

AMWU

News

Australian Manufacturing Workers Union



AMWU

Summer 2019/20

Defence delegates target Canberra



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Paul Bastian

AMWU National Secretary since
2012 and AustralianSuper Board
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Editorial

One of the key initiatives of the New Union Project was setting up our National Industry Committees. In this edition, you'll read about the great work of two of these committees - Defence and Aerospace, and Rail - in leading campaigns on the issues that matter to them.

Our train-builders had secured a commitment from Labor to sort out rail procurement if they were elected. When the Liberals won government in May, rather than rolling over or throwing their hands up in frustration, our delegates immediately said they wanted to get down to Canberra and talk to politicians about the importance of rail manufacturing and what the government should be doing to support it. You can read all about who they met with and what they said on page six.

Our Defence and Aerospace Committee held their annual face-to-face meeting in Canberra, and after a couple of days of industry planning, briefings, and training, they spent a day in Parliament campaigning for TAFE funding, apprenticeships, training, and skills. You can read more about that on page eight.

Meanwhile, our legal team has delivered the goods for delegates who were wrongly sacked and workers who were short-changed.

Two Visy delegates in Victoria were sacked after being accused of inciting unprotected industrial action in 2017. After two long years of fighting against the multinational, the Fair Work Commission decided in favour of the delegates, ruling that their termination had been unfair. The delegates were reinstated and paid six months back pay. This is a huge win for these two workers and shows what you can achieve when you stick together. Check out all the details on page six.

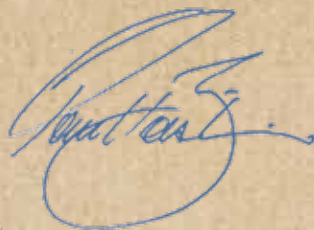
Over in the West, Komatsu tried to get out of paying its employees a ten per cent performance bonus, claiming it was a typo that should have read two per cent. AMWU member Philip Southgate took Komatsu to the Industrial Magistrates Court in WA with the support of the union, and secured back pay for all the affected workers at Komatsu.

We've also included a feature on asbestos in this issue. Our union has always been at the forefront of the fight against asbestos, and we're proud to support APHEDA-Union Aid Abroad's campaign: No Australian Money in Asbestos: Not Here. Not Anywhere. Get all the details on page nine and sign the online petition here: www.megaphone.org.au/p/ADBasbestos.

We've also got stories on women's uniforms at Qantas, won by AMWU delegate Jayda, another EBA win in the Victorian bus industry, and the story of three AMWU 50-year members.

I hope you enjoy the edition.

In unity



Paul Bastian
AMWU National
Secretary



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**PROUDLY PRINTED BY AMWU MEMBERS
AT MCPHERSON'S PRINTING PTY LTD**

AMWU News Summer 2019/2020

AMWU News is the official publication of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, (registered AFMEPKIU) National Office, 133 Parramatta Road, Granville, NSW, 2142.

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All information included in this publication was correct at the time of publication, but is subject to change at any time.

Please contact your union organiser for updates.

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Victory for Visy delegates

All wins are sweet, but for the AMWU Print and Packaging Industry a recent win over the unfair dismissal of two AMWU delegates was particularly sweet.

In 2017, two Visy workers, who were also union delegates, were terminated after being accused of inciting unprotected industrial action.

The problems began after an unpopular Drug and Alcohol Policy was introduced. Two meetings were held where the policy was poorly communicated, and workers were left feeling hurt and agitated.

The workers subsequently decided they wouldn't work overtime, something which Visy claimed was orchestrated by the two delegates. Following a botched investigation, Visy claimed it had the right to sack the two workers.

For Beni Rustemi and Fahim Ahmadyar who were wrongly dismissed, it was the start of a two years and three-month emotional rollercoaster.

"It was tough because I was the main breadwinner at the time. It was just a big shock at the start, but after that thought I'd turn around and fight it," Beni said.

Fahim said he knew they needed to stick together.



Visy delegates Beni and Fahim with Assistant State Secretary (Print Membership Area) Tony Piccolo.

"It was hard getting through it.

There was a lot of stress, but we had faith that we could get through it with the support of our families and friends," Fahim said.

Together with their union, the two workers took the cardboard giant to the Fair Work Commission, claiming they had been unfairly dismissed.

"These delegates were welded on to see this through," said Lorraine Cassin, Assistant National Secretary (Print and Packaging Membership Area). "They knew there was an injustice and they wanted to see it through and put it on the record."

AMWU members also supported the delegates through the

Commission, including giving evidence at the eight-day hearing.

