



# AVIATION NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2021

**We know 2020 was an unbelievably difficult year for many of you. We look to 2021 with hope for more certainty, open domestic borders and a vaccine rollout that means recovery is on the horizon.**

**This will be a year to rebuild, and to keep a united front right across the industry.**

**But we must also keep up the pressure for AviationKeeper, and for the Federal Government to come forward with a national plan for the industry. Members from across aviation are now telling their stories for the Senate inquiry into aviation, and the Federal Court case against Qantas outsourcing continues.**

## YOUR VOICES IN THE SENATE INQUIRY INTO AVIATION

We've now sent submissions from many members about how they've been affected by the devastation of the aviation industry, as well as a detailed account of the efforts aviation workers have gone to in calling for the Federal Government to extend support to the industry. Brisbane and Sydney hearings have already been held, with another upcoming in Canberra.

## VIRGIN'S COLLAPSE CENTRE OF BRISBANE HEARING

The lack of government support that led to Virgin's collapse into administration was the main topic of the Brisbane hearing. Former Virgin delegate Nick Harris shared the stress and heartache this caused for Virgin workers, and your strong fight to ensure Virgin would remain a strong second airline and retain VARA.

Virgin CEO Jayne Hrdlicka also appeared, repeating our joint calls for "AviationKeeper" by telling the inquiry that JobKeeper ending in March would be "devastating" for aviation workers and the whole industry.

Congratulations to all aviation workers for keeping up the fight and ensuring that even under new management, Virgin Australia remains in step with our calls on the government to support workers. Having the CEO of Australia's second airline repeat your calls before a Senate Committee is a critical step towards achieving government support.



Queensland State Secretary Peter Biagini with MP Anita Wells and Senator Nita Green

## SNAP SURVEY: HELP FIGHT FOR AVIATIONKEEPER

**It's important we keep up the fight for AviationKeeper by showing how much workers need it.**

**The Federal Government has already flagged additional support for hard-hit industries. Help us strengthen our case by filling out the survey. Please take the survey as soon as possible ahead of government lobbying in Canberra next week.**

**Survey: [bit.ly/AviationSurvey21](https://bit.ly/AviationSurvey21)**

## TWU MEMBERS SHARE STORIES AT THE SYDNEY HEARING



Recently several members appeared before the Senate Committee to speak about how aviation restrictions, lack of access to JobKeeper, Qantas' disregard for safety during the pandemic, and outsourcing has affected their lives and families. Congrats and thank you to everyone who shared your stories so bravely, speaking up not just for yourselves but for everyone else in the industry.

The courage of so many aviation workers leading the charge for better outcomes for the future of aviation is important in ensuring that what happened in 2020 will not be repeated. We need skilled, experienced and loyal workers like yourselves to remain in the industry, and the Federal Government to support good, safe jobs in Australia.



## COMING UP: CANBERRA HEARING

Canberra-based aviation workers, and TWU National Secretary Michael Kaine will give evidence at the Canberra hearing of the aviation inquiry. Qantas has also been called to appear at this hearing, meaning the Senate Committee will have the chance to hold the airline to account for its actions in 2020. Swissport, who continues to drive down conditions in aviation will also be called before the committee. The hearing will be broadcast on the Parliamentary website so you can watch along as it happens. Stay tuned for updates.

## FRESH CALLS FOR AVIATIONKEEPER

The TWU responded to grim predictions that international borders will remain shut by rallying together unions and employers to write to the Prime Minister calling for "AviationKeeper" payments for all aviation workers beyond March. The letter caught the attention of media and put pressure on the Federal Government to look at targeted support for the industry. [Take a look by clicking this link.](#)



### OUR LETTER TO SCOTT MORRISON

Though the Federal Government has left out thousands of aviation workers, it is thanks to unity right around the industry that it has hinted at additional support for industries that are still hard-hit by the pandemic. It remains to be seen whether this will take the form of AviationKeeper, but we remain optimistic that with such unity across the sector, the Federal Government will have to take notice.



Hon Scott Morrison MP  
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By email: [Scott.Morrison.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Scott.Morrison.MP@aph.gov.au)

22 January 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

We write to you regarding the urgent need for a wage subsidy package in the aviation industry beyond March 2021 and to ensure that all aviation workers are included under the scheme.

This week Health Department Secretary Professor Brendan Murphy predicted that international border closures will largely remain until 2022. Recent events have also shown that domestic borders are likely to continue to periodically close with short notice.

Over the last 12 months, as a direct consequence of border closures brought on by the pandemic, the aviation industry has lost at least 11,000 aviation workers to redundancies. A further 2,500 ground handling and cleaning workers have been outsourced by Qantas.

**TOGETHER, WE ARE STRONGER. JOIN NOW FOR A BETTER FUTURE.**

# FAREWELL TO QANTAS MEMBERS

Congratulations for a strong fight that sent a message to Qantas and other employers that workers will not stand for outsourcing. Your hard work led to the NSW Parliament and the Senate condemning Qantas' actions, with an outpouring of support from politicians and the public all around the country.

We're still in the Federal Court fighting to reverse Qantas' decision, reinstate those of you who want your jobs back and fight for compensation for what the airline has put you through. Hearings are due in April and we expect a decision around May. We'll keep you updated as soon as we hear more.

For now, we know Qantas workers are finishing up your final shifts around the country. On behalf of the TWU and wider union movement, thank you for your hard work both as reputable aviation workers and staunch union members.

Last year, Qantas celebrated its 100th anniversary, and it could not have done so without its workers. You've built the company up from the ground, given up holidays, taken wage freezes, and made Qantas renowned as being the safest airline in the world. None of that can be taken away, and the job you've done is second to none.

Qantas has continually used the global pandemic as an excuse for its despicable behaviour, but as many of you know, the company has a long history of mistreating workers.

Who could forget Alan Joyce's decision in 2011 to ground Qantas' entire worldwide fleet and lock out its workers? Or workers taking an 18-month wage freeze in 2016 only for Joyce to receive \$24 million once the company was in better economic shape? Qantas workers have been through hell and back for this company, only for you to now be pushed out the door while we're still in the Federal Court fighting to reverse the decision.

This is of course a devastating result for both you and your families, and we know how unimaginably hard it has been for all of you. Thank you for fighting so hard for your families, for each other, for the people this may affect in the future. Please stay in touch. If you're staying in the industry, our collective fight continues together. If you're leaving the industry, we wish you the best of luck and hope that we can rely on your continued support to improve conditions for transport workers.



**TOGETHER, WE ARE STRONGER.**  
**JOIN NOW FOR A BETTER FUTURE.**

[www.twu.com.au/join](http://www.twu.com.au/join)

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