



Hon Scott Morrison MP
Suite 102, Level 1 30 The Kingsway
Cronulla NSW 2230

By email: 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.

As unions and employers representing tens of thousands of workers and contractors across aviation, we urge you to implement an 'aviation keeper' wage subsidy to ensure that the aviation industry can sustain the lasting impact of the pandemic while maintaining and supporting its skilled and highly trained workforce. This scheme would:

- ♦ Be extended to all aviation workers;
- ♦ Extend beyond March 2021; and
- ♦ Be phased out as domestic and international borders are phased open and confidence in aviation returns and flying returns to normal.

The aviation industry is an essential service that Australians rely on for business, tourism and connecting the community. A strong aviation industry will be critical to the long-term economic recovery. While border closures will mean that it is one of the last industries to return to pre COVID-19 levels, its ability to bounce back will depend greatly on the support the industry is given today.

Given the industry's importance and unique position, we need a specific response to ensure that planes can return to the skies and that all aviation companies that operate in Australia regardless of ownership structure can remain operational for when we all need them.

Professor Murphy's warning this week demonstrates that it will be far more than a year for anything resembling normality to return to our aviation sector. There are not only thousands of jobs on the



line because of this, but the very viability of multiple employers as well. For the sake of aviation workers and the families who depend on them we must work together to mitigate this.

For those companies and workers who could access it the JobKeeper payment has been a lifeline, enabling workers to maintain ties with their employer and to support themselves and their families. It has allowed eligible companies to retain their trained, experienced staff so they are ready to return to their jobs when possible.

For those not allowed access to the payment, the past year has been extremely difficult with families facing turmoil, debt, housing stress and loss and the constant threat of job losses. At least 1,000 Dnata workers volunteered for redundancy to help them pay some of their debts.

What we need to ensure in the absence of a fully operational industry is a targeted extension of support and changes to ensure all workers are included, in the form of an 'aviation keeper'. This must form part of national aviation recovery plan.

We believe that a commitment by the Federal Government to deliver 'aviation keeper' would give workers and businesses the certainty they need at this time. It would mean the aviation industry would remain intact, ready to respond when the economy rebounds.

Please do not hesitate to contact Nick McIntosh, TWU Assistant National Secretary on 02 8115 6500 or nick.mcintosh@twu.com.au for any additional information or to discuss the above.

Yours sincerely,

Nick McIntosh (TWU Assistant National Secretary) & Emeline Gaske (ASU Assistant National Secretary)

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