

# CPSU CSIRO DELEGATES HANDBOOK



# Welcome

Congratulations on deciding to become a delegate.

In doing so you join thousands of other CPSU members who have been stepping up since 1913 to protect and advance the interests of the people they work with.

You are the face of the CPSU in your workplace. You are the voice of members, and their go-to on questions and concerns about work.

You are also the eyes and ears of the CPSU in your workplace, keeping your organisers and officials informed.

Without delegates, there is no union.

This handbook will take you through the basics of your new role to give you some more confidence and a better understanding of what being a delegate is all about. It won't make you an expert - this will come through experience and the good advice of others around you - and that's why throughout the handbook we let you know where to go for more help.

***Melissa Donnelly***  
**National Secretary**



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# 1 WHAT IS THE CPSU?

The union movement in Australia has a long history reflecting the enduring commitment of working Australians to a fairer society.

Unions in Australia have fought for decades and won wage increases, safer workplaces and improvements in working conditions.

We have been instrumental in improvements in equality for working women and the establishment of universal health care, superannuation and parental leave.

Today the union movement in Australia has over 2 million members. The CPSU along with around 40 other affiliated unions are represented nationally by our peak union body, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU).

The Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) is a national trade union in existing in various forms for over 100 years. Unions in CSIRO have existed since 1943 and the Staff Association merged with CPSU in 1992.

In 1994, with the amalgamation of two unions, the PSU and the SPSF, the CPSU was formed. The two bodies operate separately under one banner and two groups - The SPSF group which represents State public sector employees and the PSU, which you are a member of, which has members in a wide range of industries including the Federal, ACT and NT public sectors, telecommunications & call centres, employment services, commercial broadcasting, the aviation industry and science and research.

When we talk about the CPSU, we are nearly always talking about the PSU group, as is the case in this handbook.

The CPSU is a non-profit organisation funded almost entirely by membership fees, with a very small amount coming from some external training we provide, and some rent from our property in Sydney.

The CPSU is governed by financial members of the union by means of an elected Governing Council, an elected and paid Executive Committee and membership plebiscites.

The Governing council is made up of volunteer members who are elected directly by the membership.

There are seven members of the Executive Council who are elected by the full membership as salaried officers of the union. The Executive Committee oversees the daily operations and finances of the CPSU.

Governing Council and the Executive Committee are supported by organising, industrial, political and support staff across nine offices nationally.

While the CPSU is formally affiliated to the Australian Labor Party (ALP), the CSIRO Staff Association is not. CSIRO Section members do not count towards the CPSU's total of ALP-affiliated union members.

The CPSU also works on an ongoing basis with other unions and civil society organisations to promote and support public services, stop regressive legislation and prevent anti-worker/anti-union changes to industrial relations legislation.

We participate in parliamentary processes and inquiries, and we campaign for community and political support for progressive legislation and a better resourced public sector.

We need to be powerful to achieve change and to do this we must ensure that growth and asking people to join the union are central to all of our work.

The work that you do as a CPSU delegate is fundamental in the fight for fairer working conditions, secure jobs and enforceable and universal rights for all Australians.

For more information on the history of the CSIRO Staff Association visit <https://csirostaff.org.au/about/history/>



# What do we stand for?

Our cause is to protect and progress the interests of our members in CSIRO and in society. We do this as the democratic voice for staff. We advocate for CSIRO and science. We promote a community of staff in CSIRO so that we can assist members to enforce their rights. For more information visit <https://csirostaff.org.au/about>

To find out more about the work done by the CPSU and what the union stands for, it's also worth reading the Objects as set out in the CPSU rules, which you can find on the CPSU website in the Governance section: <https://www.cpsu.org.au/about-cpsu/governance>

We've picked out some of the key points for you below:

- To protect the rights of members in connection with their employment collectively or individually
- To uphold the rights and improve, protect and foster the industrial, social, intellectual and general welfare of members
- To provide membership services such as education, insurance, medical and other financial services to advance the interests of members in these areas
- To assist members by financial or other lawful means including the provision of legal assistance
- To submit industrial disputes to conciliation and arbitration in accordance with the policy and procedures of the Act
- To participate in any system or scheme of industrial conciliation and arbitration or for the prevention or settlement of industrial disputes or for the regulation of industrial affairs pursuant to the legislation of a state of the Commonwealth
- To seek and obtain or to oppose the making of awards or agreements by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission or by any successor to that body by whatever name called
- To provide a means for officers and members of the union to be promptly advised of and consult together upon agreements, awards, decisions, disputes, rates and relativities affecting the industrial interests and welfare of members of the union; and to afford opportunities for discussing other matters of common interest
- To develop and implement strategies to ensure equality of opportunity for all members and to pursue the objects of the union in an equitable manner



# Who does what

## CSIRO STAFF ASSOCIATION ELECTED ROLES

### Delegate

Staff Association delegates represent members in their workplace. Responsibilities include updating notice boards and distributing material, assisting organisers conduct meetings of members, helping to identify potential new members, providing assistance to members with workplace and encouraging colleagues to participate in Staff Association activities.

### Section Councillor

Staff Association Councillors represent the members in their sub-section on (national) Section Council. These are volunteer positions and representatives are directly elected once every three years. A Section Councillor is often the go to person for a delegate in a particular state. Due to their size, not all agencies will have a Section Councillor.

### Section Secretary and Section President

The CSIRO Section Secretary leads the Staff Association and - with support from the Section President - is responsible for representing the views and opinions of members in their Section at Governing Council, with management and in other forums.

CSIRO Section Secretary is a paid position, while the Section President is a voluntary official. Both are elected once every three years by members in their Section.

### Section Treasurer and Deputy President

The Section Treasurer and Deputy Presidents (two positions) make up the Staff Association Executive with the Section Secretary and President.

### CSIRO Sub-Sections

Each elect one councillor with varying voting strengths (based on the numbers of members in each sub-section) as part of the CSIRO Section Council.

- Australian Capital Territory
- New South Wales
- Northern Australia (NT and Far NQ)
- South Australia
- Southern Queensland
- Tasmania
- Victoria
- Western Australia

