



## Prepared Statement by Australian Aviation Ground Handlers Industry Alliance.

We represent the Australian Aviation Ground Handlers Industry Alliance, which represents 70 per cent of the entire industry.

We appreciate the invitation to speak at this Senate Hearing.

We are here to warn that hundreds of airline flights will be grounded this summer because thousands of critical aviation ground operations workers are leaving the industry as they have been excluded from the Australian Government's support package for the rest of the sector.

This will have an enormous effect on jobs, business confidence and consumer confidence at precisely the time the Australian economy should be recovering from the COVID pandemic as state and international border restrictions lift.

We would like to make three major points:

1. Firstly, Aviation is structured into three key areas:
  - a. Airlines
  - b. Airports
  - c. Ground operations which are performed by specialist outsourced companies such as ours.

Aircraft cannot fly without all three.

Aviation ground operations staff perform 15 key functions at airports including;

- aircraft safety inspections before take-off
  - taxiing aircraft onto runways
  - ensuring that baggage and cargo are safely balanced in aircraft holds
  - communicating with aircraft control towers
  - managing all aircraft movement on the ground
  - aircraft cleaning
  - security assessment of passengers at checkin
  - driving passenger buses across tarmacs
  - inflight catering and
  - baggage and cargo handling.
2. The second point we'd like to make is the Australian Government announced a \$750 a week support package last month that was designed to protect local aviation jobs and ensure these skilled workers are available when normal flight schedules resume in coming months.

However, specialist aviation ground operations staff have been denied support and only airline staff are eligible.

Without the support, a large proportion of the Aviation ground operations workforce have sought more financially secure work outside the Aviation industry. It will take six months to recruit, train and accredit new staff to Federal Government standards before ground operations can resume.

Without aviation ground operations, planes cannot fly.

The unintended consequence of the worthy Policy initiative has a National effect - Airlines could be grounded in November, December, January and February right when the Country opens up. Madam Chair, you fully understand the impact to Tourism in your region and across Queensland.



The Prime Minister states our pathway for economic recovery is vaccination. However, right when the country is vaccinated and opening back up, aircraft will be grounded as aviation ground operations workers will not be available.

Without aviation ground operations, planes cannot fly.

3. Our final point is that the solution is simple – extend the \$750 per week available to Airline staff to include the ground operations sector. Invest \$69m now to ensure ground operations workers stay connected at a time when Australia's economy is opening up. The impact to the \$1.4T economy is the loss of billions and billions of dollars in economic activity.

The Australian Aviation Ground Handlers Industry Alliance wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce MP on 3<sup>rd</sup> August and we are still waiting on a reply.

Copies of our letter and press releases have been supplied to all Senators.

Thankyou