



# BRIEFINGS //

QANTAS Pilot Council

TO // Qantas Short Haul and Long Haul Pilots  
FROM // AFAP Qantas Pilot Council  
DATE // 28 March 2026  
RE // QPC Briefing No 9 2026

## QPC Briefing No 9 2026 LH EA Draft

Following the release of the draft EA11, your elected representatives and AFAP industrial team have completed a full review of the document and met with Qantas to clarify outstanding issues. Subsequently, the **QPC met and has determined it will recommend a 'no' vote on EA11.**

It is important to note that last year the AFAP did *not* reach in principle agreement with Qantas and was unable to endorse the proposed agreement.

During the drafting period, our approach was deliberate. We provided members with detailed information rather than directing a vote. That reflected the complexity of EA11 which has impacts that vary significantly across fleets, ranks, and career paths, and recognised the risks and complexity of escalation. A simple “YES” or “NO” position at that stage would have risked oversimplifying the realities facing individual pilots.

Now we have the final draft, and an opportunity to seek clarification from Qantas, it is clear that the document contains material changes, omissions, and risks that cannot be ignored.

Several critical items were identified that were outside the in principle agreement which we have summarised further below.

### Key Concerns

#### Omission of Reduction in Numbers (RIN) Protections for non-787 fleets

The most significant issue identified in the draft is the omission of any Reduction in Numbers (RIN) pay band protection for non-787 fleets. This was raised directly with the Company to determine whether the omission was intentional and to understand the rationale behind it.

Qantas has since confirmed that the omission is deliberate and given the significance of this issue, we have outlined further details on this in the latter half of this brief.

#### Frequency of Blank Lines

The issue of the frequency of blank lines remains an issue in the final draft document. Though the additional blank-line clauses do not represent a change from the in principle agreement, the QPC has concerns around the details and the efficacy of these clauses, along-side the effectiveness of proposed carers line changes.





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Over recent months, the QPC has been reviewing Pilot agreements from our IFALPA partners worldwide to explore alternative solutions to the coverage provided by blank lines that may offer pilots more stability. You can expect a detailed blank line brief on this in the near future.

## Localised Lines for Trainees

This clause was introduced during drafting of the document and did not form part of the in principle agreement. Currently there are no proper provisions for offshore training. This opens the door for dispute under the current EA regarding how the Company schedule and pay for offshore training. The changes introduced in the drafting document formalise the current practice.

The inclusion of trainee localised lines represents a relatively minor drafting addition, and concession, that did not form part of the in principle agreement.

## Duty Travel Lie-Flat clause

During the final stages of negotiations, the Company outlined it required flexibility in the application of the lie-flat duty travel clause entitlement. The AFAP team accepted the need but wanted clear parameters around these flexibilities.

The drafted document did not contain these parameters. If, for example, two flights depart on the same day on the same city pair, and a pilot is booked to pax on one and that aircraft is changed to a recliner configuration, under the proposed agreement the pilot will remain on the booked flight in the recliner, even if lie-flat seats are available on the other flight (same city pair).

The AFAP team highlighted this was not a reasonably drafted clause. Qantas did not agree to change it.

## 15-4 Call

During the final stages of negotiations, the AFAP team outlined the concerns around the flexibility of the Company to make changes between 15 and 9 hours to the departure time. Our primary concern was the ability for the company to continuously 'roll' departure time. Our suggested solution was that the 9 hour passive contact window would be anchored to original departure time. This suggested solution was dismissed, and our concern remains with the drafted clause.

## Classroom Training

During negotiations the Company highlighted the need for the 8 hour limit on ground training to not be prescriptive in makeup. The drafted clause excludes breaks and does not define 'classroom' training. This means Qantas could exclude breaks, equipment training, doors and any practical training from the 8 hour limit. In theory Qantas could roster pilots for training days well in excess of 8 hours with no other limit. Qantas did not address these concerns after they were raised this week.

## SOT to FOT pay

We also raised concerns around the current mechanism that would allow pilots to be employed as SOTs on day 1, move to shorthaul and continue to be paid SOT wages during their SH training, despite the FOT pay function existing for direct hires. We raised this concern with Qantas, but it was dismissed outright.



## QPC Decision

As a result of the changes to the draft document, **the QPC met and has determined that it recommends a no vote.**

While much of the agreement aligns with the earlier framework, the lack of meaningful RIN protections, along with the issues outlined above represents an unacceptable level of risk to pilots.

Protections in our agreement are crucial, especially for matters like RIN that directly impact future earnings and career prospects. Members will soon receive more details on the other items mentioned above. Below we highlight why the RIN pay provisions matter and why their omission is significant.

## Background – RIN Protections Under EA9

When EA9 introduced the pay band model, replacing the “years of service” system, it changed how pilots progress through pay.

Because this created a real risk for pilots displaced through a RIN process, EA9 included a key protection:

- Clause 32.5.6 (787 RIN Protection) ensured displaced pilots entered the highest pay band, reducing financial impact and gaps with the old system.

The impact of RIN is well known, especially after the 767 and 747 retirements, and the Company has stated plans to retire the A330 and A380 fleets. RIN protections are therefore not theoretical, they are likely to be used in the coming years.

## Current EA vs Proposed EA – Key Difference

Under the current agreement, pay for non-787 fleets is determined by Years of Service (YOS). This structure inherently protects pilots in a RIN scenario, as movement between fleets does not reset or materially disadvantage pay progression.

The **proposed EA fundamentally changes this model**, introducing a “years in category” pay band structure across additional fleets.

However, unlike the EA9-introduced 787 clause, **no corresponding mitigation has been introduced for airbus fleets** to preserve pilot earnings in the event of a RIN.