Read more at : <https://csirostaff.org.au/about/our-people/>

## CSIRO STAFF ASSOCIATION EMPLOYEES

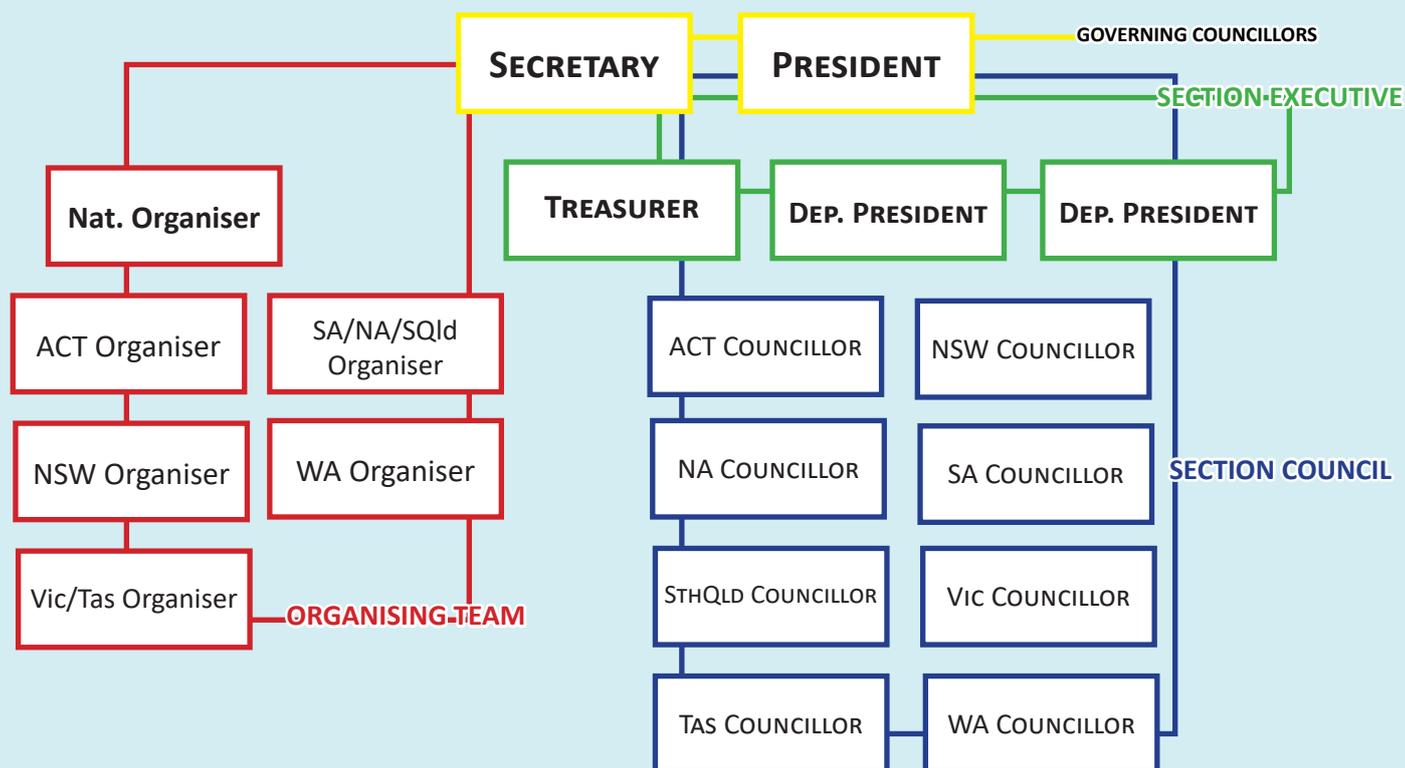
### Organiser

Staff Association organisers are responsible for the implementation of the union's organising strategies in workplaces comprising the various sub-sections. Organisers provide support to delegates and provide assistance to members for workplace matters.

### National Organiser

The National Organiser coordinates the Staff Association organisers across the country. The National Organiser supports the Section Secretary in developing organising strategy and provides expert technical advice for industrial issues.

## STAFF ASSOCIATION (CSIRO SECTION) STRUCTURE - CPSU



# Who does what

## CPSU ELECTED ROLES

### Delegate

Delegates are the representatives of the members in their workplace. Their role includes distributing union material, calling and conducting meetings of members, recruiting new members, identifying members' issues and concerns and organising members to participate in action.

### Section Councillor

Section Councillors represent the members in their agency, or part of an agency (e.g. state) on a national representative body known as a Section Council. These volunteer representatives are directly elected once every three years. A Section Councillor is often the go to person for a delegate in a particular state. Due to their size, not all agencies will have a Section Councillor.

### Section Secretary and Section President

The Section Secretary, supported by the Section President, lead a Section and are responsible for representing the views and opinions of members in their Section at Governing Council, with management and in other forums.

The Section Secretary is a volunteer, with the exception of the CSIRO and ABC Sections which have salaried secretaries, and is elected once every three years by members in their Section. These people are often the main CPSU person for a particular employer.

### Governing Councillors

The CPSU Governing Council is the supreme decision making body of the union. It is responsible for ensuring good governance of the union and sets its strategic direction. Governing Councillors are elected every three years by CPSU members in their area to represent their views and interests at a national level.

Governing Council is made up of:

- An Executive Committee of seven full-time CPSU National Officers who are directly elected by a vote of all members, and
- More than 50 honorary officials (including Section Secretaries and Presidents) who are directly elected from workplaces by members in the relevant Sections of the union.

### National Officers

This group of paid, elected CPSU officials works to implement the strategic direction set by Governing Council. They are responsible for effectively managing the governance and operations of the union on a day to day basis. The National Secretary is the chief operating officer of the union. The members of this group are directly elected by all CPSU members nationally once every three years.

- National Secretary
- Assistant National Secretary
- National President
- Deputy National President x 2
- Deputy Secretary x 2

See here for more: [www.cpsu.org.au/about-cpsu/our-leaders](http://www.cpsu.org.au/about-cpsu/our-leaders)

## CPSU EMPLOYEES WHO HELP YOU

Contact details for all CPSU employees can be found here: <http://www.cpsu.org.au/staff/directory>

### Organiser

CPSU organisers support delegates in your role. They can assist delegates with workplace issues, distributing information, running meetings, taking action or recruiting members. Often they are located in your state or territory's CPSU office, though they may be responsible for an agency in more than one state or nationally.

### Member Service Centre (MSC) Phone Organiser

Senior MSC phone organisers operate the Delegate Hotline which is your direct point of contact and support in the MSC. The Delegate Hotline can provide individual and collective support and advice. MSC phone organisers assist with individual member queries regarding membership dues and individual issues. They also assist delegates with queries and provide individual representation to members.

### Lead Organiser

Lead organisers typically manage a group of organisers around the country who cover a particular agency or portfolio. They have national responsibility for implementing organising and industrial plans for a particular agency or employer.

