

# Brace for impact!

## The Qantas climate crash flightpath

Qantas, Australia's leading airline, is facing the challenge of reconciling its national and international emissions reductions commitments with its growth projections.

In response it has chosen to increase flights while claiming Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) and carbon offsets will cut its emissions in line with its Net Zero 2050 pathway.

Qantas's response, supported by an obliging Australian government and, to date, accepted uncritically by the mainstream media, puts it on a climate crash flightpath.

- 1** Qantas flight emissions will almost double between now and 2050.
- 2** Qantas has arguably already blown its risk-averse 'Paris aligned' emissions budget.
- 3** To achieve its stated goal of reaching Net Zero 2050, Qantas's deployment of SAF and use of offsets must overcome critical and arguably insurmountable barriers.
  - Deployment of SAF at scale faces critical cost and feedstock obstacles, and claimed emissions cuts are overstated.
  - Offsets have a very poor record of achieving emissions cuts equivalent to new emissions against which they are credited.

> The *Brace for impact! Qantas's climate crash flightpath* [BACKGROUND NOTE](#) critically assesses Qantas's claims, drawing on publicly available aviation data, climate science research papers and Qantas reports.



### BRIEFING NOTE

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- 4** Regulatory oversight of Qantas's path to Net Zero 2050 remains inadequate.
  - Qantas faces no Australian government mandated domestic emissions reduction target.
  - Qantas is not required to abate the majority of its international emissions.
  - The aviation industry has missed all but one of its emissions reduction targets over the last 20 years.
- 5** Even if Qantas could achieve its goal, Net Zero 2050 won't hold warming to well below 2°C, an aim of the Paris Agreement which Qantas supports.
  - On the Net Zero 2050 path warming of 1.5°C wasn't due until 2040. But it's here now. With 2°C now due by 2040, and 3°C by 2050, unless emergency action is taken.
- 6** Qantas's sustainable aviation actions are not commensurate with those actions now needed to avoid catastrophic warming.
  - Current CO<sub>2</sub> levels of 426 ppm are dangerous and on their own will push warming past 2°C if not drawn down.
  - To restore a safe climate new emissions must stop *and* atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> must be rapidly drawn down to below 350 ppm.
  - This urgent task of permanent carbon sequestration is undermined by Qantas SAF and offsets (and, indeed, all carbon neutral actions) that replace drawn down carbon with new emissions.
- 7** The Qantas sustainable aviation pathway may help Qantas to sustain flights but it will not make aviation sustainable.