

Qantas seeks to impose more Drug and Alcohol Testing

Qantas Group Management has written to each of your unions to inform us that they want to implement a new Drug and Alcohol testing regime.

As you may be aware the Federal government through the Civil Aviation and Safety Authority (CASA) has introduced new regulations requiring most airlines in Australia to have a Drug and Alcohol Management Plan (DAMP). The "new" proposed Qantas policy is supposedly in response to the government's request to Qantas to formulate their DAMP.

Qantas has a long history of attempting to institute a harsh and unfair drug and alcohol policy dating back to 2003 and union members working together across the Qantas Group have resisted these attempts over many years to ensure fairness, and privacy are at the forefront of any policy.

The new proposal from Qantas management has now made some changes in their DAMP that have come about as a result of the new CASA regulations and on face value some of the amendments look harmless.

But other changes are not so simple and on closer reading there are significant concerns that Qantas may be using the CASA regulations as a 'smokescreen' to implement further unnecessary changes in policy.

SOME THINGS TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT

There are also a number matters in the proposed new policy which are not required by CASA but have been included – they look very much like the things that Qantas management tried to impose 5 years ago.

The new policy areas which are NOT required by CASA that should be of concern to all workers include:

1. **The introduction of random urine testing for all workers**

2. Stand-down provisions for those who have tested 'inconclusive' for all banned substances and stand down provisions for workers that have tested 'positive' for **over the counter** and **legally proscribed medications**
3. A significant increase in the time that Qantas can test workers after a safety incident.
4. An extension of the list of prohibited substances to include many prescription medications (such as sleeping tablets and anti-depressants) and over the counter medications (such as cold and flu tablets and codeine)
5. The potential doubling up of testing involving the use of urine, breath and saliva testing
6. Mandatory reporting of medical treatment and the associated prescription drugs taken for illnesses to management

WHY ARE QANTAS DOING THIS?

As there is no discernable evidence of a culture of drug and alcohol abuse at Qantas and the unions believe that many of these changes represent an unwarranted intrusion into your private lives. As always we are serious about good occupational health and safety at Qantas and what Qantas is proposing does not fit the bill.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Just like in our previous campaign it is important that we all work together. We must show Qantas Management that we do care about our privacy and that they cannot use the new CASA regulations to impose a harsher scheme for drug and alcohol testing on Qantas Group Employees.

We are gearing up for a campaign and will need your help so we can be successful like we were last time.

If you would like to comment on these proposed changes, or if you have any concerns about the application of current policy, please contact your union and watch out for more bulletins on what you can do.



Authorised by: Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU); Australian & International Pilots Association (AIPA); Australian Licenced Aircraft Engineers Association (ALAEA); Australian Workers Union (AWU); Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU); Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers Australia (APESMA); Australian Services Union (ASU); Communications Electrical and Plumbing Union (CEPU); Flight Attendants' Association of Australia – Domestic/Regional Division & International Division (FAAA); Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union (LHMU); Transport Workers Union (TWU); National Union of Workers (NUW)