### Team Leader

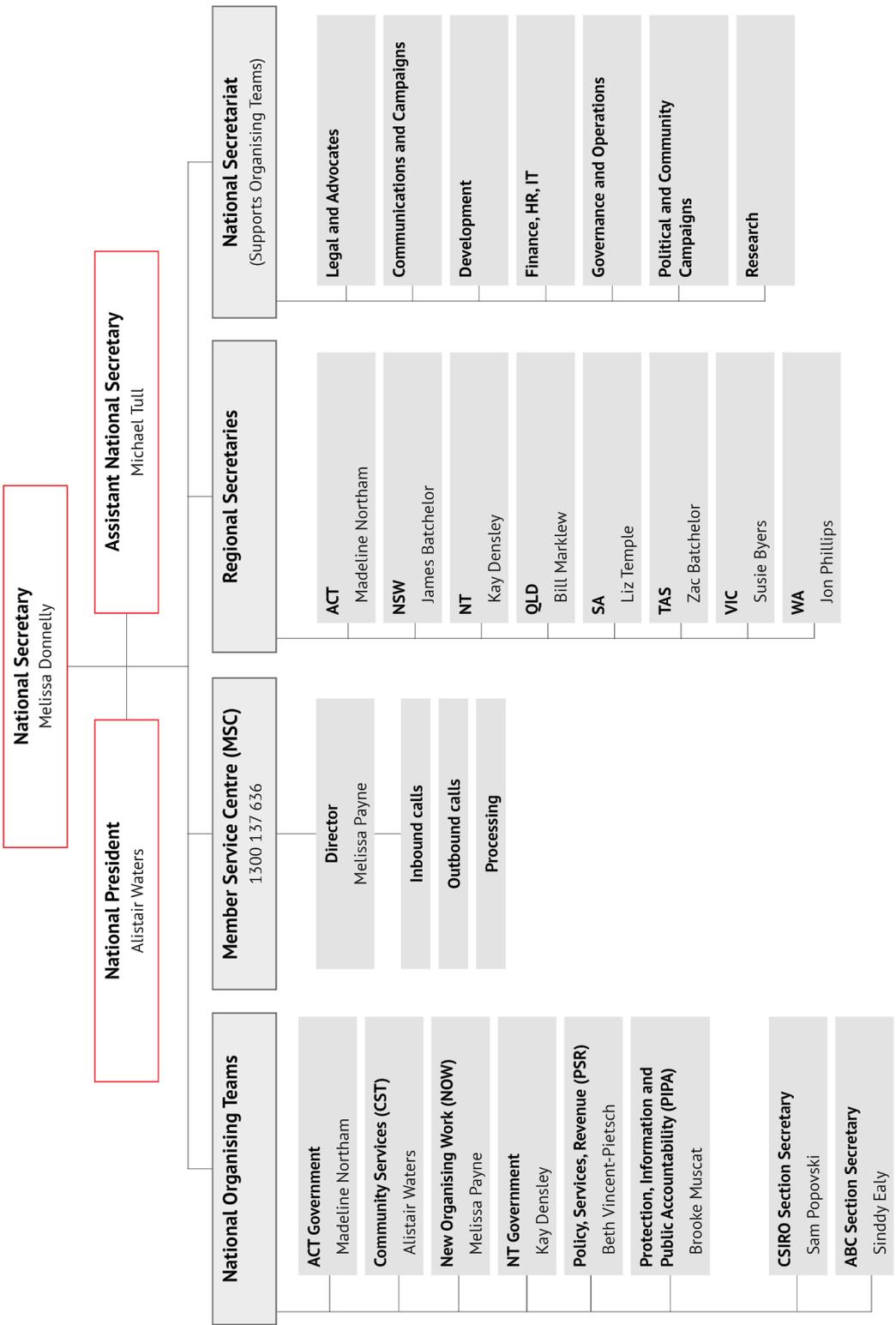
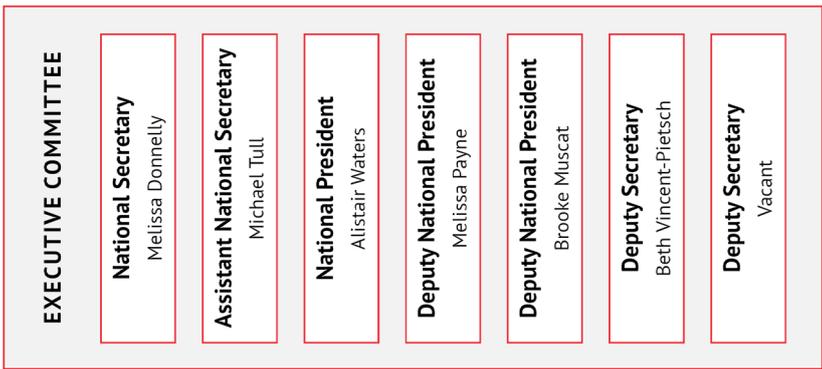
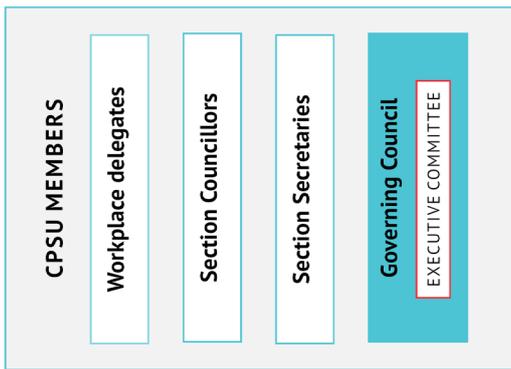
CPSU members are grouped into eight industrial teams. Each team is headed by an elected official or team leader and has its own group of organisers, lead organisers and support staff.

### Regional Secretary

Each state and territory has a Secretary who is responsible for implementing the organising and industrial plans for members in all the agencies and employers in their region. They are the CPSU National Secretary's representative in that state.



# COMMUNITY & PUBLIC SECTOR UNION ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



# ALP affiliation

Like many other Australian trade unions, the CPSU is formally affiliated to the Australian Labor Party (ALP).

## Background

The CPSU exists to protect and advance the interests of members by winning better pay and conditions and protecting jobs and quality public services. To secure these advances we organise in the workplace, run public campaigns, build community alliances and engage directly in the political process.

## Having a voice in the debates that matter

Through affiliation we get direct input into ALP policy-making forums and access to decision-makers. Alongside more traditional campaigning methods, affiliation helps us work for better outcomes, protect jobs and promote quality public services.

## Why the ALP?

The ALP was formed by trade union members over 100 years ago to ensure working people had a voice in the Australian Parliament. Over the last century this partnership between trade unions and the ALP has delivered many important advances including superannuation, collective bargaining rights, workers' compensation, strong health and safety laws, paid parental leave, Medicare and other social welfare protections. Today the CPSU and other affiliated unions are continuing to push the ALP to embrace further progressive changes.

## Getting involved

If you are interested in ALP policy development or representing CPSU members' issues in ALP forums, we'd like

to hear from you. Call 1300 137 636 or email [members@cpsu.org.au](mailto:members@cpsu.org.au).

## How does affiliation work?

Affiliated unions are entitled to votes in various ALP decision-making forums based on the number of members the union is affiliated for. The larger the CPSU affiliation, the more influence we have.

## CSIRO Staff Association members do not count towards CPSU's ALP affiliation

When the CPSU decided to affiliate with the ALP, CSIRO Section Council voted to abstain from the process. This means that the CSIRO Staff Association is not affiliated with the ALP and CSIRO Section members do not count towards the CPSU's ALP affiliation total.

## All CPSU members can opt out

CPSU recognises that some members may be uncomfortable with it. Therefore every member gets to choose whether their CPSU membership should be included for ALP affiliation, or not. If you don't want your membership included you can 'opt out'. Opting out means you remain a fully accredited CPSU member, but your membership is not counted as part of the CPSU ALP affiliation.

## Does ALP affiliation affect the cost of my union fees?

No. Affiliation costs are paid collectively by the union, not by individual members. The amount of union fees you pay is the same whether your membership is counted for affiliation or not.



# 2 ROLE OF THE DELEGATE

## AS A CSIRO STAFF ASSOCIATION DELEGATE, YOU

- Are the face of the CPSU and CSIRO Section in your workplace and the voice of the members
- Always act with integrity and in the interests of your members and show leadership in what you do
- Inspire workers to become part of the union community, organise them to establish sustainable power in the workplace, and mobilise them when needed
- Are trusted by your colleagues and are seen by them as professional, approachable and effective
- Understand your rights as delegates and the rights of the workers, including on health and safety
- Display and support the values of CPSU members, CSIRO Section Council and the CPSU Governing Council
- Undertake a number of activities in your workplace with support from the CPSU office

## DAY TO DAY TASKS INCLUDE

- Recruiting new members and retaining current members
- Providing individual industrial advice with the assistance of Staff Association organisers
- Running collective disputes with the support of your organiser
- Running workplace meetings
- Liaising with management about workers' concerns
- Distributing union materials to co-workers
- Commenting and providing feedback on Staff Association proposals (policies, guidelines etc.)
- Running workplace meetings to members, non-members and with other delegates
- Undertaking activities to increase union visibility in the workplace



### DELEGATE STORY

I love handouts, doing meetings and getting to know and help staff. I like making sure that the workplace is doing the right thing by its staff. I also have a great group of delegates around me which really helps.

