



25 Stoney Creek Rd Bexley NSW 2207  
Ph: (02) 9554 9399 Fax: (02) 9554 9644  
email: [alaea@alaea.asn.au](mailto:alaea@alaea.asn.au) [www.alaea.asn.au](http://www.alaea.asn.au)  
ABN: 84 234 747 620

# ❖ NOTICE ❖

**TO: QANTAS MEMBERS**

**RE: QANTAS EA NEGOTIATIONS AND QUOTA REVIEW**

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After months of frustration with Qantas and their refusal to deal with two major issues in a timely and fair manner (our EA negotiations and the LAME Pay structure quotas) the ALAEA yesterday made an application for the Fair Work Commission to deal with the dispute over the LAME pay structure quotas. Some of the background and recent developments in both the issues is set out below.

## **Enterprise Agreement Negotiations**

The current Qantas LAME Enterprise Agreement expires on 5 January next year. The ALAEA surveyed members in July 2018 and developed a log of claims that we intend to put to the airline when we get them to the negotiation table. Unfortunately it appears that, despite our repeated requests for them to commence the process, Qantas are doing anything they can to delay negotiations.

The first step that formally kicks off negotiations is when the company issues a document called a “Notice of Employee Representational Rights”. This document announces that negotiations will shortly be commencing and gives employees an opportunity to nominate who will represent them in the bargaining; though employees who are in a union are automatically represented by their union unless they nominate someone else in writing.

Qantas wrote to us on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 2018 stating they would be ready to negotiate by the end of September (see extract below).

*As foreshadowed in my earlier email, QE fully expects to commence bargaining in 2018. At this stage, it is anticipated that QE will be in a position to commence bargaining later this month. Any such decision will be communicated through the issuing of the Notice of Employee Representational Rights (NERR). Once this has occurred, employees will be given some time to consider the NERR and, assuming the NERR is issued later this month, an initial meeting with ALAEA would follow in October 2018. Further meetings would then be organised for QE to provide important context for the bargaining, including business, operational, employee demographic and finance updates. As you can appreciate, preparing this information takes time and forms part of the planning that is already underway.*

Despite claiming they would be in a position to commence bargaining by the end of September, the company have not released the Notice of Employee Representational Rights. Legally negotiations can't take place until after they do this and the airline has failed to meet their own timeline as communicated to us.

Some members have asked about the importance of having us negotiate now when the current EA does not expire until January 5<sup>th</sup>. Typically negotiations should always commence well before any pay agreement expires so we have the best opportunity to secure a new Agreement in time to replace the expiring one. The later negotiations start the more chance there is for an employer to threaten during negotiations that backpay will be lost if employees do not agree to what the company wants. If Qantas postpone the commencement of negotiations any further, we will apply to the Fair

Work Commission seeking orders to force them to the table in a timely manner.

### **LAME Pay Structure Quota Review**

It would be an understatement to say that dealing with Qantas can be extremely frustrating. They seem to place high priorities on their own change management projects such as Deputy, transitioning LAME work to other departments (eg. 787 R&D) and redundancy programs whilst ignoring requests from unions to address legitimate workplace concerns. Their standard way of handling many issues raised by the ALAEA seems to be to completely ignore them. Sometimes this forces us to take action in a court or tribunal such as the Fair Work Commission before the company shows any interest in even meeting clear obligations they entered into as part of an Enterprise Agreement. This matter falls directly into that category.

Your current EA contains provision for a LAME pay structure quota review to be undertaken every two years and for the company to provide the information, resources and manpower to make sure it is thoroughly performed. This means a review should have been completed by 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017. We have written to the company several times over this and they simply ignore our requests and refuse to comply with the terms of the EA. The review is now 20 months overdue. We applied to the Fair Work Commission yesterday to force Qantas to meet this EA obligation.

The LAME pay structure quota review is important as we believe Qantas has, basically, lost complete control of the current pay system. Just some of the problems encountered recently include:

- A Federal Executive member who was told his approval to go up a level had been approved. He had to advise the company that he didn't have enough points to get to the next level.
- A member who was #3 on a waitlist for particular level. Qantas contacted him to say that it was a mistake as he did not have the pre-requisites to be on the waitlist. After months of debate, the decision was reversed and he was placed back on the waitlist, this time at #48.
- A member was placed on a waitlist two levels higher than he was qualified for.
- Many members contacting HR seeking clarification on their status within the quota system and not receiving replies from HR.

Qantas did not progress our earlier approaches to implement a simpler wage system (it will now be an EA claim) so, until such time as we have a new EA with a different system, we are stuck with the current arrangement. This being the case Qantas should, as a minimum, honor the terms they agreed to in the EA nearly four years ago.

A copy of the Fair Work application will be emailed to members. It's not overly complicated but will give those who will be following the case a little more insight.

  
Steve Purvinas  
**Federal Secretary**

  
Rodney Wyse  
**ALAEA President**