

**Media statement
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Dunne to Air NZ: start doing your job

United Future New Zealand leader, Peter Dunne, today called on Air New Zealand to stop wasting taxpayers' money in its continued pursuit of an anti-competitive merger with Qantas.

"The New Zealand and Australian consumer watchdogs yesterday delivered a devastating blow to the airlines' plans to form a monopoly in Australasian skies, following which any reasonable person would say the plan has no hope of being approved," he said.

"Yet today, we have the bizarre situation where taxpayer-owned Air New Zealand says it's going to push on with getting the plan approved, using the taxpayers' money to do so. Even more bizarrely, if the Qantas takeover of Air New Zealand were to succeed, it would be to the detriment of those very same taxpayers who would face decreased levels of service and higher airfares.

"It's time for Air New Zealand to get back to its primary job of running a quality airline for the benefit of New Zealanders, doing the basic things right like ensuring pilots are available to fly scheduled services which has not always been the case of late, otherwise it risks becoming a sub-standard airline with Third World standards of service," said Mr Dunne.

Ends

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