- Ikini, CPSU delegate

While there are some “super-delegates” who do all these things all the time, having more than one delegate in a workplace spreads the load, and it’s common for delegates to specialise in a few of these tasks.



# 3 RIGHTS OF THE DELEGATE

As a CPSU delegate you have certain rights and protections, which are contained in legislation or agreements. You also have a range of facilities, which are generally provided for by agreement with management.

For more information on specific delegate rights in CSIRO visit <https://csirostaff.org.au/document/delegate-rights>

## WORKPLACE RIGHTS

The Fair Work (FW) Act is the legislation which governs employment and industrial relations in Australia.

The general protections provisions of the FW Act protect workplace rights, freedom of association and provide protection from discrimination. These protections apply to all workers, including delegates and contractors. Remember, as a delegate you may also have additional rights specified in your EA. Employers can't take adverse action against a worker because they have or use their rights at work. For example, an employer can't fire an employee because they make a complaint that they're not getting their minimum entitlements, or because they have engaged in lawful industrial activities.

## FACILITIES

While you should check the arrangements that apply in your agency, generally your facilities include things like:

- Using your work phone to attend meetings or to have discussions with the CPSU office, members and other delegates
- Using the printer
- Attending union delegate training
- Emailing other members of staff
- Speaking with workers in the tea room

These facilities will often vary between employers and agencies, and even by workplace where you have reached local agreement with your supervisor or manager.

Managers and supervisors have been known to deny access to facilities, often because they don't understand them. It's easy to feel unsure, but it's important to be firm about what you can do without ruining any good relationship with local management. Sometimes it just takes a conversation to resolve the issue. Your organiser will help you if you're not sure what to do in these situations.



## INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES

A person engages in industrial activities if they:

- Organise, promote, encourage or participate in a lawful activity for the union
- Comply with a lawful request of the union
- Represent or advance the views of the union, or
- Seek to be represented by a union

Employees are protected if adverse action is taken against them because they are a member or officer of a union or they engage in or propose to engage in industrial activities.

## PROTECTIONS

### Discrimination

Employees are protected if adverse action is taken against them for a discriminatory reason.

This includes reasons of race, colour, sex, sexual preference, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family or carer's responsibilities, religion, pregnancy, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.

### Coercion

A person cannot coerce an employee to exercise or not exercise a workplace right or to engage in industrial activity.

### Undue influence or pressures

An employer cannot exercise undue influence or pressure on an employee to make the employee make or terminate an agreement under the NES, an award or enterprise agreement or an individual flexibility arrangement or accept a high income guarantee.

### Misrepresentations

An employer cannot deliberately or recklessly make false or misleading representation about an employee's workplace rights or obligation to disclose whether they are a union member or officer or are engaging in an industrial activity.



# 4 SUPPORT FOR DELEGATES

As a member of a huge community, you're not alone. Help and support comes in many forms.



## YOUR UNION ORGANISER

Your organiser is your main link to the CPSU office, and one of your go-to options when you have questions about being a delegate, or about issues in the workplace. They will help you with local campaigns you want to run, and work with you on how to implement broad campaigns in your workplace. They will provide you with resources to undertake your role and help you develop and progress your workplace plan.



## TRAINING

In-face training is provided for both new and experienced delegates, with courses being listed on the Delegates page on the CPSU website. For more information, contact your organiser. Access to training opportunities can be found online: <https://csirostaff.org.au/about/our-people/delegates/>



## OTHER DELEGATES

Some delegates and councillors have been in the role for a number of years and have experience representing members at the highest level. You can tap into this source of knowledge by establishing or joining support networks with others.



## ONLINE - WWW.CSIROSTAFF.ORG.AU

As a delegate you have access to information and resources not available to other members. Most of this can be found in the dedicated Delegates section of the Staff Association website.



## MATERIALS

Posters, flyers, membership forms, badges, noticeboard headers, signs – all examples of what we can provide you with. Speak with your organiser about what you need for your workplace. Keep a printed copy of the current CSIRO Enterprise Agreement handy



## ACCESSING YOUR DELEGATE RIGHTS

Much of the work we do is around ensuring delegates like you have facilities to do your job, such as use of the phone, copier, conferencing facilities, time to attend training and help members. What you can do varies across employers, so talk with your organiser about what facilities are available.



## THE MEMBERS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

The more you engage with your members, the more they will see and value what you do for them. They will support you in return.

# 5 KNOWING YOUR WORKPLACE

In order to build a strong and visible union, you need to know who is in your workplace and how the union functions within it.

When we talk about a workplace, we mean the group of workers you look after. That might be a workgroup on one floor, everyone in the whole building, or a couple of floors, or even spread over a few very small sites. You might share responsibility for that workplace with other delegates.

If you are not sure of what your workplace is and who it covers, speak with your organiser or other delegates in your site.

## MAPPING

We talk about the process of gathering workplace information as 'mapping' and a well mapped workplace will ensure that you will be equipped to run successful campaigns, grow the strength of the union, and effectively represent members. It will also get you thinking about current attitudes, other potential activists, and opportunities for growth.

## GETTING STARTED

Questions that you might want to consider as part of getting to know your workplace include:

- How many people work in your workplace?
- What worker groups make up your workplace e.g. Labour hire, contractors, casuals, part timers etc.
- How many of these are in a group who are eligible to become members?
- How many, and what proportion of these workers, are members?
- How active and interested in the union are they?
- Are there any obvious workplace issues around which you might organise?
- Are there any other factors that might affect the level of interest or membership in your workplace?



# 6 BUILDING A UNION COMMUNITY

Scheduled environments, a lack of organised activities and changes to the way we work have left a void that the CPSU can fill. As a union we want people to feel part of a positive and supportive community at work. It makes members feel connected and part of something in a real and tangible way. It fosters a strong visible union culture which in turn helps us to grow union membership and inspire the confidence of our members and delegates.

A union community is not just a social club. It needs to centre around union values and convey at all time the importance of strength in unity.



## CASE STUDY

John is a delegate who has just moved to a new workplace. There are some established delegates at the site, but union presence is not as high as it once was. He meets with the other delegates and they are happy for him to continue as a delegate in his new workplace. They also decide to hold a BBQ to kick start a process of rebuilding union presence. They check with management who are happy for the group to meet regularly to plan events and workshop issues.

One of the delegates advises that a local community group is raising money for the local community childcare centre. A few of the CPSU members in the call centre are part of this group, and the delegates decide to use the BBQ to raise money for the fundraising campaign.

The delegates update the noticeboard with posters that include photos of themselves to let everyone know who they are. They also distribute a flyer advertising the upcoming BBQ. It makes a great conversation starter as the delegates use lunch and tea breaks to invite others along.

The BBQ is a great success. There is union information displayed on tables and several people join on the day. The delegate group raises \$412 dollars in donations and photographs from the day are posted on the noticeboard. The childcare centre posts a few snaps on their Facebook page and sends a letter of thanks to the union which is forwarded to all staff.

