



Secretariat Report

IEU Federal Council Meeting

29 August 2024

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Some sad farewells in our IEU family

The last 12 months has seen the sad passing of two loved and admired IEU officers.

In December 2023 **John Quessy** passed away following a lengthy health battle. John supported and contributed to the work of our national union in his roles as a NSW/ACT Organiser, NSW/ACT Branch Secretary and as Federal IEU President from 2024 to 2019.

John Spriggs devoted over 30 years to the work of the QNT Branch during his time as Senior Industrial Officer. Spriggsy was a vital contributor to the work of our Federal Industrial Committee and our national industrial agenda. John sadly passed away in April 2024.

We extend our deep condolences to the friends and families of John Quessy and John Spriggs.



The IEU acknowledged and farewelled **Mark Northam** upon his retirement from the NSW/ACT Branch in October 2023. Mark's extraordinary contribution to the IEU over decades of work as an Organiser, Assistant Secretary and most recently as Branch Secretary were celebrated across our union and the wider union movement. Thank you Mark!



Key Priorities 2024

Professional Engagement

CLARIFYING COMPLIANCE

Our work has started with education authorities & policy makers to end the unnecessary overlay and duplication of compliance tasks.

THE NSRA (NATIONAL SCHOOL REFORM AGREEMENT)

The IEU is pressing for innovative changes that would see school funding and resources linked to tangible workload reductions.

NTWAP (The NATIONAL TEACHER WORKFORCE ACTION PLAN)

The IEU is working with the federal government and education authorities on the implementation of key NTWAP proposals that address workload.



WIA (WORKLOAD IMPACT ASSESSMENTS)

Our union is urging that all education policies and initiatives be subjected to workload impact tests to break the cycle of added workload layers.

AI IN EDUCATION

In addition to legal, ethical & educational concerns, we are fighting workload pressures caused by new academic integrity policies that increase workload for teachers & school leaders.

ITE & SUPPORT FOR EARLY CAREER TEACHERS

The IEU is advising on best practice induction guidelines & lobbying for greater early career support, including dedicated time for mentors.

EARLY YEARS STRATEGY & ACECQA WORKFORCE PLAN

The IEU is lobbying for urgent relief from the burden of compliance tasks, parity with teachers in schools, and better resources & support.



IEU Priorities 2024

Organising & Campaigning

Tranche 3 IR Reforms

Pursuing the next phase of IR reforms for IEU members: easing PAB requirements & limits on protected action, ending employer lockouts & dealing with the challenge of EBA freeloaders



Deep dive into workforce data

Building on our 2023 research, progress a deeper analysis of sector & workforce trends to support Branch campaigns & identification of recruitment targets

Political engagement & voter mapping

Targeted engagement with potential allies & senate crossbench on the importance of our sector in their electorates, voter trends in their seats & issues of common interest

Bargaining for growth: a how to guide

Assessment of growth opportunities under the new multi-employer streams. What works, where will it work. Collation of case studies from within the IEU & broader movement

Campaign to end compliance burden

Campaign activities to support our work targeting overlay of compliance tasks. Campaign actions will be needed with policy makers, employers and our members

Member retention plans

In conjunction with the ACTU project, develop a playbook specific to the IEU context for member retention & how we minimise member churn

Training and PD opportunities

Program of PD to focus on sharing of best practice activities across Branches, the launch of our Online Resources Hubs & the 2024 national IEU conference

Key Priorities 2024

Women and Equity

CLARIFYING COMPLIANCE

Women are disproportionately impacted by workload intensification. Streamlining of compliance should be seen as a women's issue.

REVIEW OF POLICIES related to changes to the Sex Discrimination Act. Assistance and guidance to Branches to update policies where necessary.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE POSITIVE DUTY REQUIREMENTS.

Development of resources and establishment of procedures to comply with the Positive Duty Provisions.



PARTICIPATION IN THE ACTU MENSTRUATION, MENOPAUSE and REPRODUCTIVE LEAVE & ENTITLEMENTS WORKING GROUP

Contribution to the policy development work being undertaken by this sub-committee of the ACTU Women's Committee.

The COUNCIL of PACIFIC EDUCATION (COPE)

Sharing of resources and assistance as required to COPE. Continuing attention to strengthening connections and networks within the region.

DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES FOR OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

Collaboration within the federal committees to develop resources based on legislative changes, highlighting current and new entitlements in a manageable and user-friendly format for officers and members.

FOCUS ON RECRUITMENT

Development of strategies to enhance member understanding of legislative changes as the basis of ongoing recruitment.

Industrial challenges, wins and next steps

Significant industrial reforms and new workplace rights for IEU members were secured by member campaigns over the last 12 months.

