

Aircraft Refueller interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for aircraft refueller roles typically focus on safety, process discipline, and your ability to work under time pressure. Employers want to see that you understand aviation fuel handling rules and can stay calm during busy turnarounds.

- **Process:** Questions that ask you to walk through a standard fuelling procedure step by step.
- **Behavioural:** Questions about past experiences, such as handling a fuel spill or a tight deadline.
- **Scenario:** Hypothetical situations that test your judgement when flights are delayed or equipment fails.
- **Technical:** Questions on fuel grades, earthing, bonding, and documentation.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions that probe your knowledge of dangerous goods regulations and CASA requirements.
- **Teamwork and communication:** Questions about interacting with flight crew, ground handlers, and supervisors.

The interview usually starts with a phone screen covering your licences and availability. A face-to-face interview with a supervisor follows, often including a safety quiz and a practical walkthrough of fuelling equipment. Some employers ask you to complete a short written test on dangerous goods handling.

1. Walk me through your step-by-step process for fuelling an aircraft from arrival at the stand to completion.

Why they ask

This tests your procedural knowledge and attention to safety checkpoints.

How to structure your answer

A chronological walk-through: describe each stage in order, from parking the bowser and earthing to connecting the nozzle, monitoring volume, disconnecting, and completing paperwork. Highlight where you check grade, quality, and safety equipment.

Example answer

"First, I park the bowser at a safe distance, set the handbrake, and put on high-visibility vest. I check the aircraft type and fuel grade on the flight paperwork, then earth the aircraft and the bowser. I inspect the hose and nozzle for damage, and confirm spill kit and fire extinguisher are ready. I connect the nozzle to the fuel point, open the valve slowly, and monitor the volume on the meter. Once the target volume is reached, I close the valve, disconnect the nozzle, and secure the hose. I record the volume and grade on the documentation and report any defects to the supervisor. Finally, I remove earthing and move the bowser away."

2. Tell me about a time you noticed a fuel quality issue or discrepancy. What did you do?

Why they ask

This shows your vigilance and ability to follow escalation procedures.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the Situation, the Task, the Action you took, and the Result. Focus on how you identified the issue, who you told, and how you prevented a problem.

Example answer

"During a routine fuelling, I noticed the fuel sample had a slight cloudiness that wasn't normal. The situation was a potential contamination. My task was to ensure the aircraft didn't receive substandard fuel. I immediately stopped fuelling and informed my supervisor. I took a fresh sample and compared it to the previous one. The supervisor tested it and confirmed it was within limits, but my caution was noted. The result was no contaminated fuel entered the aircraft, and I learned to trust my instincts and escalate early."

3. You have three aircraft to fuel and one is running late. How do you prioritise?

Why they ask

This tests your judgement under pressure and your ability to communicate with the operations team.

How to structure your answer

A triage approach: explain how you assess urgency based on departure times, fuel requirements, and available equipment. Mention communicating with the supervisor and flight crew to adjust priorities.

Example answer

"I would first check the departure times and fuel loads for each aircraft. The late aircraft would be my top priority if its departure is most imminent. I would radio the supervisor to confirm the new order and let the other crews know there may be a short delay. I would fuel the late aircraft first, then move to the next most urgent. If two are equally urgent, I would ask the supervisor to decide. Throughout, I would keep communication clear so everyone knows the plan."

4. What checks do you complete before connecting the nozzle to an aircraft?

Why they ask

This assesses your technical knowledge of safety and quality procedures.

How to structure your answer

A checklist approach: cover earthing, bonding, fuel grade, sample quality, equipment condition, and paperwork. Explain why each check matters.

Example answer

"Before connecting, I check the aircraft fuel point for damage and ensure it is clean. I confirm the fuel grade against the flight paperwork and the bowser. I take a fuel sample from the bowser to check for water or particles. I ensure the aircraft and bowser are properly earthed and bonded to prevent static sparks. I inspect the hose and nozzle for wear or leaks. I also confirm the spill kit and fire extinguisher are within reach. Only after all these checks do I connect the nozzle."

5. Describe how you handle a fuel spill on the tarmac.

Why they ask

This is a core safety question that every refueller must answer confidently.

How to structure your answer

Immediate actions first: stop fuelling, contain the spill, protect drains, notify supervisor. Then describe cleanup and reporting. Emphasise environmental protection and regulatory compliance.

Example answer

"If I see a spill, I immediately stop fuelling and shut off the valve. I alert those nearby and put on personal protective equipment. I use the spill kit to contain the fuel, building a dam with absorbent material and blocking any drains. I notify my supervisor and the airport emergency services if needed. I do not use water to wash it away. After cleanup, I dispose of contaminated material according to environmental regulations and complete an incident report. I also review what caused the spill to prevent it happening again."

6. How would you handle a disagreement with a flight engineer about fuel load?

Why they ask

This tests your communication skills and ability to follow procedures while maintaining good working relationships.

How to structure your answer

A collaborative approach: listen to their concern, explain your understanding based on paperwork, and escalate if needed. Focus on safety and accuracy.

Example answer

"I would listen to the flight engineer's concern first. I would then check the flight paperwork and fuel order to confirm the required load. If there is a discrepancy, I would politely explain what I have on my documentation. If we still disagree, I would ask my supervisor to clarify. I would never fuel beyond the safe limit or ignore a legitimate safety concern. The goal is to resolve it quickly and correctly so the flight can depart on time."