After the event, the delegates email all staff surveying them about local issues and interests. With this information they draw up a plan of events for the year, including some information sessions on negotiating annual development plans, a pizza day, and a book stall, which they advertise on their noticeboard.

The above scenario is an example of how you might begin to create a strong and dynamic union community in your workplace.

In time the community should become an active and relevant part of the workplace culture. By enjoying positive

relationships with management and meeting regularly with other delegates, the union becomes visible, relevant and interesting.

The union in the workplace becomes more than just a bargaining agent, or someone you go to for assistance. It becomes an entity that contributes positively to workplace wellbeing and culture.

The cornerstone of building and developing a union community is interaction and relationships. It requires regular conversations with people.

## SO WHAT DOES A STRONG UNION COMMUNITY LOOK LIKE?

1. A strong union community has strong, passionate leaders. Think of other members who would make great delegates and have a chat with them.
2. A strong union community has members with diverse skills and interests that they can bring to the community. Many members and delegates are involved in community issues already and will welcome support in promoting or advocating on the issue. Survey your members to find out what interests they have or outside groups they are a part of, then talk to them about how you can help connect that with the workplace.
3. To begin encouraging a union community in your workplace, it might help to think about what a strong union community might look like for *you*. Is it:
  - Approachable?
  - Supportive?
  - Highly active and visible?

Does it:

- Have engaged and educated members?
- Have respected, known and approachable delegates?
- Have high density?
- Run lots of union activities that CPSU members enthusiastically support and are involved in?
- Run regular member meetings?
- Have visible and tangible benefits of being part of the community?
- Have a positive relationship with management?

4. A strong union community should have plenty of interesting and fun activities. When organising activities:

- Make sure the issue or cause is in line with union values
- Draw up an activities calendar for the whole year
- Allocate responsibility for leading the activity (make sure it's not the same person every time)
- Work with management to get their support for the activity
- Use positive language to promote the event
- Have at least one really positive handout for the event so potential members can take it away
- Promote the event afterwards with pictures

## EXAMPLES OF THINGS YOU CAN DO IN YOUR WORKPLACE

- Morning teas, afternoon teas, BBQs
- Wednesday Walkers Group
- Fundraisers and blood drives
- Competitions and quizzes – especially ones that get members from different areas meeting
- Guest speakers – doesn't have to be about union issues



### QUICK TIP: KEEP IT SIMPLE

The simpler you make it the more chance you have of sustaining it when you are busy.



# 7 INSPIRING OTHERS TO ACT

To win outcomes for our members, we need to inspire or persuade people to do things – to act.

- We need non-members to become members.
- We need members to attend meetings, read emails, engage in consultation, take industrial action when needed, provide feedback when needed, ask colleagues to join us.
- We need the employer to reach agreed positions with members on local and national issues.
- We need the public to show support for public services.
- We need politicians to act in the interests of our members.

There are hundreds of thousands of pages written about how to get people to act and within that are many useful ideas and examples, some of which we will explore in this handbook. To keep things simple, though, it's possible to extract five general principles that guide what we do.

- People do things for reasons important to them.
- People generally need to be asked to do something, either explicitly or implicitly.
- The relationship between those involved is pivotal.
- It's easier to inspire someone to act within their values than to expect them to change their values.
- Engaging with the relevant individuals or groups is the most effective way to persuade or inspire them to act.

In this section of the handbook we will cover:

- Increasing visibility
- The 5 fundamentals
- Communication tips
- Handling objections



# Increasing visibility

When we think about “visibility” we probably think of the equivalent of hi-vis vests, or something else designed to grab your attention.

But visibility is not just about someone seeing you. It’s what they see you doing and how they respond to what they see.

People don’t just see you, they see what you do, how you go about things, how you interact with others, and what you say. They see outcomes as well as the actions and the people behind those results.

So, what are some things you can do to increase your visibility in your CSIRO workplace?

First you can get the “billboard” type of visibility sorted. This is about there being a constant reminder that you exist, and that union membership is normal in your workplace.

- Audit and map the Staff Association noticeboards in your workplace.
- Dress up the noticeboard with colour - use visuals that get people’s attention.
- Put up a flyer on the noticeboard and at your workstation with your photo letting people know that you are the Staff Association delegate.
- Update the noticeboard regularly.

Once the more passive visibility is sorted, it’s time to be visible through your actions.

- Steer clear of office gossip.
- Smile at people – say hello.
- Do your job well and be helpful around the workplace. You can also provide members with industrial assistance. If someone is not a member and they want industrial help, ask them to join.
- Speak up at team or office meetings.
- Lead and participate in union activities.
- Where you can, establish a good relationship with supervisors and managers.
- Let people know what the Staff Association is doing.
- Chat to your co-workers about broader issues at CSIRO that affect them. Be positive about what we achieve and offer solutions to problems.

“

## DELEGATE STORY

**What’s good about my union noticeboard? It’s a constantly changing kaleidoscope of useful information about the CPSU and what we do!**

- Peter, CPSU delegate



# Inspiring others to act

Effective union communication aims to change a person's viewpoint. To create a shift in their attitudes we need to engage with their values and beliefs.

People form and adjust their views based on the evidence available to them and the reality of their own lives.

Every time we talk to someone we are in a position to add to the information that they have at their disposal and even alter their perceptions about the power relationships in their workplace and beyond. Fundamentally we are in a position to be shaping people's experience of what a union is and how it works.

That means we need to think about what message we actually want to convey and consider how to do that in a way that respects people's existing experience and viewpoints. If we ask them to take action in response to something they don't genuinely care about then it is unlikely to be successful.

If our goal is to organise successful action (like large-scale membership growth followed by excellent bargaining outcomes) then every communication we have needs to show respect for experience, understanding of other's views and careful planning around the issues we approach people with.

This means that we have to ensure that we don't buy into the negative messaging that is often found in workplaces – statements like “The union got us a bad agreement” or “Unions only look after the complainers” serve to reinforce negative bias that exists in the minds of many non-members.

When you hear statements like this, instead of trying to deny the listeners viewpoint, you can try to add to their understanding of the situation by using a concept called 'light and shade'.

An example of light in the poor agreement outcome conversation would be to draw the listeners' attention to the protections saved during a difficult bargaining period, or you could alternatively point out what might have occurred if the union hadn't protected the conditions that were under attack (the shade).

## Asking non-members to join the Staff Association

Part of being a delegate is inviting your colleagues to join the union – this is particularly important with new starters.

Most of the time when you invite someone to become a union member, you will get a positive and polite response. Some people will say 'yes' straight away, some won't. Very occasionally, people may be rude or hostile.

Someone who doesn't know much about the union is unlikely to join. We need to let them know that the Staff Association:

- Gives employees a voice in their CSIRO workplace
- Represents them on career and professional issues
- Provides individual assistance and other member benefits
- Engages in bargaining and industrial work
- Advocates on broader issues such as jobs, rights at work and funding for science and the public sector

We want to be a union that most employees want to join, even when they don't have a particular issue they want to be resolved. Every new member provides more resources and more power.



# The five fundamentals of asking someone to join

There are five fundamental questions most non-members want answered before they join. Most non-members want this information even if they don't ask the question.

1. What is the CPSU and what has it got to do with me?
2. What difference does membership make?
3. Can I get the benefits without joining?
4. Is it normal/ok for me to join?
5. Why should I join today?

