

Tuesday, 25 August 2020

## Statement from ACTU President Michele O’Neil on Qantas job cuts

Qantas’ announcement that they are outsourcing their entire groundhandling operations and cutting 2500 jobs is nothing short of devastating, and is further evidence that the Morrison Government has turned its back on aviation workers.

We send our support and solidarity to every single worker at Qantas today, as well as their families and communities.

This announcement comes on top of 6000 job losses at Qantas that have already been announced.

That means we are now losing at least 8500 highly skilled and experienced workers from Qantas, adding to a further 3000 from Virgin Australia. The aviation industry is being decimated by this pandemic, while the Government stands by and does nothing.

It is a shocking double standard that Alan Joyce has resumed receiving his multi-million dollar salary, but can’t find money to pay the workers who have built his wealth.

How can it be that Qantas has received half a billion dollars of taxpayers’ support through measures like the JobKeeper subsidies without the Government putting conditions on workers continuing to be directly employed?

The Federal Government has refused time and time again to put in place a comprehensive aviation industry support plan and extend JobKeeper to all aviation workers.

That refusal has led to enormous uncertainty in the sector and led directly to thousands of job losses.

Other countries’ governments have chosen to support their aviation industries.

But this Government has chosen to turn their backs on aviation workers in the middle of the worst recession we have seen since the Great Depression.

They must act immediately to put in place an aviation industry support plan, and deliver a comprehensive jobs plan to pull our country out of the recession.

Once again, the government is left playing catch up as more workers lose their jobs. Working Australians are crying out for a comprehensive economic recovery plan that puts decent, secure jobs at its centre.

**ENDS**

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