



# **Preliminary Survey Results**

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**A•S•U**

## **Australian Services Union**

In August 2003 the Australian Services Union National Airlines Division Council (NADC) resolved to conduct a nationwide survey of customer service staff at airports to determine their views about the level of air rage at Australian airports.

Their opinion was to be also sought on how security at Australian Airports can be improved.

### **What is Air Rage?**

Air rage occurs both at airports and in flight. Air rage is disruptive passenger behaviour which can range from the failure to obey safety instructions to verbal harassment or physical assault directed at airline staff.

### **About the Survey**

The ASU commenced distribution of the survey to airports around Australia on 25 September 2004. A copy of the survey is included in this report.

The surveys were posted and faxed back and have been completed online at the website [www.zeroairrage.com.au](http://www.zeroairrage.com.au).

To date 314 completed surveys have been received with more results on the way. The summary of the results to date has been prepared for the ASU's submission to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit – Review of Aviation Security in Australia. This is a preliminary report on the results to date.

It is anticipated that the final report will be available by the end of November 2003.

# Results

**Number of Surveys** = 314  
**Airports** = 14  
**Airlines/Ground Handlers** = 10

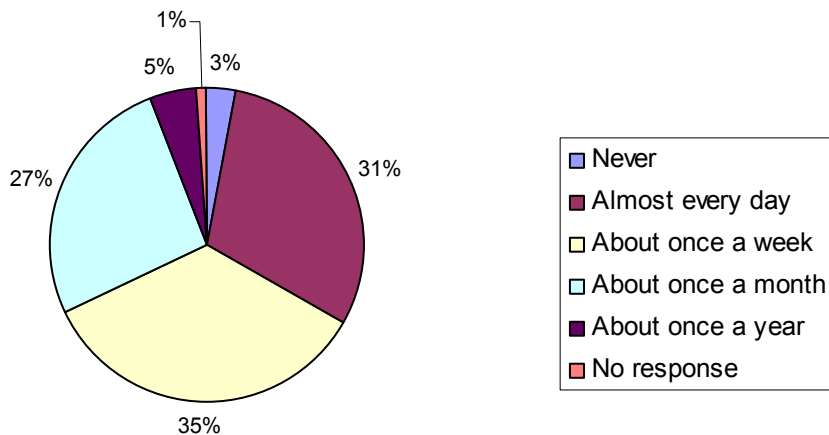
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## 1. Have you ever experienced Air Rage at work at your airport?

Yes	96%
No	4%
No Response	1%

## 2. How often have you witnessed Air Rage at work at your airport?

Never	3%
Almost every day	31%
About once a week	35%
About once a month	27%
About once a year	5%
No response	1%



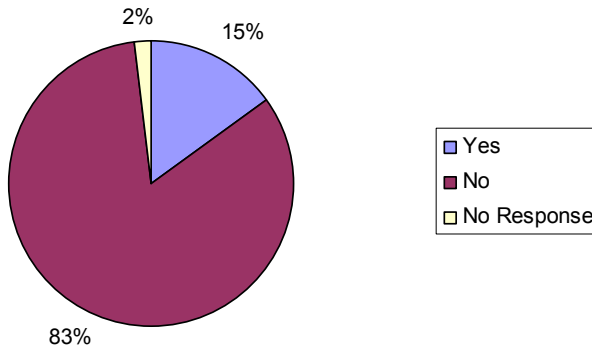
## 3. Please check off the behaviours you have witnessed

PAX becoming angry at agent or fellow passenger	95%
PAX verbally abusing agent or fellow passenger	94%
PAX out of control; will not calm down	67%
PAX verbally threatening agent or fellow passenger	70%
PAX physically assaulting agent or fellow passenger	32%
PAX stalking/following agent or fellow passenger	16%
No response	2%

