

## A Message from the National Secretary on the Fuel Crisis

Dear Members,

A big welcome to all our new members who have joined the TWU this year. We hope this newsletter will help bring you up to speed on what we've already achieved in 2026 and for Our Roads, Our Skies and Our Future Campaign.

We know that this is a stressful time for some of our TWU members in aviation. Many of you went through incredibly challenging times in Covid, and there is fear around the current global uncertainty.

We are constantly talking with members and your employers, including the airlines, to minimise the impact of flight cancellations from the Middle East. Please keep talking to your organisers and delegates, to update them on any changes to your rosters so we can monitor and work through this as fairly as possible.

For the last month we have also been in regular contact with the federal and state governments, as well as the airlines on fuel supply, demand and distribution. ([Read on for detailed updates on how Qantas and Virgin are responding to fuel prices, and what this means for workers.](#)) In the last few weeks, the TWU has led the way in securing critical new emergency laws to assist in fuel costs and ensuring large corporations at the top of supply chains, cover the costs for transport operators to keep running. This will assist ground transport supply in aviation, and in transport industries across the whole economy.

Jet fuel supply remains steady for now, and all parties are working to ensure it continues but the TWU has also been talking through contingency plans with the airlines if the situation worsens. Delegates are also in regular discussions through consultative committees and bargains to ensure regular updates.

For the last three parliamentary sitting weeks, TWU members and leadership have been in Canberra. They have been meeting with the government and cross benches, to ensure protections for transport workers and our industry.

We will continue to fight to ensure the burden from this crisis isn't placed solely on workers.

In unity,

Michael Kaine  
TWU National Secretary



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## Qantas and Virgin Fuel Updates

### Virgin Australia

The TWU spoke to Virgin Australia representatives to clarify any potential impacts on members following media reports.

Virgin Australia advised that:

- The announced 1% reduction in scheduled flying for the short term will not have any material impact on workers' hours, and there are no route cancellations associated with today's announcement.
- Overall scheduled flying in 2026 will still represent a net increase compared to 2025.
- Virgin Australia's fuel hedging strategy has significantly reduced the impact of current fuel cost increases.
- The company has committed to notifying the TWU in advance of any future announcements, providing the opportunity for feedback on any potential negative impacts on members.

### Qantas

The TWU has spoken directly with Qantas leadership about the measures being taken across Qantas, QantasLink and Jetstar in response to increased fuel prices.

Qantas has advised that it is reducing Qantas Group domestic capacity by around 5% across May and June, covering both Qantas and Jetstar's domestic networks.

According to Qantas, the majority of these reductions are being made on key trunk routes between major capital cities, where larger aircraft and higher frequencies are typically used. However, the reductions apply across the network, including regional routes. Qantas has stated that, where possible, capacity has been removed at off-peak times to minimise customer impact.

## Qantas and Virgin Fuel Updates

Qantas has also confirmed the following temporary route suspensions:

### Qantas

- Melbourne – Hamilton Island
- Melbourne – Coffs Harbour

(both suspended from 18 May to 28 June)

### Jetstar

- Sydney – Busselton (18 May to 22 September)
- Darwin – Gold Coast (18 May to 12 October)

Separately, Qantas has made the decision to indefinitely suspend flights between Adelaide and Mount Gambier from 18 May. While this will not directly impact Qantas direct-hire positions, the flow-on effects for the aviation workforce and regional communities are clear.

This is a deeply disappointing decision and yet another example of regional communities being abandoned by Qantas in pursuit of potential marginal profit gains, in the absence of strong and effective aviation regulation.

That is exactly why the TWU continues to push for a Safe and Secure Skies Commission - to protect aviation jobs, regional connectivity, and the long-term sustainability of our industry.

## Lobbying trip to Canberra

In March, a delegation of 32 TWU delegates and union leadership traveled to Parliament House to meet with politicians across the political spectrum to lobby for a Safe and Secure Skies Commission.



Over 40 politicians, including MPs, Senators and Ministers from Labor, the Coalition, the Greens and Independents, all heard stories from TWU workers on how and why standards have collapsed in the industry over the decades. All of them were shocked to hear just how low standards had fallen, and many took the pledge to support and establish a Safe and Secure Skies Commission.