When you have your next join conversation, it will help to include this information.

What you say depends on your situation and the nature of your contact with the non-member. We've included some basic examples below.



## WHAT IS THE CPSU AND WHAT HAS IT GOT TO DO WITH ME?

Many workers have never been in a union or have limited knowledge of how they operate. We need to give them some basic understanding of who we are and what we do.

*"The CPSU exists to represent our members on issues that are important to them around work, including your pay and conditions".*

*"We are a democratic, non-profit organisation funded by tens of thousands of members, and we are completely independent of the employer".*



## WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES MEMBERSHIP MAKE?

Giving examples of the benefits of unionism can be reinforced by talking about what happens when you don't have a strong union. Real examples or anecdotes are more effective than concepts, e.g.

*"We were able to protect your guarantee to 15.4% super in the last round of bargaining. If we didn't have the strength that we do, this may have been lost".*

Speak with your organiser for help with thinking of specific examples for your workplace, or visit:

<https://csiirstaff.org.au>



## CAN I GET THE BENEFITS WITHOUT JOINING?

This can be a tricky topic to address if the listener views the CPSU as only a bargaining agent. To effectively manage this part of the conversation you need to move the listener away from this concept and identify some of the many other benefits that a member will have access to. You could say something like

*"The CPSU brings over 100 years of experience to represent our members exclusively on a range of work-related matters like individual representation, bargaining, campaigning for appropriate staffing, as well as a host of member-only benefits".*



## IS IT NORMAL/OK FOR ME TO JOIN?

You might say something like;

*"It is really normal for people to ensure their security and protections within the workplace by joining the union".*

*"We have a lot of members here, including some of the managers."*



## WHY SHOULD I JOIN TODAY?

Addressing this depends on what is affecting workers at the time of discussion.

If there is a current campaign at the workplace you might say:

*"By joining today, you will immediately have a voice in this campaign".*

Otherwise you might say:

*"This is a good place to work. Keeping it that way means that we need to keep growing everyday".*

For more help or ideas, please talk to your CPSU organiser or call the delegate hotline.

## QUICK TIP: ASKING PEOPLE TO DO OTHER THINGS



These five questions don't just apply to asking someone to become a member. They also apply when asking a member to participate in an activity or come to a meeting or wear a sticker. Just replace "join" with whatever you are asking them to do and the principle is the same.

# Some tips for effective communication

## KNOW YOUR PRODUCT

When you are confident, people pick up on that and respond more positively.

The best way to be confident in a conversation is to know what you're talking about and what you want out of the conversation. It is also useful to have a range of examples and metaphors to suit the assertions you are likely to make.

## BE UPFRONT

You know when those power companies call you or knock at your door and say; "I'm not trying to sell you something..."? Does anyone actually believe that? Don't be that person. Be open about what you are asking them to do.

## PEOPLE JOIN FOR REASONS IMPORTANT TO THEM

Simply telling someone that 'joining the union is good for them' does not necessarily make it true for that person or give them an important reason to become a member.

It's more effective to open the door and invite someone in than try to push them through it.

People do things if it fits with their values. Some of the strongest values people share are those we can collectively group as autonomy and self-direction or self-determination values. In society we see these in democracy, civil rights, LGBTI rights, consultation over new freeways, brand choice, mental health, house prices, privacy, exploration of the universe, the arts, etc.

In the workplace it's about hours of work, consultation over change, the right to be represented, adequate pay, sick leave, domestic violence leave, access to training and development, etc. It's arguably the strongest value we share as a union, yet we don't always see it as a value but simply as rights and conditions.



### DELEGATE STORY

**I become a delegate because I believe in being treated fairly. I love to support people who are unable to stand up for themselves. I believe in the values of right conduct and truth and virtues of the fair go and justice.**

**- Durga, CPSU delegate**

Other key values we hold as a union include:

- Equity
- Meaning in life
- Social justice
- Protection for the welfare of all people
- Helpfulness
- Loyalty
- Community
- Benevolence
- Tolerance
- Protection of the welfare of those closest to us
- Responsibility

## USING EXAMPLES

What better way to demonstrate the value of union membership than with a real and recent example? Forget the eight hour day and other wins lost to the mists of time, use an example that's less than a few months old, preferably in your workplace or agency. Need some examples? Ask your organiser or check your latest union news email.

## A QUESTION'S WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Using the right questions is more effective at shifting people than talking at them.

For a start, how do you know what is important to them if you don't listen? How do you know if they already think unionism is good?

If we ask questions, it leaves less time for the non-member's mind to wander off topic. It also allows them to convince themselves of the value of being in the CPSU.

And people love talking about themselves and what they think. It seems it triggers the same pleasure sensations as money and food. Who knew?

# Handling objections

Sometimes you will find a non-member will join the union fairly easily. More often, however, you will need to overcome people's objections before they join. Often the objection that you hear, isn't what the PTM (potential member) is really objecting to.

For example a PTM might say: "I'm happy with my job" but actually mean, "I don't see the need" or "I trust my employer."

They might say: "I can't afford it" but mean, "I don't see the value."

You need to listen for their objections and use strategic questioning to find the reasons underlying those objections.

A good way to handle objections is to have practiced responding to them.

You are more effective when you are being natural and responding to the person you're talking to.

Debriefing is also vital, and it's hard to debrief yourself, so do this with someone else, such as a fellow delegate or your organiser.



## "I CAN'T AFFORD IT"

This appears to be the biggest barrier for most of us to deal with and unfortunately, our internal response is normally to picture "I can't afford it" as "I have \$x

each fortnight and I have no spare money to spend on union membership".

We are reluctant (quite rightly) to drill down into what people spend their money on, however, this objection often comes before the cost is even mentioned.

Unless price is your competitive advantage, you should avoid drawing attention to the cost and focus instead on the value of union membership.



## "UNIONS ARE BAD"

Often this can be about a general perception of unions, or it could be about a specific experience.

First, find out what they actually mean, then explore how this relates to the CPSU.

Use questions like:

*"Is that how you see the union members here behave?"*

*"What do you think we should be doing?"*



## "I DON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEMS/ I'M HAPPY AT WORK/MY MANAGER IS GREAT"

That's why we're here, isn't it? To create better workplaces and improve peoples working lives. A good response to this is to say that you're glad that they're happy at work and talk

about the role the CPSU has had in making it a good place to work. You can then explore the dangers of not being strong enough to keep it that way.

*"That's great. What do you like most about working here?... What do you think would happen if you couldn't do/ didn't have that thing you like?"*



## "I HAD A BAD EXPERIENCE ONCE"

It might be the case that the experience was with the CPSU or it could have been with another union. Whatever the case, acknowledge their feelings and then draw their attention to how you work.

*"I'm sorry that you had that experience. My job is to ensure that doesn't happen."*

If the bad experience was a collective issue, then hold the agency or government to account and turn the discussion to one of how we achieve change.

## The responses you give to most objections can be covered by coming back to the the five fundamental questions.

Remember to:

- Ask lots of questions.
- Respond to what is important to them.
- Don't tell them how to think. You can't force them to agree, instead aim to open the door and invite them in.
- Talk in practical rather than theoretical terms. Using real world, tangible examples assists this.
- Respond to the real, or underlying objection.
- Demonstrate the value and quality of CPSU membership.
- People don't always make a decision straight away – it might take a couple of conversations or attempts.
- Never dismiss an objection or argue against it. Hearing and addressing the objection is critical.