\* PAX = passenger

**4. Have you every been physically touched or assaulted by a pax?**

Yes	15%
No	83%
No Response	2%



**6. Was the offender prosecuted?**

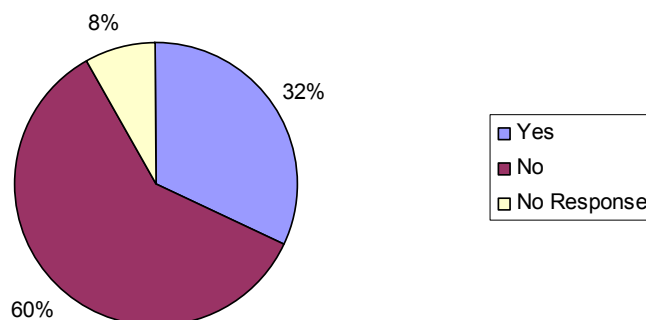
Yes	1%
No	19%
Don't Know	2%
No Response	77%

**8. Do you think that the criminal penalties for Air Rage at airports should be tougher?**

Yes	92%
No	3%
No Response	5%

**10. In your opinion, are the security arrangements adequate (at airports)?**

Yes	32%
No	60%
No Response	8%



## 14. Do you think that PAX photo identification should be checked at the gate before boarding all flights?

Yes	77%
No	18%
No Response	4%

## Descriptions of Incidents

### 5. Incidents involving physical touching or assault by passenger

Airport	Airlines	Comment
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Got spat on
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	PAX threw passport at me and hit me with it.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax was throwing punches at Qantas staff at front counter
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Passenger grabbed my arm in arrivals area. Was asked 3 times to remove his hand. Did not remove until I wrenched it away.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Passenger denied a seat on an oversold flight
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Due to privacy act people demanding to know whether guests are on flights etc
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	I have witnessed a check-in agent be assaulted by a pax - 1st floor domestic
Melbourne Airport	Virgin Blue	Verbally abusing and pushing
Melbourne Airport	Virgin Blue	Pushed
Brisbane	Qantas	Prodded with finger when pax was making a point.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	But witnessed assault.
Alice Springs	Qantas	Finger poked in chest as foreign pax tried to prove his point. Flight oversold. Pax denied boarding.
Sydney Domestic	Qantas	Pax missed his flight when told so he threw his bag on floor and became verbally abusive. I walked away from desk and pax and he grabbed my arm to pull me back.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	No access into QF club, verbally abusive, threatening and physically touched.
Cairns Airport	Macair	Finger poking, arm grabbing, spat on.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	I was pushed and I have been jabbed in the ribs whilst around the carousel.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	But have witnessed a pax push in the door to an office.
Cairns Airport		Pax wanting to get on flight
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax had lost bag off international flight - pushed me and demanded to know where bag was.
Darwin Airport	Qantas	Pax would not hand back the phone and held it up as though they were going to use it as a weapon
Unknown	Unknown	Pax grabbed my id and pulled it from behind around my neck. Pax pushed me against wall.
Unknown	Unknown	A delay situation - I happened to walk past when a group of pax surrounded me screaming and pushing me.
Melbourne Airport	Virgin Blue	"Chested" by pax who didn't want to be "held up".
Melbourne Airport	Menzies	Pax spat and threw briefcase.
Melbourne Airport	Menzies	Pax tried to take ID card off me and leant across counter and snatched at it.
Melbourne Airport	Menzies	Could not give pax window seat so she pulled my ASIC from me in the toilet
Melbourne Airport	Menzies	Drunk football trips
Melbourne Airport	Menzies	Bag did not arrive - so it is my fault.
Melbourne Airport	United Airlines	Waiting for the staff bus, pax came past and touched me on the behind.
Melbourne Airport	Group 4	Pax abusive
Melbourne Airport	Group 4	Slapped on face when saying a bag is overweight.
Perth Airport	Qantas	Pax grabbed my arm when told he was too late for his flight.
Perth Airport	Qantas	1. I had a pax throw a mobile phone at me. 2. Been threatened with physical violence (punch in face). 3. Racial abuse, pax assumed I was aboriginal.
Perth Airport	Qantas	Passengers lost their bags - pax grabbed me by throat
Perth Airport	Qantas	During a delay incident a pax grabbed me in desperation to get my attention.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Delay on departure of flight so pax got angry and pushed me.
Melbourne Airport	Air New Zealand	During boarding of Air NZ flight
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Someone followed me to bus stop and spat on me because they missed their flight.

Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Excess baggage conversation
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax opening door hitting my arm
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Abuse from delays, aircraft changes, bookings etc
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Threatened, due access to QF club denied - went in anyway! Security called - not isolated
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Shaken but not stirred!
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Verbally assaulted, cursing, yelling, etc
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax irate as he missed flight. Started verbal abuse told to leave. Asked for my name as I handed him the piece of paper grabbed my hand, I then pulled it away.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax's friend threatening check-in agent when pax had to pay excess baggage.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Walking through security screening and grabbed on arm by pax and pulled backwards.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax wouldn't let me walk away until I located bag even though he was told bag in another state.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax grabbed my arm. Also shoved by a person in toilets.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Abuse everyday at the baggage services
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Poking finger into chest and abusive
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax drunk and aggressive
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax walked very closely behind me, pushing me with their body.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Elderly lady assaulted and punched me in the back whilst waiting in queue. Totally unprovoked and unexpected. Alcohol effected.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Escorting angry pax off aerobridge after incident onboard. Pax started arguing with me and pushed me.
Sydney International	Qantas	I asked for 25K not 25A
Sydney International	Qantas	Wrong info and booking from travel agents. Every delayed flight. American hand carry
Sydney International	Qantas	Excess luggage, not happy with seating, flight delays, hand carry limit.

## 15. What else could be done at your airport to improve security?

177 detailed responses to this question were received. The following is a cross section of the suggestions:

Airport	Airlines	Comment
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	More publicity of improved penalties being enforced.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Non travelling public should not join the queues at check-in - only the passenger unless passenger is blind or deaf or needs specific help, e.g. unsupervised minor
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Fines for leaving baggage unaccompanied. Presence of APS or security - not enough currently.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Response time of APS. More presence necessary, they need to appear a lot more diligent!
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Keep all bar travelling passengers out of queue and away from check-in
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	All luggage should be x-rayed, remove all knives and forks from Qantas Club and meals areas airside. QF Management need to be fully trained in Vic Laws regarding fire arms illegally carried and failure to disclose to QF staff.
Brisbane	Qantas	Bollards at entrance doors to prevent driving through doors. Cars are left unattended, baggage is left unattended. More security presence
Darwin Airport	Qantas	All we want is to be treated with respect at all times. This campaign is long overdue.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	If I call security during an incident I don't want a 50 year old, 4ft woman turning up to "protect" me - this has happened to me in the past!
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Most problems are with pax family not travelling. Should be like overseas. Bags x-rayed before check-in and no family allowed in check-in area.
Darwin Airport	Qantas	Emergency buttons to alert APS when pax becomes verbally abusive.
Ayers Rock	Qantas	APS staff present.
Sydney Domestic	Qantas	Stop non pax on airside.
Sydney Domestic	Qantas	Only Pax to be allowed to baggage reclaim area. Too many wrong takes/stolen bags - resulting in abuse from Pax to staff.
Adelaide Airport	Qantas	Armed security guard at the front check-in area all opening hours - not walking around the terminal. Front counter at Adelaide Airport is in arrivals hall they cannot hear page for security. Need to call immediately not call somebody else to page security
Melbourne Airport	Menzies	Screen all pax bags and more physical presence by APS for every flight.
Melbourne Airport	United Airlines	Better trained security staff. They need to take their jobs more seriously as also pointed out by many of our pax!

