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❖ NOTICE ❖

TO: QANTAS MEMBERS

RE: DAMAGE TO PERSONAL MOBILE PHONES

The ALAEA is aware of the fact that many of its members within Qantas utilise their personal mobile phones for work purposes. However, given a recent incident that occurred in Melbourne during March the ALAEA is strongly recommending that members change this practice.

Background

During March 2019 member in Melbourne damaged his personal mobile phone while carrying out his duties. Consequently, the member approached management seeking reimbursement for the cost of repairing or replacing his phone. Qantas Management refused. They refused on the basis that Qantas did not require this engineer to utilise his personal mobile phone as part of his role. According to management, personal mobiles are not a "Tool of the Trade".

The ALAEA's Letter to Qantas

As a result of Management's refusal, the ALAEA wrote to Qantas asking Qantas to reconsider its position. In doing so the ALAEA wrote:

1. Firstly, there was a clause in the Melbourne Line Maintenance Local Area Procedure which required "*[A]ll Engineers to carry a radio to ensure they remain in contact with each other and the office at all times. If a radio is unavailable engineers must ensure they contactable by an alternate means (e.g., mobile phone or accompanied by someone with a radio).*"
2. Secondly, there were numerous complaints about radios having notoriously poor battery life and therefore they were not lasting for an entire shift. This was in addition to the radios being inadequate during peak times as a result of heavy radio traffic; and
3. Thirdly, Qantas utilises the personal mobile phones of its engineers for its own benefit, as various departments within Qantas regularly communicate with engineers via their personal mobile phones (e.g., Qantas utilising personal mobiles phones to receive authentication codes for various Qantas apps or for Qantas Security using the same for updating ASIC ID).

Qantas' Response to the ALAEA

Two weeks later Qantas finally responded. On the issue of radios Qantas stated:

“[Q]antas have reviewed Melbourne Engineering Line Maintenance records and did not identify any complaints relating to radios, their battery life, or difficulty communicating”

Where it concerned mobiles being a “Tool of the Trade”, Qantas stated:

“Qantas communicates ... with employees using the contact details they have provided and nominated for employment related correspondence. Contacting an employee on their nominated contact number does not make a personal device a tool of trade Whilst I understand that some employees choose to keep their phones on them whilst at work for personal reasons, this is not a business requirement.”

The ALAEA's Recommendation

Given that Qantas do not require engineers to have personal mobile phones, and will not reimburse engineers for the cost of repairing or replacing personal mobile phones that are damaged at work, the ALAEA strongly recommends the following risk preventative measures to its members:

- Do not use personal mobile phones for work related purposes (if Qantas requires you to have a mobile phone they will need to provide you with one);
- Update and/or change your nominated contact details for employment related correspondence and/or communication to your work email address, work phone number, and home phone number.

Should any member have queries regarding this notice please do hesitate to contact me on 02 9554 9399 or via email at sean.morgan@alaea.asn.au



Sean Morgan
Industrial Officer