### DELEGATE STORY

A colleague told me he had never liked unions or wanted to join one, but after seeing the effort we put in to protecting staff interests he wanted to join and has since become a strong advocate for the union.

- Elizabeth, CSIRO delegate

# 8 WHAT IF SOMEONE COMES TO YOU WITH AN ISSUE?

You've been approached by a worker in the tea-room who wants to talk to you about an issue. What should you do? What will be your approach?

The first step is to ascertain if the issue is collective or individual. Why? The answer to this question will change the way that you handle the situation.

Put simply, a collective issue affects more than one person and an individual issue will affect one individual. Sometimes what seems to be an individual issue will turn out to be a more broad or systemic issue.

Alternatively, a member might tell you that everyone is upset about a change, however, when you ask around, you find that no one else is affected, or thinks that it is a problem.

Some examples that are likely to be collective:

- An email has been sent to everyone to say the office is relocating
- The local manager interprets part of the agreement in a way that has a negative impact on part time workers
- The local manager advises that medical certificates are now required for all sick leave and they must state the medical condition

You can see that these issues will affect people differently, perhaps some not at all, but the solution is likely to be something that applies to a group of people.

Some examples that are likely to be individual:

- A worker is about to be performance managed
- A worker is told there is a concern about their time sheets
- A worker has a personal problem and needs time off work but doesn't know how to approach management

Some examples that could be either collective or individual:

- Bullying and harassment
- Start/finish times
- Access to overtime
- Ability to take leave

## SO HOW DO YOU WORK OUT IF IT'S INDIVIDUAL OR COLLECTIVE?

You should talk to your organiser or speak with the other delegates in the workplace as soon as you hear of an issue. You should act quickly, but not before thinking your approach through.

Often you will know it's collective because an email has gone out to a group of staff, or it's discussed at a team meeting – it will often be a change or directive that obviously affects a group of people.

An individual issue may also be an issue that affects some others in the same situation, but the sensitive nature of the matter indicates that each case needs to be approached separately and confidentially.

Asking around will help you work out if it's a collective or individual matter, but don't rush in – you need to assess whether asking around will draw attention to a personal issue affecting a small number of workers.

Fostering a good relationship with management and your members will mean that this initial stage of information gathering will be easier and quicker as the communication lines will be more readily open to you from the outset.

Once you have worked out if the issue is individual or collective, you can map out what you will do, as outlined in the next two parts of this handbook.



# Individual issues

## TIPS FOR REPRESENTING MEMBERS

- Always make sure they are a member before assisting them. If they are not a member, just say you would love to help them, and all they have to do is become a member.
- Decide what level of help you need to represent the member and contact your organiser.
- Be supportive. Reassure the member that you'll be in their corner each step of the way.
- Never promise an outcome you may not be able to get for the member. Workplace issues are rarely black and white, so we need to make sure our members have realistic expectations.
- If you're not sure of an answer say you'll investigate it and find out.
- Seek advice from other delegates at work.
- If it's a particularly complex issue, like a workers' compensation or code of conduct matter then it may be best to put the member directly in touch with your organiser.
- If you're meeting with management, do some planning and preparation beforehand and ask questions as necessary. Take notes and keep them in

a safe place. Make sure that you're constructive and professional in your approach.

- It's a good idea to take notes and map out the key features of the issue. See the next page for an Individual issues worksheet
- Whatever the issue, before you give any advice look at your agreement to see what it says (or doesn't say). Visit <https://csiostaff.org.au/resources/enterprise-agreement/>

## MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

When members come to CPSU delegates about individual industrial matters, they are often experiencing a particularly challenging situation which is why they've reached out. It's important not to own their issue or get side-tracked from the approach that offers the best help.

## IF A MEMBER IS DISTRESSED

If a member is showing signs of distress, you can advise them to access EAP, their GP, a psychologist or a counsellor. If a member is suggesting self-harm or suicide, ensure they have Lifeline's telephone number 131114 and contact 000 if appropriate. Remember to practice self-care when supporting members through difficult situations. Think about contacting EAP to debrief and access any other support services as needed.



# Individual issues worksheet

The below worksheet can help you plan your course of action in dealing with an individual issue.

Member's Name	
Business Unit and workplace	
Email address	
Mobile number	
Additional contact information	

<b>SUMMARY</b> Briefly list the main facts and events	Briefly list the main facts, events and people involved
	For example management decision, bullying or harrassment, hours of work, access to leave, workers compensation
<b>ISSUES</b> Analyse the nature of the issue	
<b>IMPACT and OUTCOME</b>	Impact: How has this issue affected the member?
	Outcome: What kind of outcome would satisfy the member?
<b>ACTIONS and NOTES</b>	Action: What action needs to be taken to support the member? Do you need assistance from your organiser
	Any additional notes

# Collective issues

When we talk about handling collective issues, we talk about organising or campaigning around the issue. What that means is that we have objectives in addition to resolving that issue for those affected. These include:

- Increasing our visibility and relevance
- Increasing union membership in CSIRO
- Building a union community through working together
- Inspiring confidence in the Staff Association
- Inspiring participation
- Finding more active members, and even a new delegate or two

## THE KEY THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN CAMPAIGNING AROUND A LOCAL WORKPLACE ISSUE ARE:

1. Act quickly
2. Involve, inform and represent your members
3. Ask non-members to join
4. Publicise outcomes

Let's look at that in some more detail, starting with an example case study.



### CASE STUDY:

Sally approaches Ben, her local delegate. She says that her team has just been told that they are no longer allowed to take their accrued flex on Fridays.

Ben checks that Sally is a member. He then checks the Enterprise Agreement and finds that there is no clear reference as to when Flex can and can't be taken.

Ben walks around the site and asks several known members if they are affected. He finds that staff all over the site have been told the same thing. Ben asks if people would come along to a meeting if he called one at lunchtime the following day. Most people say yes.

Ben calls his organiser Jarrod. He tells him the situation and that there are a number of people affected.

Ben books a room at his site and emails his members and other staff at the site about an urgent meeting the following day.

Ben places posters on the noticeboard and asks his active members to encourage everyone to attend.

That afternoon, Ben is approached by the local manager. He asks why Ben is calling a union meeting. Ben is upfront with the manager but declines to meet with him privately to discuss the issue. He says that he would prefer to meet with his members first and that once this has occurred, he will request a meeting to discuss the outcome.

Before the meeting, he prints off membership forms and a meeting attendance sheet.

In an office of 30 people, 25 staff members attend. 10 are non-members, and 15 are members.

Ben makes it clear at the outset that non-members are welcome to attend as observers, however, as this is a union meeting they need to join if they want their views represented.

The discussion in the meeting is heated. Staff feel upset and intimidated by management's approach to the decision. Staff feel that this is a blanket decision that has been made because some individuals are constantly taking Fridays off leaving the office short staffed. They feel that it is unfair that all staff should be punished for the actions of a select few.

Ben asks the members in the group what they think would be a reasonable outcome. After much discussion, the group agrees that a roster would be a reasonable outcome. Ben agrees to take the suggestion to management and spends the last minutes of the meeting talking about membership benefits to the group. Four non-members fill out the form and join.