Combined with changes in 2022, the industrial rights and protections for IEU members have improved dramatically under a federal ALP government. However, challenges remain to win the further reforms needed to bring final balance to workplace laws.

Closing Loopholes Bill #2

IEU members were again front and centre in the fight to deliver a range of important reforms as the *Closing Loopholes Bill #2* was passed by the federal parliament.

While the changes delivered a broad range of improvements for secure jobs and fairer workplaces, new delegates' rights and the right of employees to disconnect have particular relevance to IEU members.

Our union will continue to advocate for changes to the excessive restrictions imposed on members seeking to take industrial action, and wind back the ability of employers to lockout staff for taking minor work bans.



Ending discrimination endured by IEU members

While the federal government is commended for delivering major improvements to industrial laws, similar legislative support to end discrimination in faith-based schools remains unresolved.

The federal government's decision to seek bipartisan support from the coalition for federal changes undermined their clear election commitment and once again delayed basic discrimination protections for thousands of employees and students.

Similar political failings by several state governments continue to frustrate and delay long-overdue changes at the state level in NSW, QLD and Western Australia.

The IEU will continue to campaign for the commonsense changes needed to anti-discrimination exemptions in faith-based schools. We can support our communities of faith while at the same time ensuring these laws reflect modern community standards.

IEU Federal Office Research and Policy support for Branches

Inquiries, reviews and Commissions

A plethora of reviews and inquiries were a feature of the education and industrial landscape over the last 12 months. The IEU lodged 15 submissions including on the ALRC review of Anti-Discrimination provisions, the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Bill 2023, the VET Workforce Blueprint, the NSRA review and Covid-19 Royal Commission. We made several submissions specifically on the perils and promises of AI in education, and on ECEC.

Copies of all submissions can be found at <https://www.ieu.org.au/policy-submission>:

- IEU Submission VET Workforce Blueprint 2024;
- IEU Submission to Productivity Commission ECEC Inquiry 2024;
- IEU Submission – Jobs & Skills Australia 2024;
- IEU Covid Royal Commission Terms Of Reference 2023;
- IEU Submission – Covid Inquiry 2023;
- IEU Jobs and Skills ECEC Submission 2023;
- IEU Submission on the Closing The Loopholes Bill 2023;
- IEU Submission to the ACCC Inquiry (Interim Report) into Childcare Services 2023;
- IEU Submission on Review of NSRA 2023;
- IEU Submission to the AI Taskforce 2023;
- IEU Submission to the AI Inquiry 2023 (House Standing Committee)

Federal Budget

The IEU was in attendance on Federal budget night on 14 June 2024, with Federal Secretary Brad Hayes and Researcher Christine Regan watching the Treasurer deliver the budget live at Parliament House and engaging with MPs and union representatives.

A budget summary paper was sent to Branches on the night supplemented by an IEU Speaks and a further budget brief outlining in more detail key outcomes for our sector including government support for increased wages in the ECEC multi-employer agreement, cost of living support, affordable housing measures, paid practicum placements, lower HECS/HELP indexation, domestic violence payments, and super paid on government parental leave.



Staffing and enrolment

ABS schools data and the National Schools Statistics Collection have been principle sources of data for mapping school staffing and enrolment trends nationally and across states and territories over a sequence of timeframes dating to 2006. Along with the presentation at the national conference last year, reports have been prepared and delivered to each IEU Branch.

To date we have found, for e.g., that the Catholic sector performs more strongly in NSW than the national average, although the independent sector will soon employ more workers in NSW, and is already doing so in QLD, SA and WA.

Voter mapping

As part of voter mapping in cross-bench electorates, the federal office conducted a data project identifying the predominance of non-government school enrolments in some electorates represented by Greens MPs. These reports highlighted the higher levels of non-government school enrolments in these seats, and provided a further basis for IEU engagement with the cross-bench including a common interest in different forms of representation of workers and families in these electorates.

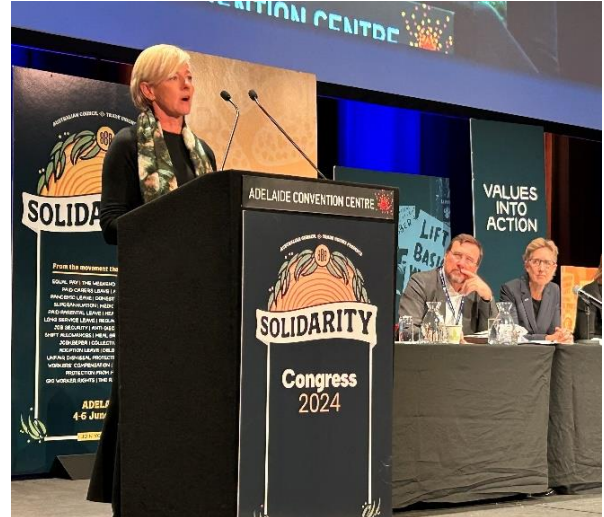
Enterprise Agreement workload provisions

Building a comparative data source of workload provisions in Catholic systemic school enterprise agreements across all states is another project underway in the IEU federal office. The goal is to provide branches with user friendly, one-stop documents that enable quick initial comparison of each category of provisions designed to address workload. Identifying whether, for example, some states may have innovative or new provisions may be beneficial for decision making in areas like logs of claims in collective bargaining. For ease of use the documents will contain links to each clause.

