

QF:053/2007

14<sup>th</sup> November 2007



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**TO: QANTAS MEMBERS**

**RE: A380 AGREEMENT BALLOT**

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We are aware that quite an amount of discussion in the workplace has centred on the A380 Agreement for training points, bidding for internal contract work and the like. It would be nice to fully disclose the content of the A380 Agreement but unfortunately we are still bound by a Deed which requires us to treat certain commercially sensitive information confidentially. I will though give a brief overview of the Agreement, as ALAEA members will now be voting on one aspect that we can discuss. It should be noted that at all stages of the process management have been well aware that the new aircraft was arriving, were given 18 months to negotiate with the ALAEA but have left it all to the last minute giving us only hours to make key decisions that affect our members. It is unclear if this is a deliberate Industrial tactic or a reflection of disorganisation within Qantas management.

18 months ago the ALAEA lodged a claim with the airline for 6 points for LAMEs who train on the A380 based on the current Licencing system and not EASA conversion. Following intensive negotiations with Qantas the ALAEA was satisfied with the payment obtained to take into account the aircraft type and EASA conversion.

The airline wanted a suite of rosters for flexibility for staff working on Team A380 to meet a yet to be decided operating schedule. The ALAEA had concerns about this concept but agreed with some limitations applied. We made this decision on the understanding that Qantas would have found enough employees to voluntarily work the various rosters regardless of what others thought in order to further their own careers.

The other issue agreed and signed by both parties, and the one now in question, was for a "merit based selection process to be jointly developed by Qantas and the ALAEA". Qantas commenced the selection process and interviewing candidates without notifying us and no joint development of the selection process had taken place. The latest developments would have been avoided if management read the Agreement they signed and followed the steps agreed between the parties without commencing the selection process alone.

ALAEA officials met with Qantas management yesterday to develop selection criteria and discuss this process but the meeting concluded with the parties not reaching agreement and holding 2 distinctively different views on how selection for successful candidates should be determined. Both parties agree the process should be a fair one, however Qantas claimed that the process should be based solely on a score from 10 questions asked at the interview weighted toward abstract management concepts. The ALAEA claimed that it would not be fair to select candidates in such manner and acknowledgement and more weight should be

**"To undertake supervise and certify for the safety of all who fly."**

given to the qualifications and experience of candidates over a period of time. The ALAEA requested additional points be added to the interview score for years as a LAME and licences held. Adequate recognition for experience was not offered by the airline who insisted that the primary factor in determining candidates should be the interview score only. As agreement was not achieved, the ALAEA made it clear that Qantas would be in breach of the A380 Agreement should the selection continue without the jointly developed selection criteria.

Qantas were advised that grievances would be called from those affected and a membership ballot would now occur to determine if our members would support a selection process based entirely on one interview of management criteria. The result of a negative vote would be the termination of the A380 Agreement based on Qantas' failure to honour the first step in the Agreement. The Question to be put to members will be –

*Do you agree that Qantas should be able to select candidates for A380 training based solely on a score calculated from an interview based on management's criteria? Yes/No*

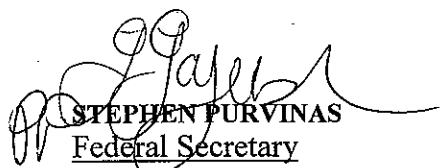
When making a decision it should be noted that a no vote may eliminate any chance for Qantas to secure a successful bid on this new aircraft and the contract might automatically be awarded to the other bidder. If a "no" vote results the decision would be up to Qantas to withdraw from the tender, or re-negotiate a merit based selection process with the ALAEA.

Whilst conducting the ballot the ALAEA will also take the opportunity of asking another question of financial Qantas members regarding "rosters". A recent full bench AIRC decision upheld our right to withdraw from extended hours rosters "for any reason or none". It was also recognised that this could be used as a legitimate action to place the ALAEA in better bargaining positions for various reasons and that the decision was ultimately up to the ALAEA Federal Executive to make.

I think most people are aware that withdrawal from extended hour's rosters results in 8 hour rosters determined by management being implemented. The ALAEA has a right to request specific start times or patterns to take into account fatigue, family responsibilities, leave and Occ. Health and Safety considerations but generally management will not settle beyond the standard items contained in our Agreement e.g. 10 hour breaks. We will be asking the following question that will be used as a guide to future ALAEA decisions –

*I would support the ALAEA Federal Executive in a decision to withdraw from extended hours rosters and revert to the standard 8 hour should they think it appropriate as an industrial strategy. Yes/No*

Again this question has serious implications and careful consideration should be given to your response. It would possibly be appropriate to think about the change in your lifestyle if we make the decision sometime further down the track. Of course the ALAEA has only made this choice once before and it would be used seldom if ever. The result to this question will not be made public. The secure electronic balloting will be organised over the next few days.

  
STEPHEN PURVINAS  
Federal Secretary