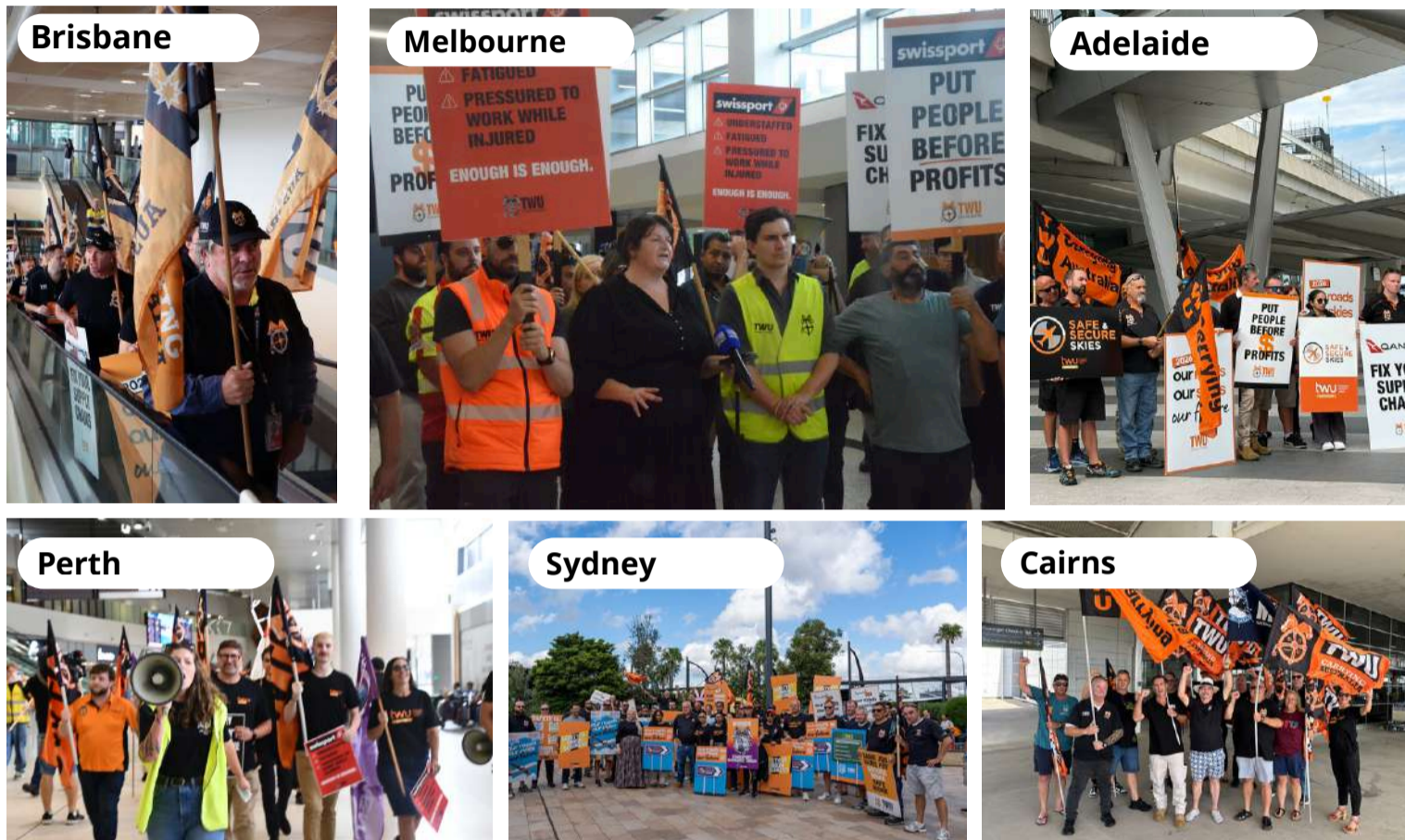
This was the first of many trips the TWU will make to Parliament this year, as we shape Safe and Secure Skies laws and industry protections.



Hear what they had to say:

## Aviation National Day of Action

Shortly after the trip to Canberra, TWU members took action at airports right across the country in protest of ground handling company Swissport. Hundreds of workers from ground crew, baggage handlers, cabin crew, pilots and security, stood shoulder to shoulder, calling out the company's alarming safety standards and bottom of the barrel conditions.



### Protests centred on Swissport's long history of safety issues and poor worker standards:

- Recent safety blitzes revealed issues with damaged ground equipment, unsafe staffing levels, heat-based injuries and psychological hazards from intrusive surveillance methods.
- Swissport refusing entry for legally sanctioned safety inspections at Perth airport.
- Up to 400 safety reports a month recorded last year at Swissport in some ports.
- Safety blitzes follow a horrific series of workplace incidents across ground handling, including the death of a freight worker crushed by heavy machinery last year.



See news coverage:

## Roster dispute case launched at Swissport

Meanwhile, the TWU is escalating a major dispute with Swissport on its non-EA compliant rostering practices, which has greatly affected members across the country. Swissport refused to fix its rostering practices and to adhere to the EA, so we've launched a case in the Fair Work Commission.