One Visy worker was asked by Visy's barrister why he willingly gave up the overtime. In response he said: "Money is not everything. When you've ... worked 10, 15, 20 hours straight, everybody was upset. Because they put the effort in for the company and then they get spoken to like that and called names like that."

In September, the Fair Work Commission

overturned Visy's decision, saying it had been unfair.

The two delegates were reinstated and were paid six months back pay.

"I am so proud of these delegates that they took the risk to run the case," said Lorraine. "It could have been a decision that didn't reinstate them, but they stood firm from day one, and fought the injustice."

"They are two very loyal delegates who had absolute faith in the advice they were given by the union."

"I've had a long career - you don't get too many reinstatements. This is on all accounts an exceptional outcome and we're very pleased of this precedent."

"We're so proud to have delegates like this within the AMWU and we look forward to having many more years working with these delegates."

Assistant State Secretary (Print and Packaging Membership Area) Tony Piccolo said it was a monumental victory for the two delegates.

"They showed it doesn't matter how large the box of money you have, that you need to respect workers' rights and workplace laws," Tony said.

For Beni and Fahim there was never a doubt that their union was backing them.

"The AMWU was very supportive. Lorraine backed us through the whole process. Every time we'd call on her she was there - we know she had our backs through the whole process," Beni said.

"We also want to thank organisers Mick Bull, Dean Griffiths, Lachie Wallace, Robert Gee and Tony Piccolo for their support through this time."

"It was great to get that result not only for us, but for the AMWU and the workers of Australia. It's been fantastic - we've cleared our names, we can walk back in with our heads held high."

"It was also about setting the record straight and setting a precedent for workers in the future." ●

Albury mill rolls out its final page

Workers may have seen it coming, but that doesn't make the closure of Norske Skog's newsprint mill at Ettamogah, near Albury, any easier for the 183 workers who have lost their jobs.

The mill was scheduled to close by the end of 2019, leaving many long-standing employees out of work as the year ends.

AMWU Organiser Dave Corben said the closure would have a significant impact on the Albury-Wodonga region.

"It's a difficult time for the workers and their families, particularly coming into Christmas.

"Some workers will be taking an early retirement, but for many others it will be a challenge to find other jobs.

"The mill is a big employer in the Albury region, so there will be a knock-on effect to suppliers and to local businesses."

The viability of the mill had been under question for some time due to the decreasing demand for newsprint across Australia and Asia.

Norske Skog will now consolidate its Australian operations at its mill in Boyer, north of Hobart, which produces newsprint, book grade and light-weight coated paper.

The 37-year old newsprint mill at Albury was the largest of its type in Australasia, with an annual production capacity of 265,000 tons.

While the Albury site will no longer produce newsprint, it may yet have a future in the

production of cardboard, as Norske Skog has sold the plant to packaging giant Visy.

Visy is reportedly conducting feasibility studies on a number of options for the site.

Dave Corben is optimistic that Visy will bring the mill back to life in a new capacity.

"The fact that Visy has bought the mill gives us cause for hope. It may take a year or two, but there's definitely a good prospect that the mill could be retooled for making cardboard or other packaging products."

In the meantime, the AMWU is keeping in touch with Norske Skog workers to make sure they are supported through the closure of the newsprint mill.

"We're here to help our members in whatever way we can," said Dave. ●

KOMATSU SLAMMED FOR 'TYPO' EXCUSE

Employers across the country are trying every trick in the book these days to get out of their legal commitments to pay workers correctly.

But multinational mining equipment supplier Komatsu probably takes the cake for the most pathetic excuse for underpaying workers, after claiming the ten per cent performance bonus clause in its Enterprise Agreement was a "typo".

According to Komatsu bosses, the ten per cent figure in the final Enterprise Agreement (that they agreed to) was actually a mistake, and it should have been two per cent. Also, the dog ate their homework, and their Twitter accounts must have been hacked.

Komatsu supplies and maintains a fleet of trucks, loaders and shovels at the KCGM Super Pit gold mine, and the Enterprise Agreement covers 17 maintenance workers at the site.

At first, the company tried to get out of paying the performance bonus by declaring that the Enterprise Agreement

had been "varied" to reduce the bonus down to two per cent - even though the only way to legally vary an Agreement is through the Fair Work Commission.

They then sent a letter to all employees naming and shaming the workers who were owed the bonus.

The AMWU made every effort to talk to the company about the situation, and to resolve it amicably, but company management refused to play ball.

Eventually the union and AMWU member Philip Southgate decided to take the matter to the WA Industrial Magistrates Court.

