECOMING A HELICOPTER PILOT

The flight training portion takes most students around three and a half months to complete. Rather than the common flight school structure of only coming in for your allocated training period each day, AHA students are generally here during business hours Monday to Friday. There is always in-house study to do when not flying and often opportunities to learn more about the mechanical side of the helicopter in the hangar.

While conducting your training, subsidised student accommodation is available at our fully furnished house located in Kununurra.

Please note, as part of our Drug and Alcohol Management Policy, you will be required to complete a standard pre-employment drug and alcohol test in Kununurra at the beginning of your flight training.





+ Obtain a Medical Certificate

A commercial pilot requires a Class 1 Aviation Medical Certificate which is renewed every 12 months. It is a good idea to do one before starting your training just in case anything unexpected comes up.

A list of CASA Designated Aviation Medical Examiners (DAME's) can be found here: <https://www.casa.gov.au/licences-and-certification/aviation-medicine/search-medical-examiner-or-eye-examiner>

To be eligible to complete the medical examination you will need an Aviation Reference Number (ARN). The form can be obtained using the following link to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) website: <https://www.casa.gov.au/licences-and-certification/individual-licensing>

+ Conduct an interview

While a bit unusual for a flight school, being accepted as a student with AHA is subject to an interview. This is because we only wish to train people who have the attitude and ability to be employable at the end of their licence, whether with HeliSpirit or elsewhere in the helicopter industry.

+ Complete your theory training

As well as completing the minimum flight hours, CASA also requires applicants to complete the seven commercial theory examinations. Unlike most flight schools, we require students to complete their theory exams prior to commencing flight training.

This ensures you have a solid foundation of knowledge for us to build on right from your very first flying lesson and increases the chances of finishing your flying training as close as possible to the minimum hours.

There are a number of dedicated theory schools in Australia whose sole focus is preparing students for the CASA exams. They all offer full-time courses which take about 3 months, or self-study options where you can go at your own pace. Some schools we recommend are:

- Advanced Flight Theory (AFT), Maroochydore (Sunshine Coast): www.advancedflighttheory.com.au
- Infinitas, Dubbo NSW: www.infinitasaviation.com.au
- HeliTheory, Bankstown NSW: www.helitheory.com.au

+ Complete your flight training

The minimum number of hours required for a commercial helicopter licence in Australia is 105 but is subject to the following conditions:

- You must complete the last 30 hours within 90 days.
- You can only train in a maximum of two different helicopter types.
- If training is conducted in more than one helicopter type, you must do a minimum of 20 hours in each type.
- The first 15 hours must be conducted in one of the two types.
- At least 40 hours of dual flight training must be conducted across the two types.
- At least 25 hours of solo flight training must be conducted across the two types (not including cross-country training).



DID YOU KNOW?

Most students complete the majority of the training in the R22 to keep the cost down and then a minimum of 20 hours in the R44.

It's also important to be aware that, while the R22 has a maximum weight limit for each seat of 109kg, due to fuel loading it is very difficult to train students weighing more than 90kg in that aircraft and you may need to consider training solely in the R44.

The upside to the extra cost of training in the R44 is that most insurance companies need pilots to have at least 20 hours on type to be covered and therefore you will be much more employable once you get your licence.



HIGHLY EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTORS

Instructors at the Australian Helicopter Academy have a vast and wide range of experience, with an extensive number of flying hours between them.

Their experience includes having flown for commercial operators throughout Australia and overseas in a large scope of operations including charter, filming/photography, firefighting/aerial ignition, mining exploration, power-line inspections, and flight training, just to name a few!

This can give you a distinct insight into many facets of the aviation industry.

Our instructors are also part of the HeliSpirit Check and Training team maintaining the high standards both AHA and HeliSpirit are recognised for throughout the industry.

During training, our instructors will highlight the skills needed to perform operations and the Kimberley region offers great diversity to build your skills.

We endeavour to help guide you on the journey to attain your goals and aspirations as a professional helicopter pilot and give you a head-start in your pilot career.



Helispirit



TRIAL INSTRUCTIONAL FLIGHT

What better way to introduce yourself to the life of a helicopter pilot with a trial flight!

Duration	Approximately 45 minutes
Helicopter	Robinson R22 (subject to student weight)
Location	Kununurra HeliSpirit Base

Includes:

- ✓ Pre-flight briefing on the primary effect of controls, explaining which flight control does what
- ✓ Pre-flight briefing on the hand-over and take-over procedure of the flight controls
- ✓ An overview of the helicopter
- ✓ Instructor starts the helicopter, taxis and departs the aerodrome
- ✓ Instructor demonstrates the effects of each primary control
- ✓ The student flies along a defined course at a constant airspeed
- ✓ Instructor invites the student to take each control separately then multiple controls and eventually all controls together to fly the helicopter straight and level at a constant airspeed
- ✓ The student flies the helicopter around an area descending and decelerating to a slow speed at low level
- ✓ The student attempts to hover
- ✓ The student flies the helicopter back to the aerodrome, makes an approach to the landing area and once again attempts to hover the helicopter





LIFE IN THE KIMBERLEY – STUDY/LIFE BALANCE

The vibrant town of Kununurra is a great place to be while studying. There is a strong sense of community in the town and a plethora of things to do and see in your free time.

