



**AIRLINE PASSENGER PROTECTIONS (PAY ON DELAY) BILL 2024 SENATE HEARING.
MONDAY, 17 MARCH 2025**

OPENING STATEMENT DELIVERED BY MARKUS SVENSSON

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Good morning, Chair and Committee members. We welcome the opportunity to appear before the Committee.

My name is Markus Svensson, I'm the Chief Executive Officer of Qantas Domestic.

Safety will always be our first priority and we will never put our schedule before safety. At the same time, all stakeholders share an interest in reducing delays and cancellations, and improving customer experience when things do go wrong and keeping airfares sustainable and affordable.

We know that on-time performance and reliability are central to the customer experience. The Group has continued to see a year-on-year improvement in operational performance. In February 2025, 81.2% of Qantas Domestic flights departed on time which represents our strongest result since before COVID.

Meanwhile, the Group continues to invest in our operations and digital channels to further improve the experience for customers during disruptions and is focused on the roll out of our multi-billion-dollar fleet renewal program, which will further improve reliability and resilience.

Whether directly within or outside Qantas' control, it is in our best interests to ensure flights run on time and there are no cancellations. Running on time and avoiding cancellations is the best outcome for our customers but also the most efficient way to run an airline.

When there are delays or cancellations within our control, the Qantas Group already provides customers with a wide range of support including options for a refund or re-booking on another flight, plus (depending on the circumstance) meal vouchers, transfers, accommodation and any other remedies required by law.

We agree that customers should have access to timely information and understand their rights and any recourse they are entitled to. We support the development of an Aviation Industry Ombuds Scheme and Charter and look forward to working with the Government as it develops these.

Compensation-based regimes such as those in Europe and Canada have shown these schemes do not deliver better outcomes for consumers in terms of reduced delays and cancellations and they increase the cost of travel.

The potential effect on fares, implications for low-cost carriers and the likely negative effect on economically marginal routes – particularly on Australia's regional network – should all be closely considered.

Aviation is a complex, safety-focussed industry operating in an intricate ecosystem with multiple dependencies. Without acknowledging the complexity of the ecosystem, there is a risk that this legislation would not address underlying causes of delays and cancellations, risk unintended consequences and fail to achieve its desired outcome.

The Qantas Group is focused on continual improvement of operational performance, with significant investment leading to performance largely returning to pre-pandemic levels. This is important context for assessing the need for policy change.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear. We welcome your questions.

