

Air Vice-Marshal Rodney Noble, AO

Rodney Noble was born in 1921 at Sydney, N.S.W. He was the son of notable Australian Cricket Captain 'Monty' Noble, whose name is perpetuated in the M.A. Noble Stand at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

After he obtained a Bachelor of Engineering (Aeronautical) Degree at Sydney University, he enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force in October 1943. After completing pilot training he served with No 1 Air Performance Unit Laverton engaged in flight-testing a variety of aircraft. He was demobilised in 1946 and became a Plans and Performance engineer for TAA.

He re-joined the RAAF in March 1947 in the Technical Branch with the rank of Flight Lieutenant. He was posted to Air Force Headquarters, Melbourne, for technical staff duties and in 1949 to Aircraft Research and Development Unit, Laverton, for engineering duties. In the 1950's Air Vice-Marshal Noble under the direction of the Australian Government visited France and the United Kingdom to investigate high-speed flight research then being carried out into the so-called 'sound barrier'. Returning to Australia in 1953 he was posted British Atomic Bomb testing facilities in South Australia where he was to witness the first British atomic bomb test.

Air Vice-Marshal Noble underwent the RAAF Staff College Course in 1954 and on completion of the course in January 1955 was posted to No 482 (Maintenance) Squadron, Amberley, for engineering duties. In January 1957 he was appointed to the Directing Staff of the RAAF Staff College, Fairbairn, ACT, and in April 1959 was posted to Department of Air, Melbourne for electronic data processing duties. In May 1960, he was posted to the staff of the Air Attaché, Washington, for engineering staff duties and on his return to Australia in October 1962 was posted to Headquarters Support Command for engineering staff duties. In July 1964 Air Vice-Marshal Noble was appointed Commanding Officer of the RAAF School of Technical Training, Wagga, NSW. In 1968 underwent the Imperial Defence College Course in the United Kingdom. On his return to Australia in February 1969 he was appointed Director of Maintenance Policy at Department of Air, Canberra, and in January 1971, he was appointed the Director General of Engineering Plans. In January 1975 was appointed the Controller of Services Laboratories and Trials Division, Department of Defence, Canberra. He was promoted to Air Vice-Marshal and appointed Chief of Technical Services Air Force in 1979 until his retirement in 1981.

Following his retirement from the RAAF, Rod Noble served as the Manager of the Canberra Office of Rockwell Collins (A'sia) between 1982-85. He was President of the Manufacturing Association of Australia in 1986. He served as Chairman of Institution of Engineers. Rodney Noble died on 4 February 1995.