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## **QANTAS INDUSTRIAL ACTION SHOULD BE SUSPENDED FOR FOUR MONTHS**

The Qantas industrial disputes, according to reports today in *The Australian* and *The Daily Telegraph*, have degenerated into death threats, abuse, property damage and intimidation.

The more serious matters have been referred to the police. It is to be hoped the perpetrators are found and punished.

John Lloyd, Director, Work Reform and Productivity, at the Institute of Public Affairs today called on Fair Work Australia to suspend the protected industrial action for a period of four months.

Mr Lloyd said "Fair Work Australia has various avenues available to it to suspend or terminate the industrial action. It is unlawful to intimidate people who choose not to participate in industrial action. The militancy associated with the disputes appears to be increasing. The economic harm to Qantas is considerable and the public's travel plans are being regularly disrupted.

Allegations of damage to property and menacing correspondence sent to homes are totally unacceptable. The disputes appeared to escalate last week when strikes were called leading into the weekend of the grand finals and during school holidays.

A complacent response by authorities to violence and intimidation should not be contemplated. Such conduct has no place in Australian workplace relations.

A four month cooling off suspension would take the strike free period past the summer holidays."

Qantas is entitled to resist the union claims that are prosecuted under the banner of job security. The claims seek to restrict the capacity of the airline to engage contractors to meet the peaks and troughs of operating demands. It is untenable for every duty to be carried out by a permanent staff or a contractor with permanent staff pay and conditions of employment.

Qantas wants to maintain an efficient and competitive airline in a very challenging market. This was underlined yesterday by reports of a possible bankruptcy filing by American Airlines and a warning by the International AirTransport Association that airlines face an earnings fall of 30 per cent in 2012.

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