



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

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NOT GOOD ENOUGH, QANTAS

Speaking in Parliament today, Member for Newcastle Sharon Grierson today said Qantas' plan to retrench 14 Qantaslink staff at Newcastle Airport, and its determination to enforce a union-free workplace at its Jetstar facility, was unacceptable.

"Both of these situations show that, while the Federal Government is talking about increased choice for workers in its new industrial relations regime, companies have already begun talking about increased control over workers."

"The 14 Qantaslink ticketing staff whose jobs are under threat provide exemplary service to Newcastle's travelling public and are committed to their work."

"Qantaslink has been a good corporate citizen in our region and I am disappointed they did not gain the new tender."

"Unfortunately, Qantas has outsourced these jobs to Skystar. Given that Qantaslink East has one of the lowest pay rates in Australia, I shudder to think what the workers will get from Skystar if they are forced to move over to the successful tenderer."

"Qantas has a responsibility to maintain a high level of aviation security, and there is a real fear that the lowest price equals the lowest level of service. Building a world class security culture comes from maintaining the trust and commitment of your workforce, not from creating a climate of fear and uncertainty."

"I am also disturbed by reports that Jetstar, another Qantas subsidiary, has tied its continued presence in the Hunter region to the establishment of a union-free workplace. Jetstar received millions of dollars from the State Government to expand its maintenance facility at Newcastle Airport, but now seems to want to remove unions from the agreement-making process."

"I call on Qantas to re-affirm its commitment to our region by protecting the 14 Qantaslink jobs and allowing Jetstar and its workers to negotiate the industrial relations agreements they need without coercion or threats."

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