### Next steps

**There is a listing in the Fair Work Commission on May 4.** Keep an eye out for updates, but in the meantime, keep sharing your stories and keep delegates informed as to what Swissport is up to at your port.

Swissport workers are organising nationwide, taking coordinated action to demand fair pay, secure full-time jobs and safe work. With 400+ Swissport workers backing the claim and growing TWU membership, the message is clear: enough is enough.

## Cabin Crew Award Variation



The TWU continues to file submissions and evidence in the Fair Work Commission, for the Aircraft Cabin Crew Award variation application.

### **This application aims to vary the award by:**

- Increasing base rates of pay by up to 40%
- Condensing classification structures to reflect the principles of same job, same pay
- Implementing fairer duty limits of 10 hours
- Improving rights to mandatory and enforceable meal breaks
- Providing annual leave loading on all leave.

Recently, the TWU filed an expert report on fatigue relating to health and safety risks in occupational settings, the occupational health impacts of working conditions in critical-safety roles, and the management and mitigation of injury risks in the workplace, in relation to cabin crew.

[Click here to read the full report](#)



Members will continue to be updated throughout the process, keep an eye out for updates.

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## Bargaining Updates:

### Virgin Australia



TWU members have fought hard to align all Virgin Australia agreements for bargaining this year.

Negotiations have begun for pit crew, cabin crew and stores, with PAX getting underway and pilots to come.

The TWU would also like to welcome the more than 150 new Virgin Australia members who have joined since the start of 2026.

## Cabin Crew Bargaining and Log of Claims

TWU Cabin Crew delegates and Virgin have held their **third bargaining meeting**. Delegates put forward key claims and the airline has now provided its first response to our Log of Claims.

Members have shared what mattered most in their agreement and what's worth fighting for: pay that keeps up, fair earning opportunities, **safer duty hours**, proper breaks and safe staffing levels

Virgin indicated they could potentially agree to only some of items, placing the majority of claims into categories like: "still being reviewed", "requires further costing" and "unlikely to agree."

We are still early in the bargaining process, this response goes to show why member unity and pressure will be crucial to securing real change for this agreement. The TWU is now combing through Virgin's pushback, to find key pressure points for us to focus on together.

To read and endorse the Log of Claims, [click here](#)



Before and after each bargain we will report back to members for your input as discussions progress.

**Management are attacking our alignment and are trying to separate cabin crew from other agreement expiries.** We will fight any effort to divide our power and our unity.

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## Pilots Bargaining

Pilot EA bargaining continues at Alliance WA, National Jet Express and National Jet Systems (QLink). **We have secured major improvements to the TWU Loss of Licence product for the 2026/2027** insurance year. Members will get details on this over the coming days.



## Boolgeeda (OCM) Overnight Allowance

TWU and Virgin Australia have agreed that neither party wishes to delay an increase to the allowance being paid for overnighting at Boolgeeda (OCM). Because TWU members challenged the original allowance of \$69 suggested by the FAAA, it was increased to \$111.69 earlier this month.

Whilst this is a step in the right direction, there is more that can be done. TWU members have been crystal clear that this figure must sit above the allotted \$111.69 allowance set out in the Aircraft Cabin Crew award, as this is the minimum standard. Virgin Cabin Crew have collectively fought to secure above award conditions, and a hard-lying allowance like Boolgeeda should not be any different.

TWU is progressing this dispute in the Commission and will file evidence and a submission shortly.

## JQD Bargaining

JQD cabin crew delegates have met to discuss potential claims and priorities. Bargaining surveys have been distributed so members can have their say about what they want to see in their new agreement. The survey aims to see whether members are open to strategically aligning their bargaining year with Team Jetstar.

While this does not allow a merging of Enterprise Agreements with Team Jetstar, it does mean that both groups can potentially go on strike at the same time, using their combined bargaining power and leverage to secure a better agreement.



**Complete your Bargaining Survey to let us know**  
by scanning the QR code or clicking here.



## Bargaining Updates:

### Qantas Freight (QGS, AAE and QAL)

TWU members are fighting for a fairer deal for Qantas Freight, Ground and Commissionaire workers. For too many years, Qantas have driven down wages, conditions and safety by fragmenting their workforce.

In our plan to build power and lift standards, QGS have commenced bargaining, and multiple disputes and SJSP applications have been made. QAL and AAE members have completed surveys, and will be moving to claim endorsement, as we continue to pressure Qantas to come to the table with increased job security, and pay and conditions for all TWU members through a consolidated agreement.

