

Decorated vet pulls pin in bid to beat Qantas meddling

Any terrorist worth his SIM card will tell you, keeping one step ahead of the infidel means constant innovation.

"There are no silly ideas," Osama bin Laden once told an al-Qaida leadership and paintballing weekender. "But whichever one of you dogs shot me in the backside will wish that he hadn't."

Plainly it's with that sweeping vision in mind that the enemies of civilisation have cooked up their latest subterfuge: suicide Anzacs.

Vietnam veteran and serviceman of 21 years, Norm of Woodvale, was surprised and a touch miffed to be told he couldn't take his hard-earned military medals on the plane because the little pins looked like they were straight from the hijacker's toolkit.

"Australia's airlines and contracted airport security are not allowing Australia's war veterans to carry



their invaluable medals as cabin luggage as the pin that attached them to our coats is considered a security threat," Norm told *IC*.

"It means our invaluable medals are at the mercy of baggage handlers and . . . it will be our pot luck if they arrive at the other end.

"This sort of treatment of veterans is tantamount to accusing them of being potential terrorists."

Norm, who defended his country from 1965-86, said he got an email from Qantas officials earlier this month informing him his precious medals posed a security threat.

"Unfortunately, as the medals do have a pin attached for security reasons they would not be permitted to be taken inside the cabin of the aircraft," the official said.

Determined not to fall foul of the rules and in order to make his Anzac march in Queensland next week, the 58-year-old veteran took to his seven medals with a pair of pliers.

"I have removed the pin with pliers, and will include the 'dangerous' pin and the pliers in my checked baggage and take the pin-less medals on the plane with me," he explained.

"Then I can reattach the pin in Brisbane, remove it for the flight home and do it all over again."

Last night, Melissa Thomson from Qantas HQ said there had been a highly embarrassing mix-up and the medals posed no threat.

"I would like to apologise to this gentleman — I don't know how this has happened and I will be finding out," Ms Thomson said.

"Categorically war medals are allowed on board the aircraft at all times . . . and they pose no threat."

If *The West's* food critic Rob Broadfield is anything to go by, Qantas' Moroccan braised lamb is more of a deadly weapon anyway.