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Services Union
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Media Release

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Attention: Chief of Staff / News Editor

UNION REVIEWS STAFFING AND SECURITY DEMANDS AS MAGISTRATE CONDONES ATTACK ON JETSTAR WORKER

The union representing customer service staff in the Airlines Industry has condemned a recent decision of a Sydney magistrate not to record a conviction against a passenger who punched a staff member twice in the face after missing her flight. Instead, the University Lecturer was order to pay \$70 in court costs after being told that her frustration was understandable.

Australian Services Union Branch Secretary, Julie Bignell said “This decision sends the worst possible message at a time when airlines like Qantas are seriously understaffing Airports and creating an atmosphere of tension and anger on a daily basis at places like Sydney and in Brisbane, where staff were recently abused by passengers whilst trying to save the life of an 80 year-old woman who had collapsed in the queue.”

“Airline Staff need protection from these incidents. We have previously called for a review of security arrangements at Brisbane because we are concerned for the staff’s welfare. The silence from authorities such as Workplace Health and Safety Queensland has been deafening. What more needs to happen before companies like Qantas are required to address this issue?” said Julie.

The union has been unable to secure concrete commitments from Qantas about the quantum and timing of staff increases at the Airport, which is currently estimated to operate on 90 less staff compared to this time last year.

“At the same time Qantas is telling the media they intend to hire more staff, they are sending staff from Brisbane to Sydney to help staff at the Sydney terminal. Obviously Brisbane is of secondary importance and Qantas thinks the public won’t be aware of this slight of hand. Minimum staffing levels should be set as a matter of staff and public safety. The state government must send Workplace Health and Safety Queensland back to the drawing board and do something about this disgraceful situation.”

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The Australian Services Union (Clerical and Administrative Branch) represents workers in the clerical, administrative and call centre industries across both the public and private sectors throughout central and southern Queensland