

21 JANUARY 2008
QF:009/2008



25 Stoney Creek Rd Bexley 2207 NSW
Ph: (02) 9554 9399 Fax: (02) 9554 9644
Email: alaea@alaea.asn.au
Web: www.alaea.asn.au
ABN: 84 234 747 620

❖ NOTICE ❖

TO: QANTAS MEMBERS

RE: ONE MAN PUSHBACKS

It was with some disappointment that the ALAEA fielded a call from a member today who advised that he had requested a second Engineer to assist with the pushback of various aircraft at his home port but had the requests rejected by his Senior LAME and DMM. The bosses claimed that a second Engineer was not required because it was only a recommendation from the union.

Members will recall that this recommendation was given by the ALAEA in notices dated November 7 and April 18 2007 for the benefit of all fellow members in the name of safety. We have also entered discussions with the airline regarding safe pushback procedures and the introduction of cordless headsets that were requested by the Qantas Safety Dept as early as 1997. This request has still not been met.

The Act of refusing the call from a fellow ALAEA member seeking assistance on an aircraft pushback clearly signals to the airline that some members do not care about safety. Whilst a small minority of members continue to disregard this advice, the need to implement safer procedures and equipment become less apparent to the airline and ultimately forgotten. To remove any confusion the following now stands as a directive of the Association for ALAEA members –

All aircraft pushbacks are to be carried by at least 2 Engineers until further notice.

Copies of the earlier notices are attached.


Stephen Purvinas
Federal Secretary

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

QF: 047/2007

7 November 2007

◆ NOTICE ◆



25 Stoney Creek Rd Bexley 2207 NSW

Ph: (02) 9554 9399 Fax: (02) 9554 9644

Email: alaea@alaea.asn.au

Web: www.alaea.asn.au

ABN: 84 234 747 620

TO: ALAEA QANTAS MEMBERS ACS

RE: ONE MAN PUSHBACKS – SAFETY INCIDENTS

The ALAEA has been made aware of a Safety Information Notice issue date: 21/10/2007 S.I.N. No: BNE-14-2007, highlighting the incidence of a “number of near misses” associated with pushbacks. Members should also refer to our previous Notices 25th September 2006 and 5th October 2006 that were issued following incidents in Perth last year involving single man pushbacks. In part these Notices state:

“The ALAEA recommends that all aircraft pushbacks be carried out by a minimum of two engineers until a full review of procedures is concluded and the appropriate equipment and training provided.


In addition to the initial recommendation I would also like to advise members that the ALAEA will not be able to represent members involved in incidents that occur whilst acting contrary to the above advice.”

Importantly members should remember and abide by Qantas’ policy “put safety before schedule”.

Members would be aware that the introduction of the single LAME pushback efficiency was agreed by the ALAEA and Qantas as part of the “Workchange Project” with provisos being that such pushbacks would only be implemented where it was safe to do so, appropriate training, procedures and equipment provided and working effectively. Although Qantas have taken steps to test and supply new equipment such as Cordless Headsets all of the above conditions have not yet been met.

In the interest of preventing an imminent risk to ALAEA member’s personal safety, prospective damage to aircraft and risk to passengers safety for which a LAME maybe held accountable and face disciplinary action including dismissal, the ALAEA reiterates the previous recommendation to members as highlighted above.

In the meantime the ALAEA will continue to consult with Qantas to resolve the issues.


Stephen Purvinas
Federal Secretary

“To undertake supervise and certify for the safety of all who fly.”



QF: 017/2007

18 April 2007

(2 pages)

25 Stoney Creek Rd Bexley 2207 NSW

Ph: (02) 9554 9399 Fax: (02) 9554 9644

Email: alaea@alaea.asn.au

Web: www.alaea.asn.au

ABN: 84 234 747 620

❖ NOTICE ❖

TO: ALL ACS QANTAS MEMBERS

RE: ONE MAN PUSHBACK UPDATE

***THIS IS A RE-ISSUE OF A NOTICE FROM 5 OCTOBER 2006 AND
THE ALAEA POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED***

"For those members working at terminals across the country the following is an update on the state of the one man pushback discussions with Qantas management. The ALAEA position has been made clear that a safe work environment for all members involved in aircraft pushbacks is mandatory. Over the years more than 50 aircraft engineers have been killed whilst undertaking aircraft pushbacks in what has proven to be one of the most dangerous single tasks undertaken in any industry across the world.

I remind members that until a safe procedure is developed for the interim period the following recommendation still applies –

The ALAEA recommends that all aircraft pushbacks be carried out by a minimum of two engineers until a full review of procedures is concluded and the appropriate equipment and training provided.

In addition to the initial recommendation I would also like to advise members that the ALAEA will not be able to represent members involved in incidents that occur whilst acting contrary to the above advice.

The ALAEA is working with the airline to resolve the outstanding problems and the following points have been raised with the responses attached -

ALAEA - A functional cordless headset sourced and the appropriate number identified and ordered. A reasonable timeframe for final delivery set.

QANTAS - Graeme Johnson is currently finalising the trial of the selected headsets. A request is currently with MACS for assessment of the quantity required. We note here that ACS will not provide personal headsets, but will provide an appropriate number for use by LAMEs. Suitable hygiene protection will also be provided.

ALAEA - A safe procedure for one man operation in place prior to final delivery for the interim period.

QANTAS - Agreed and will be tasked into the Towing Project.

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

ALAEA - All local area procedures reviewed and amended centrally to ensure commonality between operating procedures for cordless headset operation.

QANTAS - Agreed. Will be prepared as part of the introduction of cordless headsets. Will be tasked into Towing Comms project.

ALAEA - The appropriate training for engineers involved in one man pushbacks identified and added to the E and M one person receipt and dispatch procedure.

QANTAS - Agreed. Again to be tasked into the Towing Project. I'm assuming here that the specific training steps are what is at issue.

ALAEA - The appropriate training for tech crew involved in one man pushbacks undertaken and documented.

QANTAS - Cannot control this but we will refer it to Flight Ops for tasking to an appropriate person.

ALAEA - The appropriate training for ramp staff involved in one man pushbacks undertaken and documented.

QANTAS - Also currently included in Towing Project and Towing Comms Project, as both have Airports involvement and support.

ALAEA - Recurrent training for the three areas identified and scheduled.

QANTAS - Agreed. Also tasked into Towing Project.

ALAEA - The above changes to be overseen and approved by the existing Qantas Councillors Paul Cail, Vinko Vulin and Christopher Hall.

QANTAS - Happy to keep them briefed as key stakeholders, but do not need approval.

At the invitation of the airline I have attended the Sydney airport to observe trials that are currently underway on cordless headsets. The initial tests have proved promising and once finalised and ordered it will be a positive indication that Qantas are actually committed to this issue. The assistance of ALAEA officials to develop an interim safe procedure has also been offered. On the advice of those officials we will advise members when it is safe to return to one man pushbacks at designated bays."



STEVE PURVINAS
Federal Secretary