



## Notice 54/2011 - Qantas and Forstaff Members - Qantas and the FWA Decision

Monday, 31 October 2011 11:17

At 2AM this morning Fair Work Australia handed down a decision in relation to the various Protected Industrial Actions at Qantas. We know many LAMEs were following the developments, as were hundreds of thousands of workers, industrial practitioners and politicians. As we were waiting for the outcome messages of support flooded in from around the globe including the ones from rallies in the US and England. The decision will take days to analyse and that work is underway now. We think we can fairly say that the outcome as it currently stands was not one that formed part of our plans but it may just be another hurdle we have to overcome to achieve our overall objective of saving Qantas and our Profession from those who appear intent on destroying them.

The decision ends Qantas's plans to lockout employees without pay, puts Qantas back in the air and imposes a 21 day period of negotiations between the parties. Unions will not be able to take Protected Industrial Action and should negotiations fail, they will take place formally before a full bench of Fair Work Australia who will determine the outcome based on various factors. The Judges in the finalised case themselves acknowledged that it was not the actions of the unions that required intervention, it was the actions of Qantas management. It is widely accepted that Fair Work Australia may have had no other choice than to hand down what seems to us to be an unjust decision.

We read on a website this morning a thread that said Qantas 1 Unions 0. In our view this match concludes when we save Qantas and because of their actions, for the remainder of the game they will be down to 10 men. Stranding countless passengers without notice across the globe has gone down like a lead balloon with the public and the full blame for that has been aimed fairly and squarely with Qantas management. They have now mobilised the global union movement against it and turned once supportive Australian Politicians into strong advocates for our cause. To make matters worse they tried to blame the Prime Minister for the airline grounding because she hadn't had time to return a call to Qantas management.

Apart from the formal processes that follow from the order, a number of steps are or will become available. As this decision was made based on evidence given primarily by Qantas Managers under oath, those testimonies will be scrutinised and could lead

to further courtroom developments. Information is flooding in about the knowledge persons had prior to Saturday that this was pre-planned including the positioning of managers to outstations, tenders made by delivery firms who handed out the lockout letters, bookings to hotels and conflicting statements made publically by Qantas. In Canberra changes to the Qantas Sale Act are pending, we thought the prospects of success would have been minimal a few weeks ago but overnight a few new friendships have been formed. Strategies previously discussed by the Executive will be put in place and we will move on to the next stage of this ongoing affair.

Many of you will feel cheated today but will understand that many good people are doing all they can to get us the best outcome in both the short and long term. At no stage will we sit idle and watch Qantas continually shrink at the expense of new entities based offshore as a means of sidestepping Australian labour laws and aircraft maintenance principles. These principles are embedded into every Australian Licenced Aircraft Maintenance Engineer from the first day of his or her apprenticeship, as is the honour we have felt working for Qantas. Qantas is the safest airline in the world because of the lives we have dedicated to it. However far management get in their plans to take away what this country has, it will return in spades due to the good people who form our membership and the wider employee base.

We know it goes without saying but for members the next step is simple. Retain your usual full professionalism in every task that you perform. Relax and enjoy the company of your colleagues at work and your families at home. Leave the union work to us and if you meet Alan Joyce, smile, shake his hand and remind him of your contribution to this great airline.

**STEVE PURVINAS**  
**Federal Secretary**

**PAUL COUSINS**  
**Federal President**