Forging a career at the cutting edge of safety

Flight Lieutenant Baz Bardoe

He may no longer wear the uniform but Mark Wade is still very much part of the Air force team. As Director of Aviation Certification at the Directorate General Technical Airworthiness – ADF, Mark was honoured to receive the latest Air Force APS Team Member of the Year Award.

The award recognises an APS employee who exemplifies both the APS and Air Force Values and acknowledges an outstanding contribution to the Air Force team.

Mark received the award for enhancing the delivery of air power to the Australian Government, and playing a pivotal role in fostering the reputation of Air Force in both the Defence and wider community.

Mark says his Directorate’s work makes an essential contribution to capability through safety, focusing on “the initial airworthiness of manned aircraft, unmanned aircraft and ships’ aviation facilities”.

“We define standards for the design of these systems, guide project offices through the process of accepting a new design, and then confirm that the design is safe. We ensure risk is well characterised from a technical perspective so that Defence can make well-informed risk treatment decisions,” he says. Remotely piloted aircraft are an example. “No airworthiness authority in the world – civil or military – has yet defined a long-term approach to managing unmanned aerial systems’ airworthiness, which means we’re constantly breaking new ground,” he says.

Mark joined the Air Force in 1984 and was posted to RAAF Base Pearce, where he attained a Bachelor of Electronic Engineering degree at Curtin University. Over 15 years in the Air Force he reached the rank of squadron leader, and managed a variety of technical areas before joining the APS in 1999.

The Director General of Technical Airworthiness, Air Commodore James Hood, is delighted Mark won the award, saying he exemplifies both APS and Air Force values. “He works in a demanding area that is not widely understood. The work his team does is essential to delivering on capability and safety,” James says.

Mark says the award reflects the quality of the “great bunch of people” he works with.

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