Ben leaves the meeting and calls his organiser to debrief. He writes some notes and plans for his meeting with management, which he has asked for the following morning. He talks to one of the members, Riya, who had a lot of ideas, and asks her to come to the meeting with management. She agrees and the two of them spend some time planning for the meeting, such as thinking about how to respond to some of the things management might say.

Ben and Riya meet with the manager the following morning. The manager says he was surprised that so many people had attended the meeting the previous day. Ben has already developed a respectful and positive relationship with the manager, so he listens to Ben and Riya outline the members' concerns. The manager agrees to a roster on a trial period.

Following the meeting, Ben sends the manager an email outlining the outcome of the meeting and the manager's agreement of the roster trial. He then sends an email to all members outlining the win. He calls his organiser who sends an email to all potential members. Ben is overjoyed and decides to start planning a morning tea to bring the union members back together to celebrate the win.

# Collective issues checklist:

## EXPLORE THE ISSUE

This is the information gathering part of your campaign.

- Who is affected? How many members/non-members? A particular group? Just your workplace?
- How much do they care? Will non-members join? Is it critical that it be resolved? Another way to look at this is 'how widely felt is it? How deeply felt is it?
- What has actually happened? Get details, how did people find out? Have people been affected yet?
- Is the issue covered in the agreement/other legislation?
- Who made the decision/proposal?
- Talk to organiser/other delegates. Has this happened before? What did you do?

## PREPARE A PLAN

- What steps do you need to take?
- Is it winnable/partly winnable? What is a reasonable outcome?
- Talk to organiser/delegates from other workplaces.
- Get members active to demonstrate that it is important e.g. hold a meeting.
- Ask interested/affected non-members to join.
- How do we approach management? In writing? Ask for a meeting?
- Get members to agree on strategy e.g. hold a meeting or a vote.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF PLAN

There are many options on how you might address a collective issue. It is important to keep your organiser and other delegates in the loop for advice and feedback. Remember you are a representative and so don't agree to something without your members' acceptance.

## CONCLUSION

- Report back to members on outcomes.
- Get any formal agreements in writing.
- Celebrate winning!

## WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

We often have success around WHS issues, partly because the laws give us more capacity than the industrial laws. Please contact your organiser straight away if a health and safety issue arises.



# Collective issues worksheet

The below worksheet can help you plan your course of action in dealing with a collective issue.

Relevant manager/supervisor			
How many people work here?		How many are members?	
What percentage of staff are affected by this issue?			
What percentage of staff feel strongly about the issue?			
On a scale of 1 to 10, how strongly do they feel about this issue?			
<b>FACTS</b> What has happened? How do people feel?			
<b>ISSUES</b> Has there been a breach of an EA or Award?			
<b>OPTIONS</b>	Industrial: What outcome do members want?		
	Organising: What opportunities are there to build strength?		
<b>ACTIONS</b> What should we do to achieve these outcomes and make the most of the opportunities?	Industrial:		
	Organising:		

# 9 NEGOTIATING AND ENGAGING WITH MANAGEMENT

The three stages, or phases, of negotiating a solution with management are:

1. Preparation: consultation
2. Negotiation: in the room
3. After negotiations: reporting back

## PREPARATION

Preparation is about finding out what members want and what is possible. It's also about building union power through growth, activity and activists (finding new ones and developing new and existing ones).

Ask yourself:

- Is the issue widely and deeply felt?
- Will any solution adversely affect other members?
- Do those affected all understand the issues?
- What does my organising plan look like?
- What does the CSIRO Enterprise Agreement say?



### QUICK TIPS: FIONA

Using the FIONA acronym can help you remember some of the preparation stages:

**F**acts: Research properly and don't assume, be clear about what the EA, policy, award, relevant legislation etc. says.

**I**ssues: Identify issues while gathering facts.

**O**ptions: Clear objectives, top and bottom line, priorities, is it winnable/ partly winnable?

**N**umbers: Is the issue widely felt, who are the people involved?

**A**ction

However there are other components to preparation.

- Try to predict management's likely position and arguments and work out suitable responses.
- Determine who you will be negotiating with and whether they are the final decision-makers.
- Have a clear understanding of what you will talk about and an understanding of definitions of words and legal terms. Think of examples that illustrate what you mean by a word or phrase. Have examples to validate assertions. Do not make up anything.
- Caucus with those on your side of the negotiations to assign roles and determine boundaries/rules (such as not raising personal issues in the room and not agreeing to proposals management present that are not part of the outcome members want).
- Prepare what you want to say – what you want, why you want it, how it can be granted, when you want it to happen. Identify the strengths of your team members and play to those strengths.
- Organise support from the members in the workplace if necessary.
- Consider ways to demonstrate workers' support.
- Practice.

## NEGOTIATION

The purpose of getting into a room and negotiating is to get an outcome members will accept. Everything you do and say needs to be useful and effective. This is why it's important to prepare.

- Never negotiate alone.
- Never go beyond your mandate. If management presses you for an answer you do not have the authority or ability to answer, confirm you will respond later when you are able to.
- Present a united front. Take the time you need to step outside and caucus should something unexpected occur e.g. a left-field question or position from management. You do not need management's approval to do this.
- Co-ordinate and control. Make sure there is a clear leader of your negotiating team, who is the only one who can give definite "yes" and "no" responses.
- Listen – a key skill. Don't assume management will respond in a certain way. Paraphrase and clarify management's statements and offers. For example, people often refer to a four week period as a month but they are not the same thing.
- Be respectful in your dealings with management.
- Take notes. Ensure key comments and words are recorded exactly as said, not paraphrased. Your notes are crucial and could end up in the Fair Work Commission (FWC) or court.

- Do not buy into any management ploy to distract you and your team, e.g. in the heat of the moment by claiming industrial rights before confirming those rights.
- Approach the task with purpose. You represent your members and the CPSU. Management represent management. As early as possible ask management to state its case and see where it relates to what you are seeking. Don't be side-tracked. Be courteous but firm. Be clear and simple in explaining what you seek. Don't lose your temper, don't make personal attacks, and don't make management lose face. Engage management with respect and focus on the issue, not the person.
- If you reach an impasse, you can use one of these options:
  - Acknowledge agreement is not reached on a specific issue and move on to another issue
  - Take a break
  - Make a non-substantial concession (within your mandate) and make it appear you are giving up a lot
  - Adjourn to discuss with delegates and members
- Check back before concluding. Go over notes and clarify any arguments, decisions or concessions. Confirm your understanding of management's position and document this confirmation. This avoids argument later on. Restate what your next step is.

## AFTER NEGOTIATIONS

- Immediately after the negotiations, the union team should compare notes and assess both the result and the process.
- Discuss with the members what further steps are necessary or possible including organising opportunities.
- Prepare a report with recommendations for further action if appropriate.
- Report back to the members and the Staff Association office as quickly as possible.
- Take follow-up action as required.
- Keep records of the outcome, for example agreements etc.
- You may wish to send your written understanding of the negotiations to management as closed correspondence that does not invite a response from management.
- Monitor implementation of the outcome of the negotiations.

## THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS

Keep in mind that you always want to build capacity and strength through:

- Recruitment
- Developing and finding new delegates
- Generating activity







**COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SECTOR UNION**  
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Authorised and printed by Sam Popovski - CSIRO Section of Community & Public Sector Union (PSU Group) - 350 Queen Street, Melbourne, Victoria