

e-Torque

Welcome to the December 2011 edition of *e-Torque* – the newsletter for ALAEA members across the country.



President's Opinion

As we hurtle towards the end of the year, your Association has been working around the clock to ensure Qantas members get a fair and reasonable deal after they were forced to maintain their professionalism through one of Australia's worst corporate dummy spits of all time.

I'm sure none of you will forget the way Qantas management treated its employees, customers and the Australian people with their act of sabotage back in October. I know I'll never forget it. But it's a testament to the dedication and hard work of our members and the ALAEA officials who have done all they can to ensure we get a fair deal at the end of the day.

The 21 day negotiation period imposed on us by Fair Work Australia as a direct result of Joyce grounding the airline has now expired.

I'm pleased that through the pre-arbitration conciliation process we were able to secure agreement with Qantas on a number of matters, including retention of the current Job Security Clause 11, which protects existing job functions subject to factors within the airline's control. However there are still some outstanding matters that FWA will mediate for us.

To determine the way forward we have begun conducting nationwide meetings with Qantas members to seek their opinions and preferences on our current position. Members are strongly encouraged to attend those meetings and hear what is currently on the table. This is your opportunity to get involved and have a say.

A full list of dates and locations for the workplace meetings are on the ALAEA website.

In a separate, yet equally distressing matter, we continue to be aware of Qantas' desire to introduce Cat A licences into Line Maintenance. This move will change the nature of certification within the aircraft engineering profession, propagating a race to the bottom that will have an untold impact on the way we do our jobs. It is clear that this is a union-busting tactic and we believe it will lead to job losses across the country.

There is no doubt this will become a growing threat to our people, and could split licence coverage of the airline's maintenance over two agreements. This is unacceptable to the ALAEA and is a real concern to the entire aviation engineering community, who fear it will impact on safety and definitely diminish the skill base of our workforce. We continue to relay our concerns to airline management and CASA about this dedicated race to the bottom.

I'd like to finish up this year by saying a big thankyou to all our members out there who have had to put up with less than professional behaviour by your employers during the past 12 months. The aviation industry in Australia has a long and proud history and it's always unsettling to see our profession under attack by the toe cutters who only have one thing on their



minds – bigger profit margins at the expense of safety and our members' livelihoods. This attitude not only places safety standards at risk, but also undermines consumer confidence and places a dark cloud over the entire industry. You only have to look at the choices Alan Joyce made a few weeks back, first giving himself a 71 per cent pay rise and then shutting down the entire airline the very next day. This was not an act that could be isolated – it was something that affected hundreds of thousands of people. It affected staff, customers, business operators, the hotel industry and the entire aviation industry.

Alan Joyce may think his decision delivered customers “certainty” – but if you ask me there is only one thing certain in this whole debate, and that is the irreparable damage his decision has done to the airline and the industry as a whole. It is now up to our members and all other airline employees across Australia to reverse that damage and once again restore faith in our great industry.

Over the Christmas period enjoy what time you can with your loved ones. I'm sure like me you are looking forward to doing it all again next year!

Keep Safe,

Paul Cousins, Federal President



Entitlements when your employer is sold or acquired

From time to time members who work for a business that has been sold or acquired by another business (especially those who work in GA) contact the ALAEA. They have questions in relation to their continuity of service and any applicable redundancy entitlements if they are offered a position with the new company.

This is often a complex situation depending on a range of factors such as what sort of role the new business offers the member, and on what terms. If you are working for a business that is in financial difficulty or has been taken over or sold, it is important that you obtain advice from the ALAEA office in Sydney as soon as possible before making any decisions to take up new employment.

Qantas TSS structural review

The structural review of the Qantas Technical Salaried Staff roles, as agreed to in EBA 8, is now being progressed with TSS staff members meeting with the Hay Consultants to discuss the Hay Job Questionnaires.

Any staff who are having issues with the content of the Questionnaires or who would like an ALAEA staff member present at the Hay meetings should contact Gary Norris or Lincoln Amos in the ALAEA Sydney office.

Etihad to begin bargaining

The Association has been contacted for advice after Etihad sought to begin bargaining for a new collective agreement with Aircraft Engineers. The Association encourages anyone working in aircraft maintenance at Etihad to consider what terms and conditions other members who work for similar carriers in Australia are receiving and ask whether what is being offered by the company is good enough.

We encourage Etihad employees to consider becoming an ALAEA member; building membership at Etihad gives the best chance of securing some real improvements in the company's offer.



Emirates agreement now close

The negotiations for a new Emirates EA have taken place over a number of months during 2011. The previously inferior offer from the Company saw the ALAEA, ASU and employee bargaining reps advocate a No vote when the Company decided to put the draft EA to a vote in October. The outcome of that vote was a resounding No vote margin of 70%, a great result.

Since that time the ALAEA and ASU have called on Emirates to resume negotiations with the full bargaining reps committee, and an EA bargaining meeting finally took place in Melbourne on 5 December.