IEU members' inspiring tradition of activism

The last 12 months has once again seen IEU Branches engaged in bargaining campaigns, political lobbying and disputes across the Catholic and independent sectors.

It will continue to be IEU member campaigns that will make the positive change needed in our schools and in our classrooms.



International solidarity and action



Council of Pacific Education (COPE) Regional Conference 1 – 3 March 2024

The Council of Pacific Education met in Fiji in March 2024 to discuss issues of critical importance for achieving progress towards quality public education, social equity and climate justice. Affiliates shared their challenges in delivering quality education to students and worked collaboratively to prepare a climate justice motion for presentation at the Education International (EI) World Congress.

While there are clearly differences in capacity and resourcing around the Pacific, teacher shortages, workload and the impact of climate change were recurring themes at COPE.

The Conference resolution to EI focused on real action to protect the lives and livelihoods of those most impacted by climate change in the Pacific, and guarantee stable and quality education for all students.



SPEAKERS.

- IEUA: INDEPENDANT EDUCATION UNION AUSTRALIA
- SNTA: SAMOA NATIONAL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
- VTU: VANUATU TEACHERS UNION
- NZPPTA: NZ POST PRIMARY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
- FITU: FRIENDLY ISLAND TEACHERS UNION
- FTU: FIJI TEACHERS UNION
- PNGTA: PAPUA NEW GUINEA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

COPE Executive Meeting, Vanuatu 13 – 14 June 2024

Cope Executive met in Vanuatu followed by participation in Vanuatu Teachers Union training. Members of Executive travelled from Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Samoa, New Zealand and Australia. Veronica Yewdall, IEU Assistant Federal Secretary, attended in her role as Assistant to the Women's Network Co-ordinator, Nanise Kamikamicka.

Executive visited members of the VTU, who were taking stop-work industrial action on that day and awaiting a commitment from the government to address their long-standing claims. A message of solidarity from the IEU was communicated to the VTU.

A visit to the Malasitapu School in Port Vila was followed by attendance at a VTU training workshop. The COPE Executive meeting included consideration of the financial report, country reports and discussion of issues related to the upcoming EI World Congress.

The COPE Executive addressed the VTU workshop on the challenges in delivering quality education in the Pacific and strategies for women's empowerment and leadership.

Vanuatu Teachers Union (VTU) and COPE Executive (photo from the Daily Post Vanuatu)



APHEDA

The IEU proudly supports Union Aid Abroad APHEDA and encourages Branches and members to join in helping build workers' rights around the world. The IEU remains active in our region through support of the Timor Leste Farm Workers Union.

Education International (EI) World Congress 2024 (August 2024)

The world's teacher unions met in Argentina for the EI World Congress for the first time since 2019. This involved 380 unions representing over 30 million union members.

1200 delegates developed the policy and action framework that will guide the work of EI until the next World Congress in 2029. Key Congress discussions centred on the UN's 'High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession'. Debates focused on global issues relevant to IEU members – teacher workload, school funding, recognition of support staff, pay rates and workplace rights. Human rights violations and the persecution of teacher unionists in many countries were particularly distressing as were the first-person stories of anti-union violence and oppression in the host country and other South American nations.



IEU Governance and Leadership

Federal IEU Executive

Our Executive continues to provide expert leadership and governance to our federal IEU:

Federal President:	Carol Matthews
Federal Secretary:	Brad Hayes
Assistant Federal Secretary:	Anthony Odgers
Assistant Federal Secretary:	Veronica Yewdall
Deputy President:	Terry Burke
Vice President:	Rebecca Collopy
Vice President:	David Brear
Executive Member:	David Towson
Executive Member:	Tim Oosterbaan

2024 ACTU Congress

The triannual policy setting forum of the ACTU was held in June 2024 with an increased IEU delegation and allocated votes given the growth of our union since last Congress.



ACTU policies spanning dozens of areas were developed and endorsed on education, industrial rights, equity and anti-discrimination protections in faith-based schools.

The IEU supported the successful re-election of ACTU office holders including Sally McManus (Secretary), Michele O'Neil (President), Liam O'Brien (Assistant Secretary), Joseph Mitchell (Assistant Secretary) and Gerard Dwyer (Senior Vice President).

