

Airlines currently operating in Australia are treating their customers with complete disregard... because they are able to.

When paying for a ticket, the customer believes they are buying a seat on a particular flight at a set departure time, however in the fine print under the current Conditions of Sale, this is not so. The airline is selling a flight to a location, as and when it happens to get there at the airline's convenience and profit.

In no other industry, is it acceptable practice to take a consumer's money and not deliver, causing so much inconvenience, stress and expense, with very little consequence for the business. As ALL of the airlines take advantage of our almost non-existent compensation laws, there is no incentive for them to improve their business practices.

**We urgently need a Passenger Bill of Rights, with strong levels of compensation payable, to deter the cavalier attitude the airlines have in delaying and cancelling flights, for reasons within their control.**

We need monetary compensation in line with that mandated under the European Union and the United Kingdom aviation rules, to ensure their business activities provide outcomes that meet the rights and expectations of their customers.

Whilst there is some meagre compensation in the form of meal vouchers, and accommodation for overnight delays in certain circumstances, our airlines do not go out of their way to assist their passengers.

**Most travellers are also unaware of their entitlements under current Australian consumer law. These entitlements (though terribly inadequate) should be required to be clearly included, front and centre, on all airline booking documentation, as well as being posted in large signage at all check-in and transfer areas at airports. Passengers can then be aware of, and action their rights immediately.**

We have the absurd situation of a customer having to pay large fees to make a change to their ticket, whilst airlines can change and cancel flights at whim – causing massive disruption to plans and often the customer missing out on days of holidays and important events, and lost accommodation and tour costs. It is currently ALL in the airline's favour, whilst treating the passengers with contempt.

Our overseas visitors are now being warned on travel forums to not have any faith that their travel itinerary in Australia will work out, due to the unreliability of our airlines. This will begin to affect our tourism industry.

This outrageous situation must be changed. As the Australian airline industry will certainly not do it themselves, **we need strong consumer protection arrangements and compensation legislated by law.**

*Judith McRaid*

██████████ ████████████████████  
██