

A•S•U national bulletin



Airlines

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Qantas Grounds Airline – What you need to do

At 5pm AEDT today (Saturday 29th October 2011), the ASU officials like the rest of Australia learned that Qantas intended to ground their Qantas Airways fleet immediately and that from 8pm AEDT on Monday 31st October 2011 Qantas Airways intends to lockout members of the Transport Workers Union (TWU), Australian and International Airline Pilots Association (AIPA) and Australian Licensed Aircraft Engineers Association (ALAEA).

This action is unprecedented and an overreaction by Qantas management and the timing of this lock out of hard working Qantas staff – just after the Annual General Meeting is cynical to say the least.

As unionists we must unequivocally condemn the actions of Qantas in both shutting the airline with minimum notice but also for locking out our fellow workers. This is not the spirit of Australia and not the actions of company and management that anyone could be proud of.

We must let our fellow workers know we think what Qantas has done is unacceptable and un-Australian.

In the scheme of things the union members who have been targeted have taken minor industrial action – the pilots for instance are just wearing red ties and making announcements on flights – if we don't stand united with these unions who will be next?

What should ASU members do?

As frontline customer service staff members at airports, telephone sales and in QBT you will be faced with hostile passengers angry at the disruption of travel plans – work will be harder not easier.

It is clear that all ASU areas will be affected by this action by Qantas not just those with customer contact.

Qantas has advised the ASU that ASU members should come to work as usual and they will be paid. Our advice to all ASU members in all areas is to do this.

We also say to our members that if you do not feel your workplace is safe then you should not feel compelled to work in unsafe circumstances.

If you feel stressed at work – you do not have to continue to work – you do not have to stay in a stressful and harmful environment.

ASU organisers will be in constant contact with local delegates and members in this difficult period- they will also be in attendance in a number of locations.

We should not blame our work colleagues for this action by Qantas management – it is an over the top response – albeit legal – to the legal industrial actions of pilots, engineers and catering and ramp/ freight staff.

What are the other unions doing?

The ACTU is working closely with all unions – those directly involved in the lockout and those like the ASU who are affected by this high handed action by Qantas management. Union leaders are meeting tonight to discuss our unified response.

The ACTU will also be representing our views to the government.

We will keep you posted on developments.

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