Whilst Qantas have offered partial consolidation, Qantas management have failed to explain how their offer will materially make workers better off.

### Ground: Menzies and dnata

With dnata and Menzies agreement aligned as part of the 2026 fight, it is time for TWU members to be thinking through claim items for this year. Organisers will be on site next month talking about how a claim could look and how we stop the cost cutting, like reducing hours through cancelling flights, and protect job security in ground contracts.

A multi-employer agreement with dnata and Menzies allows employees with common interests, like ground crew, pit crew and baggage handlers, to gain extraordinary bargaining power and lift pay and working conditions for ALL workers.

### dnata Catering

The dnata Q Catering agreement has expired, and the bargaining process is underway. Now is the opportunity for members to shape the changes they want to see, to improve wages and working conditions, job security and improve your agreement.



**COMPLETE THE  
BARGAINING  
SURVEY ONLINE**



[twuaustralia.com/QCatering-Survey](https://twuaustralia.com/QCatering-Survey)

## Expansion of Overseas-based Crew at Jetstar



TWU members have been raising serious concerns about Jetstar's increasing reliance on overseas-based cabin crew, and your pressure has already worked.

### This issue has two key impacts:

1. Overseas-based crew are being engaged on significantly lower wages and inferior conditions, raising real concerns about exploitation and the creation of a two-tier workforce.
2. The expansion of overseas-based crew has reduced access for Australian-based crew to more lucrative flying, particularly short-haul international services with overnight stays. This work has traditionally helped supplement incomes for Australian-based crew.

Because members have spoken up and applied pressure, the TWU has been able to sit down with the airline and provide practical proposals to address these issues.

### These proposals include:

- A manual adjustment of international pairings in consultation with the TWU during pairing reviews.
- Expanding TJI into the Adelaide base during next intake, to ensure ADL-based crews are not left behind as international flying expands.
- A request for data on what proportion of flying on Jetstar's 787 aircraft is being allocated to Australian-based crews.

Jetstar are currently considering our proposals and a **follow-up meeting is likely to be scheduled for late April or early May**. We will continue to push for concrete changes that ensure Australian crew have fair access to international flying. Delegates will keep members updated as discussions continue.

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## Cabin Services Australia

A massive congratulations to all members for the first major step towards improving standards at CSA, with the member-led bargaining team reaching an in-principle agreement with the company.

There is still more to do, but this agreement will lock in key rights seen at CSA for the first time and ensures you have a voice at work.

### Key wins:

- ✔ **30 June 2029 expiry of the agreement** to keep us in the industry fight
- ✔ **Pay increases**
  - 11% year 1
  - 3.5% year 2
  - 3.3% year 3
- ✔ Paid **TWU inductions** to ensure we bring more people into our fight
- ✔ **Local Consultative Committee meetings and National Consultative Committee meetings** for your representatives to discuss the issues that matter to you
- ✔ Increase to part time minimum hours to **22 per week**
- ✔ **Guarantee that no employee will fall below the Award across the life of the agreement**
- ✔ Commitment to discussions around a **safer aviation industry**, including finding solutions for the impact of **automation** and other **technological changes** which may impact workers
- ✔ Ability to **substitute public holidays for cultural/religious days**

## What's next?

The Agreement will be released for access to members

The Agreement will be put out to vote

Once approved, the EA will be registered in the Fair Work Commission before taking effect.

Begin enforcing agreement while we continue our plan to lift standards across the airport

## Certis Contract Renewal

Another huge congratulations to members at Certis Security, for retaining their contract at Sydney Airport for another five years.

This retention means hundreds of jobs at Certis are protected and follows months of campaigning by members and delegates, including actions in October last year, to demand job security and preventing the race to the bottom in standards for the aviation industry.

Members are now commencing enterprise bargaining negotiations.



# Our biggest campaign yet

## **2026** our roads our skies *our future*

For the first time in history, transport workers have aligned 200+ Enterprise Agreements across aviation and road transport to expire together in 2026.

With the combined strength of 60,000 transport workers across the roads and the skies, this is our chance to fight for better pay and conditions to future-proof the whole industry.

### The problem starts at the top.

- Low pay, job security and safety risks are the norm as CEOs choose profit over the safety of workers and the public.
- We need to lift standards for ALL aviation workers.

### TWU aviation members have:

- ✓ Secured Virgin as a strong second airline
- ✓ Won against Qantas in the High Court,
- ✓ Taken national strike action at dnata, and more.

We now have an even bigger opportunity to bring the fight to wealthy clients in aviation.

**It's time for not just your employers, but their clients — airlines and airports—to pay their fair share for decent jobs.**



 **Join the TWU today.**