



29 July 2021

Prime Minister Hon Scott Morrison MP

By email: Scott.Morrison.MP@aph.gov.au

cc Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Hon Barnaby Joyce MP: Barnaby.Joyce.MP@aph.gov.au

cc Minister for Health Hon Greg Hunt MP: Greg.Hunt.MP@aph.gov.au

Dear Prime Minister,

We write you to urgently on the issue of testing and vaccination for transport workers.

Firstly, the Transport Workers Union has support from the Australian Road Transport Industrial Association, the formal employer national representative body in transport industrial relations, in urging you to introduce national uniform standards on testing for road transport workers including:

- Requiring interstate truck drivers to be tested no more than every seven days and three days for drivers working in lockdown LGAs.
- Ensuring that testing standards includes tests that can be carried out at home
- Placing frontline transport workers on vaccine priority lists to ensure their protection and the protection of the wider community

Workers are telling us of long waits at testing centres which is problematic for shift workers but also detrimental for drivers who risk breaching fatigue management rules. There are reports of a lack of parking bays for trucks at testing centres. There is confusion when last minute health orders are made affecting transport workers on the frequency of testing requirements. Therefore, a national uniform approach setting in stone the above would help drivers understand the rules and know what they need to do.

Secondly, the TWU wishes to raise again issues for aviation workers, further to our letters of June 27th and June 30th.

We are looking at the very real possibility of another phase of stand downs in the industry and fear there is not in place a wage subsidy which can capture workers who lose hours, even though a lockdown from another state may affect their work. We urge the following:

- Aviation Keeper, a wage subsidy tailored for the aviation industry which can offer immediate financial support to workers who are stood down regardless of where the lockdown is in place. Aviation Keeper should come with conditions attached for companies: a cap on executive salaries, a ban on bonuses and dividends and a requirement to retain workers accessing the subsidy.

- Vaccine priority for aviation workers. There have been a number of cases of crew contracting the virus and infecting passengers and other crew. Aviation workers are on the frontline of the highly contagious strain and need to be prioritised for vaccination to reduce the risk of spread.
- Rapid testing of crew and passengers ahead of flights. A survey of crew shows 70% support rapid tests as a way of keeping themselves, their families and the community safe.

We are alarmed at the call for mandatory vaccination for aviation workers by Qantas when many workers are telling us the problem is access the vaccine and potentially losing pay to attend appointments. This should be remedied by setting up vaccination hubs at airports and ensuring workers do not lose pay when getting vaccinated.

We have raised several times the need for a national plan for aviation to deal with both the health of workers and the community with whom they are in such close contact, and also the viability of aviation businesses which are so critical for the economic stability of the nation.

We urge the Federal Government to examine taking an equity stake in aviation companies which draw on significant public support and require ongoing public investment. We believe the taxpayer deserve a guarantee on this investment and many countries around the world have taken this approach.

We request a meeting to advance these issues affecting transport workers. We look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours faithfully,



Michael Kaine
Transport Workers' Union National Secretary



Peter Anderson
ARTIO National Secretary