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## Qantas management betrays loyal Australian workforce in 'race to the bottom': unions

Qantas' announcement that it will shift operations offshore and sack at least 1000 workers is an outrage and raises concerns about whether it can continue to portray itself as an Australian airline, say unions.

ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence said Qantas management had shown blatant contempt for its loyal workforce who have made the airline the best in the world.

Australians will not support a race to the bottom by a company that is prepared to trade-off Australian jobs to maintain its status as the most profitable airline in the world, Mr Lawrence said.

Unions will be examining whatever further legislative or regulatory steps might be necessary to ensure Qantas remains an Australian company.

"This is one of the darkest days in the history of Qantas," Mr Lawrence said.

"Today, Qantas management has turned its back on Australia and on Australian jobs to head down the path of a race to the bottom that would see a large section of its workforce employed on the pay and conditions of developing countries.

"Qantas trades on a reputation for safety and high-quality service.

"This reputation hasn't come by accident. It comes from the hardworking efforts of a professional, highly-skilled workforce.

"And this is the thanks they get in return.

"How Qantas can continue to claim to be the 'Spirit of Australia' when a growing proportion of its business is not based here is a mystery."

Mr Lawrence said unions would seek to ensure that any Qantas services, either under the Qantas brand or a subsidiary, that flies into or out of Australia continues to be bound by Australian workplace laws, and its employees should be employed under Australian wages and conditions, wherever they are based.

Unions will also seek urgent talks with Qantas management to provide full details of its plans and to minimise any job losses.

"All Australians have a stake in seeing Qantas continue as a major employer of Australians in decent, good quality jobs," Mr Lawrence said.

"Alan Joyce is today talking about making cuts to almost every part of Qantas' operations, including pilots, cabin crews, airport staff, and engineers.

"We cannot see any need for there to be any forced redundancies from the plan announced today and we will seek to ensure that is the case at the earliest possible opportunity."

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