

Tony Sheldon National Secretary

FRIDAY AIRPORT STRIKE ACTION OFF

TWU SEEKS GENUINE OFFER FROM QANTAS

The Transport Workers Union of Australia (TWU) has called off tomorrow's planned two hour stoppage at airports across the country. The stoppage was planned for late afternoon.

"The union is seeking a serious engagement from Qantas about job security for its workforce and reasonable pay increases over the life of the next enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA).

"Given the old agreement expired in July and was developed under the WorkChoices regime, Qantas should clearly spell out to its workforce whether they will have a job for the next couple of years," National Secretary Tony Sheldon said today.

Negotiations between Qantas and the TWU have been in train for over 30 weeks now. In that time, Qantas has recorded a massive \$530 million profit and plans to sack a thousand or more workers, together with accelerating plans to relocate key aviation businesses to Asia.

"Qantas can do all these things in quick succession and award their CEO a 71 percent pay increase, but TWU members who get the planes safely ready for takeoff are fobbed off by delay tactics and management indifference," Lead TWU Negotiator, Scott Connolly said.

"This is a significant gesture of good faith from the union and our members don't want it ignored," he said.

The TWU's act of good faith comes in a week where Qantas' spin team and management smeared its workforce with innuendo and media exclusives about personal threats that were aired through the media instead of being soundly dealt with by the relevant authorities.

"The time for games is over. This week's attacks on Qantas workers has left a very bitter taste in our members' mouths. They have now resolved to suspend tomorrow's strike plans to see if Alan Joyce and his board are more interested in dispute resolution than undermining their own workforce," Tony Sheldon said.

"It's now over to Qantas management to propose something serious to its employees and not resort to the stunts we have all witnessed this week."

The TWU is seeking a firm offer from Qantas at its next scheduled meeting Wednesday October 12. If the failure of management to seriously negotiate continues, industrial action will recommence with a four-hour stoppage on Thursday, October 13. Delegates and members will meet again next Wednesday to consider the progress in negotiations, if any, and if necessary, further industrial action.

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TWU National Secretary Tony Sheldon will hold a media conference tomorrow, time and place to be confirmed.

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