



## **Media Release**

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# **Aircraft Engineers Promise No Strikes Over Christmas**

The Australian Licensed Aircraft Engineers Association today reassured the travelling public it would not disrupt services over the Christmas-New Year period, despite members voting today to approve an industrial campaign against Qantas.

ALAEA Federal Secretary Steve Purvinas said that ALAEA members had voted overwhelmingly (87%) to approve industrial action in a secret ballot that also signals a clear vote of no confidence in the existing Qantas Engineering management team.

The action comes as Qantas has stalled negotiations on a new agreement to cover the airline's 1,700 Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineers.

Key sticking points in negotiations are issues relating to professional standards – with Qantas pushing to spread the use of casual and contract engineers with inferior skills and qualifications. Qantas is also seeking to change the definition of a licensed aircraft maintenance engineer so it can employ on lower wages.

"Qantas is attempting to drive professional standards down and our members are determined to fight for their careers," Mr Purvinas said.

"But we recognise that public support is essential and accordingly we have determined that there will be no industrial action over the Christmas holiday period. Under the WorkChoices laws the ballot means industrial action must be taken by January 20."

Mr Purvinas said Qantas had gone to extreme measures in order to scuttle the ballot including using untested sections of the Howard Governments WorkChoices laws to threaten ALAEA members with loss of ordinary pay for not working overtime.

"The Qantas threats were like throwing a can of petrol on a campfire" said Purvinas with disruptions from mid January almost inevitable.

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