

# **Qatar Airways denies staff need permission to marry**

DOHA: The chief of Qatar Airways, Akbar al-Baker, has furiously denied claims that its flight attendants are sacked if they get married.



Baker told CNN that the claims were untrue and his company's employment practices were "very progressive".

Asked if staff are fired when they get married, Baker said: "That is not true. That is a load of bullshit."

The claims were first made by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) back in 2013, but surfaced again recently after being picked up by the Washington Post newspaper.

The ITF, an international federation of transport unions, claimed that the Doha-based airline requires female staff to "obtain prior permission from the company, in case you wish to change your marital status and get married".

It also alleged that Qatar Airways reserved the right to dismiss workers who were pregnant, as that was viewed as a breach of contract. At the time, the ITF said Qatar Airways was committing "flagrant abuses" of worker rights.

It also criticised fellow Gulf carriers Etihad and Emirates for their restrictive work practices, but named Qatar as the "worst". Baker on Tuesday staunchly defended his company, saying that staff have "all the rights they require".

"These rumours that are being circulated are not true," he added. More than 19,000 people work for Qatar Airways.

*Source: AFP*