As the gateway to the magnificent Kimberley region, Kununurra offers a wide variety of outdoor activities. Boating, camping, fishing, four-wheel driving and hiking are just some of the ways you can spend your downtime.

With World Heritage-listed sites and national parks at your doorstep, it is an ideal place to explore while you complete your pilot training.

AIRCRAFT RATES AND INFORMATION

Standard hourly rates

- R22 = \$695/hr (GST exempt for Commercial Helicopter Licence)*
- R44 = \$995/hr (GST exempt for Commercial Helicopter Licence)*

Additional costs

- Commercial Licence Testing Fee = \$1,550+GST* plus flight time incurred (approx. 3 hours).
- AHA Books/Checklists/R22 POH and Pilot Logbook = \$150 inc. GST*.

*Prices valid until 30 June 2025 and are subject to change

All flying hours are charged from engine on to engine off which you will find standard in training schools around the country.

Below is a rough cost summary based on the most common training option of mostly training in the R22, as well as completing the minimum 20 hours in the R44.

This will vary to suit the requirements of each student:

CPL Licence Expenses*	
85 hours x \$695/hr	\$59,075.00
20 hours x \$995/hr	\$19,900.00
Theory (Full time at AFT)	\$4,490.00
Books/Nav Equipment	\$500.00
ASL/CASA Exam Fees	\$1,055.00
Flight Test Fee (\$1,550 + GST)	\$1,705.00
Flight Test Hours (3 x R44 + GST)	\$3,284.00
TOTAL	\$90,009.00

It is important to remember this calculation is based on the bare minimum hours and most students require around 110 hours to meet the required standard so to be safe, we generally recommend to budget on about \$95,000.00.

*Prices valid until 30 June 2025 and are subject to change



VH-TRK

AUSTRALIAN
Helicopter
ACADEMY

R22
Beta II



STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES

Callum MacKellar, WA

Callum MacKellar undertook CPL training with the Australian Helicopter Academy in 2022.

“I came across AHA by chance while travelling and was immediately sold on the idea of doing the training with them. The idea of training and living in the Kimberley was all I needed to sign up, it was a bonus that AHA are some of the best in the business. I couldn’t recommend AHA highly enough. The training environment fully immerses you in the industry which helps endlessly in learning all that is required to get your licence. The people involved in the training and the HeliSpirit employees made the entire process an unforgettable experience.”

Callum successfully gained employment with HeliSpirit upon the completion of his Commercial Pilots Licence. He is currently a line pilot at HeliSpirit’s El Questro Base.



STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES

Sam Bleakley, VIC

Sam Bleakley undertook CPL training with the Australian Helicopter Academy in 2016.

“The decision was easy for me when choosing to do my training with AHA. They have experienced instructors who have incredible experience in all areas of the helicopter industry such as long lining, fire fighting, mustering etc. Being exposed to a large helicopter business has also been brilliant as you get real insight into how a professional helicopter company is run and what they expect from a professional pilot. Having LAME’s and Avionics engineers on hand has been a huge bonus as they gave me a solid understanding to the ins and outs of a wide range of aircraft. Most of all I was influenced with the scenario-based flying and the attention to detail that AHA provide so I can become a true professional in the industry.”

Sam successfully gained employment with HeliSpirit upon the completion of his Commercial Pilots Licence. Sam completed his turbine endorsement in late 2019 and began flying turbine helicopters throughout the 2019/20 wet season. He is currently working as a line-pilot at our Kununurra base.





STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES

Harry Shaw, ACT

Harry Shaw undertook CPL training with the Australian Helicopter Academy in 2022.

"I am Harry an electrician from Canberra. I heard about AHA when I went for an incredible scenic flight over Katherine gorge with HeliSpirit and was talking to a previous student (now pilot's) experience and how he went about getting his licence.

I started my training with AHA in September after completing all the theory at AFT.

I decided to go with AHA after extensive research into different schools on the East Coast and talking to as many people in the industry that I had connections with. The main deciding factor came down to a job prospect at the end of my training, as well as the quality and detailed training provided by the school.

Living in the Kimberly was incredible. Every weekend had new opportunity to explore the surrounding areas of Kununurra, either going up the Ord River cliff jumping or 4wding into remote cascades or heading to Lake Argyle & El Questro.

Highlights of the training has to be the training areas available to AHA. There is everything from open paddocks to tight gorges to remote pinnacles everywhere is stunning and with a bit of rain waterfalls pop up everywhere.

I would 100% recommend AHA to people looking to get there CPL. Being in the Kimberley means you don't waste any time with controlled airspace, get to explore stunning areas and have top tier instructors as well as the added bonus of working with HeliSpirit where you gain an understanding of how a commercial operator works and the potential for employment straight out of training!"

Harry successfully gained employment with HeliSpirit on completion of his training. Harry is now base manager at HeliSpirit's base in Bullo River Valley.

For more information about starting your career as a helicopter pilot please visit:

www.australianhelicopteracademy.com.au

or follow us on  Facebook or  Instagram



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