To be clear, **this change is not neutral**. It removes an existing protection (YOS) and replaces it with a system that requires specific safeguards, which have not been included.

Pilots are not required to accept this change; it is part of a broader concession claim by Qantas and should be assessed as such.

## Company Position During EA11 Process

Following the in principle agreement, pilots queried how a RIN would be managed under the proposed expansion of the pay band model to Airbus fleets.



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In a Company EA webinar in November following the in principle agreement being reached Qantas advised:

- Pilots RIN'd to a lower category would move to the highest pay band of that category
- Pilots RIN'd to a higher category would enter at Year 1 of the new category

While this position contained less protection than the existing 787 clause, it nonetheless represented a clear commitment to providing RIN pay protection across airbus fleets.

The AFAP reasonably understood this to mean that:

- An additional clause would be introduced to cover Airbus fleets, and
- The existing 787 clause would remain in place.

The AFAP Council's deliberations on the EA were made on this basis.

## Draft EA11: What Has Changed

Upon receipt of the draft agreement, the AFAP identified that:

- No new RIN clause has been included for airbus fleets
- The existing 787 clause remains unchanged
- There is no equivalent protection for pilots moving to airbus fleets in a RIN.

This represents a significant departure from what was communicated to pilots following the in principle agreement.

## Company Explanation

When this was raised with Qantas, the Company advised that AIPA was given a choice between:

1. Retaining the existing 787 clause only, or
2. Replacing it with the less protective new clause applicable to all fleets

We are advised that AIPA elected to retain the existing 787 clause only.

This decision results in:

- Continued enhanced protection for all pilots moving to the 787 in a RIN, regardless of category change; and
- No protection for pilots moving to Airbus fleets in a RIN.

Examples of this practically:

- A year 4 787 pilot *displaced* in an A380 RIN to the A330 would move to year 1 on the A330.
- A year 4 A380 pilot moving to the A350 in a RIN would move to year 1 on the A350.
- A year 4 A330 captain demoted to an FO on the A380 in a RIN would move to year 1 FO A380.



These scenarios map out possible outcomes affected by the lack of this protection.

As a result of this, the AFAP predicts the majority of RIN'd airbus fleet pilots would move to the 787 where the pay band protection remains. This would likely result in a large portion of displaced 787 pilots that would be forced onto airbus fleets where no pay band RIN protection exists.

## QPC Assessment

The QPC believes the current drafting leaves pilots exposed.

While the Company says A330 and A380 RINs are unlikely in the near future, experience shows fleet changes can happen quickly. A new, Company-driven pay structure should include clear RIN protections.

We reject the claim that airbus protections can't be added alongside the existing 787 clause. Without them, the AFAP considers the proposal to pose unacceptable risk.

More broadly, this raises concerns about the bargaining process. RIN provisions were not agreed when the in principle agreement was reached yet were presented as settled. Issues this significant that affect earnings, job security, and fleet transitions should not be left unresolved.

Leaving this unsolved, has:

- Confused pilots
- Led to misleading Company communications
- Undermined confidence in the process

In discussions, Qantas argued a Year 1 A350 pilot could earn similar income to a Year 4 787 pilot due to Additional Flight Duty Payments (AFDPs). However, the QPC cautions that this assumes sustained high levels of ULR flying, which may not hold over time, and, without night credits, a similar income will require more work hours, making it an unequal comparison in workload, fatigue, and work-life balance

## Strategy Moving Forward

The proposed timeline is that the Company will release the document for pilots' consideration on Tuesday. This timeline may change depending on the finalisation of remaining drafting issues.

Qantas has advised it is considering a longer access period for pilots to review the final document before voting. During the access period, no further changes can be made to the document or the access period has to re-start.

Our advice remains to consider the available information and make an informed, unemotional decision weighing the risks for your circumstances. Our [explanatory document](#) is a critical resource (along with the subsequent briefs provided) to ensure you make an informed decision on your vote. (Note; the information about RIN pay protection contained in the explanatory document has changed as per this brief).

The QPC recognises concerns about recent events in the Middle East and the potential impact on fuel prices, supply, and the broader operating environment.



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However, we also recognise that we are negotiating a four-year agreement and that is the context in which pilots should assess the outcome, rather than short-term volatility.

Volatility is not new to this industry. Many of us are still carrying the scars from COVID, but we also saw how quickly conditions can recover. That reinforces the need to focus on a sustainable, supportable outcome over the longer term.

## What Happens in a No Vote?

In the event of a “no” vote, the AFAP will move promptly to engage the membership and progress the next phase of negotiations. This will include conducting a comprehensive member survey to clearly identify key concerns, such as blank lines and other operational and structural issues, alongside broader feedback on the agreement. We also remind you that you can contact the QPC at any time via [gpc@afap.org.au](mailto:gpc@afap.org.au) with any feedback, ideas or concerns.

This data will be used to develop a detailed, evidence-based position that reflects the priorities of the pilot group as a whole. With this foundation, the AFAP will seek to re-engage with Qantas and restart negotiations from a position directly informed by member input, with the objective of addressing current issues and achieve a more balanced and sustainable outcome.

## Questions and Feedback

If you have any questions or feedback please contact your AFAP Qantas Pilot Council representatives at [gpc@afap.org.au](mailto:gpc@afap.org.au), or the AFAP legal and industrial team of Senior Legal/ Industrial Officer Pat Larkins ([patrick@afap.org.au](mailto:patrick@afap.org.au)), Senior Industrial Officer Deanna Cain ([deanna@afap.org.au](mailto:deanna@afap.org.au)) or Executive Director Simon Lutton ([simon@afap.org.au](mailto:simon@afap.org.au)).

Regards,

### AFAP Qantas Pilot Council

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