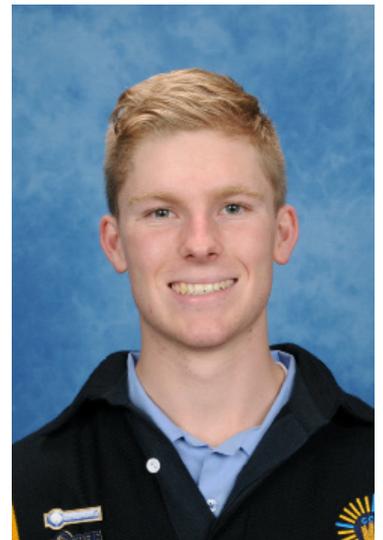


NICK SCHEIDL

AIRBASE PROTECTION, AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE

Why did you choose to apply for the ADF Gap Year? Around mid Year 12 I reduced the days I worked per week to one, allowing me to focus on my preparation for exams and the tougher part of the year where SACS are back to back and days can feel very crammed. With this decision I knew I wouldn't have enough money to support myself comfortably at University the next year, so I decided to take a gap year rather than go straight to Uni. The thing for me though was I didn't want to take just the usual Gap Year where I'd be working a very normal type of job, I wanted an experience, and it just so happened that Defence offers one that is not only both challenging and rewarding and only for a year as opposed to 3, but also pays you very comfortably.



What has the gap year been like so far what duties do you undertake in your job? Starting out as a rookie at Recruits at 1RTU, RAAF Base Wagga, was definitely a different type of treatment I wasn't used to, although if it wasn't for that, recruits wouldn't have been half the fun it was. The real highlight of recruits was the down time, in-between the Drill, countless theory lessons, PT sessions, weapons handling tests, and more Drill! These were the moments where your course-mates became your best mates. Once graduating from here I was posted to RAAF Base Amberley where I began my security training at the Security and Fire School (SFS). Here we were trained in our specific mustering (job), Airbase Protection before being posted to our job locations, mine being RAAF Base Williamtown.

With my current mustering, my main priority is protecting Airforce assets (Aircraft and People) on the Flight-line. We conduct security patrols, are authorised to search vehicles, and are the primary response to incidents on the Airbase where if need be, we apprehend an intruder. We also work closely with the Military Working Dogs which always adds a bit of fun to the shift.

Highlights from this year so far? The first day at Recruits, being woken up at 4:45 and being screamed at was probably the most scared I've ever been in my entire life! From that moment we were the lowest of the low in the Airforce, but every day after that we felt we were working towards something, and gradually bit by bit, we were treated with more respect and responsibilities. In the big picture it seems minuscule, however at the time we felt unstoppable!

Our Graduation ceremony at recruits was a very memorable day. Having friends and my whole family there including my 98 year old grandma made it a very special experience, especially when I was awarded the course Airman. Knowing she was watching made the whole 11 week ordeal so worth it.

During our security training at the School, we were OSSB (Occupational Safety Skills Basic) trained. This included hand to hand apprehension techniques, weapon disarming, pressure points, handcuffing, baton usage and OC spray. Our assessment for our lessons was to be partnered up and go into a large padded room where a scenario was taking place and we'd have to respond while being assessed. The majority of this was verbal communication based, however when one of the suspects (a 6'4" CPL) tried to attack my partner (5'1" girl) I executed a near perfect seatbelt takedown rendering the Perp flat on his back. Then watching her accidentally punch him in the face giving him a nose bleed and having all the assessing CPL's laugh was pretty memorable.

What personal skills have you developed from the gap year program: With Defence, every day is a test of your leadership, whether it be you as the appointed 2IC (2nd in command) meaning it is up to you to make the big calls for your section or course, or tests in your followership skills, that you trust your appointed 2IC's decisions and will follow them no matter what. For myself, this year has had a massive impact on my organisational skills and ability to prioritise tasks. When I wasn't as strong in these areas as I needed to, achieving results in designated time frames was near impossible. With that being said, Defence deliberately pushes you to step up your game in these areas so you can be the best you can be.