

Philippine Airlines

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A frontline in the battle against outsourcing



Workers at Philippine Airlines need your support in their dramatic battle against contracting out. On 27 September, Philippine Airlines (PAL) were forced to cancel all flights after thousands of workers struck and occupied their workplaces in protest at their imminent sacking and the outsourcing of their jobs.

Like Qantas, management at Philippine Airlines has for years been pushing an agenda of outsourcing. A month ago, some 2600 workers at Philippine Airlines were issued termination notices, effective 30 September. These workers were told they would have to reapply for their jobs with new companies set up to handle airport services (including check-in, refuelling and baggage handling), catering, and call centre functions.

All of these workers would lose the protection of their union, the Philippine Airlines Employees Association (PALEA). And all of these workers would suffer a dramatic fall in pay and conditions, as PALEA President Gerry Rivera explains: *A senior PAL reservation agent with five years of work experience receives PhP22,400 [A\$560] in salaries and allowances but is being offered by service provider SPI Global a wage of only PhP10,000 [A\$250] per month. This is not even the minimum salary and clearly a starvation wage for a family breadwinner.*

Ahead of the lockout, PAL tried to use scabs to take over workers' jobs. On 27 September, PALEA members responded by turning up to work but refusing to leave. The next day, police and security guards forcibly evicted the protesting employees from the terminal, cargo and catering areas. Picketlines have been set up at the international airports of Manila and Cebu, with PAL operations severely disrupted. More than a thousand PALEA members are on the picketline in shifts every day.

Companies including Japan Airlines, Qantas, and Philippine Airlines are using outsourcing to boost profits at workers' expense. If the one group of workers are successful in resisting this, it will be a powerful blow against outsourcing, and send a message to all workers that contracting out can be defeated. For this reason, it is important that Philippine Airlines workers get as much support as possible from workers around the world.

Discuss with your union what else can be done to support PAL workers

Discuss with your workmates & union delegates donating to PALEA strike fund
Account Number 00008-057-00403-9 Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC), Quirino Ave, Baclaran, Paranaque City, Philippines

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