The positive news is that Emirates management finally adjusted their position on several key issues that meant In Principle agreement for a three-year EA expiring on 31 December 2013 could be reached by the end of the meeting on the 5th, subject to final clarification on one last point.

Further details on the proposed EA package will be distributed shortly but key parts of the improved offer include the following:

- The fixed rate base pay adjustment will be increased to 3% per annum and there will also be guaranteed minimum level payments from the merit pot performance management system. This means the combined fixed pay and merit pot payment will be at least 5% for 2011 and at least 4.5% for 2012 and 2013 for an employee receiving the majority rating level of "good".
- The pay adjustments will include back pay to January 2011 for the fixed pay component and back-pay adjustments to the 2011 merit pot and profit share payments.
- Other improvements include improved TOIL arrangements that will see wording which clarifies engineers' access to TOIL, and if TOIL can't be used within 6 months, accrued TOIL will be paid at overtime rates.
- There are also improvements to the redundancy severance payment, part time provisions and a narrower IFA clause than in the earlier draft

Sticking together and delivering a strong No vote in October means ALAEA and ASU members covered by the proposed Emirates EA will shortly get the chance to vote again on a substantially improved overall EA package.

CASA industry brief

This month's CASA Industry brief is available from the CSA Website.

Of interest are articles on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, Stainless Steel flight control cable replacement and the failure of some MS 21042/NAS 1291 series pressed steel self-locking nuts: http://www.casa.gov.au/scripts/nc.dll?WCMS:STANDARD::pc=PC_100779



CASA negotiations

Negotiations at CASA continue to be somewhat frustrating with the Authority recently altering its stance to express preference for a shorter-term 'status quo' deal (albeit with some changes), whilst it considers the implications of a new structure for the inspectorate staff. Further meetings are scheduled throughout December and more information will be made available then.

Meanwhile the Association would like to hear from any CASA Airworthiness Inspectors in their first 18 months in the role in relation to an industrial issue concerning new staff that has recently come to light. Please contact the Sydney Office if this applies to you.

Sunstate

The cynical and unfair treatment metered out to members who worked at Sunstate has continued of late with the company agreeing to make payments to remaining staff for various payroll errors and what the Fair Work Ombudsman found was a breach of the Sunstate Enterprise Agreement in relation to working hours.

However the company has, to date, not agreed to make any such payment to the staff that left Sunstate due to the redundancies midway through this year. The ALAEA has contacted both the company and the Ombudsman about this inequality and depending on the responses will consider what else can be done.

Rex bargaining

Bargaining at Rex for a new engineers enterprise agreement has stretched over most of 2011 and a further meeting was held at the Company HQ in Sydney on 29 November.

The good news is that arising from that meeting, there is the prospect finally of an increase to the annual leave accrual amount that was a key item in the ALAEA/employee bargaining reps bargaining claim.

The less positive news is that Rex management have tied any increase to the annual leave accrual amount to accepting one of their latest revised remuneration options which our negotiating team believes may still be short of the mark in terms of the level of annual increase to base pay.

Nevertheless, further consultation to seek feedback from engineers at Rex is now occurring at workplaces in relation to the revised employer offer, and a further EA meeting is scheduled to occur at Rex HQ in Sydney on 19 December.

If the parties cannot resolve outstanding issues on the 19th, it is likely the next step will be to seek conciliation assistance from Fair Work Australia in 2012.

ALAEA Movember Mo Bros Team

This year the ALAEA Team, led by David "Biffa" Beattie, had a total of 32 members and raised \$8,194 from individual efforts. Well-done guys!

Movember is a great worldwide campaign. During November each year, Movember is responsible for the sprouting of moustaches on thousands of men's faces in Australia and around the world.

The aim of which is to raise vital funds and awareness for men's health, specifically prostate cancer and depression in men.

This was the second year Biffa has organised a Team - watch out next year!



The Qantas ALAEA Movember Mo Bros Team in Perth



Cathay Pacific

Negotiations for a new enterprise agreement at Cathay have been underway for several months now. The most recent meeting was held in Sydney on 24 November where substantial progress was made on a number of the outstanding matters. The ALAEA has been working closely through the whole negotiation period with members who make up the bargaining reps committee.

The parties will reconvene in Sydney for a 1.5 day meeting on 6/7 December with the aim of attempting to finalise a draft EA document that can be submitted to members for a pre Christmas vote if possible, although the timeframe is very tight.

Further details on the proposed EA package should be issued shortly after the next meeting. It is proposed that the next EA would cover the 2 year period of 2012 and 2013 with pay adjustments from January 2012 and January 2013 in addition to other improvements to terms and conditions. ALAEA members can continue to provide feedback and comment through the employee bargaining reps committee or directly to ALAEA National Industrial Office Noel Speers via email to NoelS@alaea.asn.au

Bristow Helicopters

Negotiations have commenced for a new EA for Engineers working at Bristow Helicopters in Australia. The current EA expires on 31 March 2012 so the ALAEA and employee bargaining reps will be attempting to negotiate a new agreement for members with our aim being to have a draft EA package out for consideration by members no later than the end of March next year.