Melbourne Airport	United Airlines	No cars should be allowed to drop off or pick up passengers or leave cars unattended.
Melbourne Airport	United Airlines	No cars or buses should be at departure level. Don't page for visitors to return to their car that has been left unattended. This should not be happening!
Melbourne Airport	Singapore Airlines	Much tighter security to protect passengers and staff that work at airport everyday.
Unknown	Unknown	Denied travel - ticket refunded. Pax blacklisted in extreme cases.
Cairns Airport	Qantas	Bags should be screened before entering airport. APS should be present at check-in areas at all
Cairns Airport	Qantas	Panic buttons at check-in counters
Perth Airport	Qantas	Have security hanging around check-in counters. Should make pax aware there is security.
Brisbane Airport	Unknown	More training for staff to handle conflict/rage situation and staff rights
Perth Airport	Qantas	Have "state police" there, who have the power to arrest! APS are weak and don't do anything.
Perth Airport	Singapore Airlines	More security staff. Bollards outside door entry points.
Perth Airport	Qantas	Restrict visitors from going through security. Pax only. Put cafes in the terminal downstairs.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Stop "paging" people to return to unattended vehicles - tow them away immediately.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Bags screened before entering terminal. Bags screened before loading aircraft. All metal cutlery removed from eating outlets and QF lounge.
Gove Airport	Qantas	I work in a Regional Airport without security where we have had to offload drunk pax transiting thru our port. This puts our staff in a very stressful position. There are oversold flights at times which causes stress not only to pax but to staff.
Unknown	Unknown	Give APS more power to hold and if necessary arrest and inform airline if pax is not able to travel due to behaviour. APS look good but that's all.
Sydney International	Qantas	Information for pax/travellers about security procedures (do's and don'ts)
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	A heavier presence, especially at blue zone domestic. Staff training re: procedures, i.e. who to call, what to do, when to call security
Melbourne Airport	Virgin Blue	More police patrol. More security patrol. More APS patrol.
Melbourne Airport	Virgin Blue	To see more police or APS officers at all times
Brisbane International	Qantas	No drop off zone at front of airport terminal. Too many unattended vehicles everyday.
Mount Isa	Unknown	AAL should provide more signs but too money conscious.
Sydney Domestic	Qantas	Have security respond "locally" when harass button pressed - not at corporate security over 2km away!
Ayers Rock	Qantas	APS staff present
Sydney Domestic	Qantas	Only let pax travel through security. Security check point on entering airport for all.
Sydney Domestic	Qantas	Provide security for SIT - Qantas seamless Transfer
Hobart Airport	Qantas	Not overbook flights. Have fewer flights in schedule to maintain punctuality
Unknown	Qantas	Qantas couldn't give a rats arse about air rage. They care about making money!
Unknown	Unknown	Let the public know that air rage will not be tolerated and they could be prosecuted.
Adelaide Airport	Qantas	Undercover security (no uniformed). More dogs
Melbourne Airport	REX	Check pax ID before boarding. Screen pax hand luggage out of small ports.
Melbourne Airport	Virgin Blue	Screen checked-in luggage. Only pax allowed down departure gates
Melbourne Airport	Virgin Blue	Ticketed pax only beyond security point. Genuine action against aggressive behaviour
Melbourne Airport	Virgin Blue	Photo ID needed by all.
Melbourne Airport	Menzies	Employing more security staff.
Perth Airport	Qantas	Only allow travelling pax into the terminal or security points. Preferably the terminal.
Perth Airport	Qantas	More screening points. All staff should be screened all the time. No access unless through screening points.
Perth Airport	Qantas	APS agent stationed at check-in in the busy times.
Perth Airport	Qantas	More support from management
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Signs to make pax aware that may be offloaded from flight and air rage is not tolerated. More staff or security officers
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Public should be charged if they are out of control especially if they physically hit staff. Ban them from flying.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	Pax with aggressive violent behaviour (physical and verbal) should be removed from the terminal and not allowed to fly, not rewarded as they seem to be now.
Melbourne Airport	Qantas	More support from management when pax joke about bombs. Pax should not be allowed to travel
Perth Airport	Qantas	Keep visitors segregated from pax