

Friday, 4 September 2020

Statement from ACTU President Michele O’Neil on Virgin Australia sale to Bain Capital

The successful sale of Virgin Australia is a testament to the strength and perseverance of workers in the face of terrible adversity.

Since the airline announced that it was going into administration on April 21, the unions representing Virgin workers have fought hard to ensure that every cent of workers’ entitlements are protected, that there is a long-term, viable future for the airline, and that the maximum number of jobs are saved.

We send our support and solidarity to every Virgin worker who is making the hard decision to take voluntary redundancies.

We will be continuing to work with Bain Capital and Virgin management to ensure they keep to their commitments and that Virgin workers who stay with the airline are treated with respect, and have good jobs with fair pay and conditions. The future of the airline must be built on the skills and expertise of Virgin Australia’s staff.

The Federal Government’s refusal to put in place a comprehensive aviation industry support plan and extend JobKeeper to all aviation workers led to enormous uncertainty throughout the administration process, and devastating job losses. The cutting back of JobKeeper payments will hit these workers hard as they rely on those payments and wait for flights to resume.

With the sale of the airline to Bain Capital now finalised, the Government must step up to ensure the aviation industry has a clear path out of this recession.

Virgin workers need the Government to put in place an industry support package and deliver a comprehensive plan to save and create jobs. We have seen the impact that Government inaction has had on these workers and their industry. Now is the time for support, not cuts and inaction.

ENDS

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