The first meeting was held at the Company HQ at Perth where the ALAEA presented the Company with a 28-point log of claims following recent member feedback. The Company also tabled a document providing a list of the issues they want addressed in the next EA.

While it was productive start, it is fair to say at this early stage the parties are a long way apart, especially in relation to the pay and allowance increases being sought.

A meeting schedule for the next few months has been agreed and the next meeting will take place in Perth on 14 December. Members can provide comment and feedback through the negotiation period through to the Bristow representative committee or directly to ALAEA National Industrial Officer Noel Speers via email to NoelS@alaea.asn.au



Aerospace Education Awards

The ALAEA would like to congratulate James Blundell and Sasha Gibson, both from Aviation High in Brisbane, as the winners of this year's Aeroskills Scholarships.

The awards are an initiative of the Queensland Government and Aerospace Industry as part of the "Gateway Schools Aerospace Project". The Project involves selected Queensland secondary schools (government and non-government) engaging with aerospace industry partners, local aerospace entities, training institutions and universities to create pathways for students into Queensland's aerospace industry. The project currently involves 17 high schools from Mount Isa in the West to Cairns in the North to Miami in the South.

These Scholarships were sponsored by Boeing Defence Australia and GE Aviation Systems Australia and were for graduating Year 12 students to cover the student contribution for the 12 months formal training including all the theory and off-the-job practical components of an Institutional Certificate IV in Aeroskills.

Both James and Sasha displayed great aptitude and attitude towards a career in Aviation Maintenance and we were honoured to be able to present them each with a voucher to purchase tools to begin their learning process.

For more information on Queensland Gateway schools follow this link.
<http://www.gatewayschools.qld.gov.au/aerospace/index.html>

The Aviation Industry Superannuation Trust (TAIST) – Transfer to Australian Super

Members who were in the TAIST fund were previously advised by TAIST in late May about the proposal to merge TAIST with Australian Super and establish an Aviation Division within Australian Super.

The transfer took place from 30 June 2011 but in the subsequent weeks a number of transition issues have had to be worked through. Members' investments were allocated to Australian Super's default investment option – the 'balanced' option.

Australian Super has indicated they remain committed to providing the aviation industry with a superior superannuation product and to promote growth in this sector.

The most recent advice from Australian Super is that members' account details have now been loaded onto the Australian Super system and that all accounts are now active and members should be able to call up information such as account balances.

It is expected that Australian Super welcome pack letters, including an Australian Super membership card, will start to be sent out to ex-TAIST members from early December.

Union Shopper



Beat the crowds and save thousands this Christmas with Union Shopper!

Union members can save big dollars and avoid busy mall crowds at Christmas by purchasing online or over the phone with Union Shopper.

From theme park tickets to fragrances, manchester to jewellery, and groceries to holiday costs, Union Shopper has a huge range of discounted products and services for members to enjoy.

“Union members can save valuable time and literally thousands of dollars on gifts and holiday costs over the Christmas period by shopping with Union Shopper,” Union Shopper executive officer Brett McCreddie said.

“Members can save on a range of Christmas time purchases, including electrical and white goods, perfume and jewellery, books and DVDs, new and used cars, groceries, travel and accommodation, tickets and passes, and car hire.”

Union Shopper reduces holiday costs, with a number of hotels and resorts offering discounted rates for members, and Hertz providing members with “mate’s rates” on car hire.

Gift-giving is a breeze with Perfume123 fragrances discounted by up to 75%, Amante jewellery discounted by at least 15%, and popular deLUXE linen offering beautiful manchester at 5% less than wholesale prices.

Union Shopper even helps members save on Christmas groceries and beverages, with Coles and Woolworths WISH gift cards reduced by 5% (credit card fees and other conditions may apply).

Doubleday also offers 50% off members’ first online orders over \$20 with free delivery on all items, including books, music, DVDs and games (conditions apply).

On average, Union Shopper members save 9-13% off their best price on white good and electrical purchases, which make great Christmas presents.

“Over the years, when needing to purchase white goods and assorted items for the home it has been our family’s practice to do the rounds of the various stores to check prices and attempt to get a good deal for our dollar,” happy member Kathy Patterson said.

“Despite visits to stores that claim to offer discounted competitive pricing, we always contact Union Shopper with the price we had been quoted to see if they can get us a lower price for our goods. Union Shopper has never let us down and we have without exception been able to purchase our selected goods at a lower than quoted price.”

To register for free with Union Shopper or to find out more about Union Shopper’s range of products and services, please call 1300 368 117 or visit www.unionshopper.com.au