In court, the company's excuses fell flat. Magistrate Martin Flynn noted that, "it is surprising that the company did not, itself, independently check the contents of the proposed employment agreement document at any point before the Fair Work Commission formally approved ... [the] agreement."

Magistrate Flynn then fined the company \$12,500 for not complying with the Enterprise Agreement, and

dished out another \$2,000 fine to the company's Human Resources Manager.

Western Australian Branch Secretary Steve McCartney said that Komatsu's behaviour was not only disrespectful to workers, it was against the law.

"Komatsu is a big international company, who chose to spend the money on fighting the union and legal fees rather than just paying its workers what they were rightfully owed.

"Companies like Komatsu think that the terms of Enterprise Agreements are just a stick to use against workers, and don't apply to them. But this case shows that bosses are not above the law, and they must abide by the same rules we do.

Steve McCartney said the court win reinforced the importance of being a member of your union.

"Big companies try to bank on workers being too scared, or not having enough resources to come after them when they do the wrong thing," he said.

"Being in your union means you're not alone. Your union has your back." ●

Moranbah awards night celebrates long-serving members

Long-serving AMWU members from the coalfields in Queensland's Bowen Basin have been honoured at a dinner in Moranbah.

Awards were distributed for 30-year and 40-year members, but the most special awards, presented by AMWU Queensland/NT Branch Secretary Rohan Webb, were reserved for three members who have clocked up 50 years with the union.

Norm Gosley, Rob Willey and Brian McCormack not only have 150 years of trade union membership between them, they are also great mates.

"We've known each other for virtually the whole time," said Norm. Rob and Brian have been active members of the union, while Norm also spent a number of years as a workplace delegate in the 1990s.

Norm first joined the Boilermakers & Blacksmiths Society of Australia in 1969, which then became part of the AMWU in 1973.

"I started off in the Mulgrave Sugar Mill up at Gordonvale as an apprentice," Norm said.

"Then I came down to Moranbah when they were getting to the tail end of building Peak Downs, and I ended up being the first boilermaker on site for the Utah Development Company, which built the mines.

"When there was a downturn in 1999 I bought a truck and did a courier run between Moranbah and Mackay each day, but I stayed with the union because I thought 'this isn't going to be forever'.

"In 2004 I went back to boilermaking, so I was Johnny on the spot when BMA needed a couple of boilermakers, and I stayed there until 2014.

"I'm still here working as a trainer at Goonyella, and I'm still a member."

At the dinner, Norm Gosley reflected on his career in the coalfields, and advised younger members to pick their battles.

"There are some fights you've got to win, and some you shouldn't be involved in," he said.

"But it's always important for members to get in behind their union representatives, support them and help them. One day they'll be the leaders, and they'll need the same support."

Former Goonyella Riverside Branch Convenor Mark Johnstone said the awards dinner was very successful, and could become an annual event.

"The awards were about recognising workers who have been part of the union for a long time.



AMWU Queensland/NT State Secretary Rohan Webb with long-term members Norm Gosley, Jeff Campbell, Rob Willey, Brian McCormack and Gavin West.

It's also important to remind people that you can be still be a part of the AMWU through the Retired Members Division even after you've finished working.

"It really was a great night, with over 100 people there - including members, families and friends - and everyone had a good time."

For more information about joining the Retired Members Division, contact your State Branch. ●

Defence and Aero Committee targets Canberra decision-makers

In a targeted strike, the AMWU Defence and Aerospace Committee landed in Canberra during October to highlight the threats and opportunities facing the sector in Australia.



The delegation made it clear to politicians that Australia needs to be playing a long game when it comes to defence and aerospace - looking ahead to make sure that our local labour force has the right skills for the advanced manufacturing jobs of the future.

The group of eight delegates and four officials received briefings from senior public servants before doing the rounds of Parliament House, conducting meetings with Senator Louise Pratt, Senator Kimberley Kitching, Pat Conroy MP, Matt Keogh MP, Richard Marles MP, Shayne Neumann MP, Graham Perrett MP, Ged Kearney MP, Tanya Plibersek MP and Tim Gartrell (Chief of Staff to Anthony Albanese MP).

The Co-Convenor of the AMWU Defence and Aerospace Committee, Hilton Gumbys, said the main purpose of the trip was to educate politicians on the challenges facing the sector in Australia.

"The key issues we discussed were apprenticeships, training, and the skills needs for the defence industry as a whole," Hilton said.

"We also talked about the general decline and underfunding in TAFE, and stressed the importance of technical and further education and training.

"Skilled labour is absolutely crucial for advanced manufacturing. So if companies can't access people with the skills they need in Australia, then there is a real risk they'll look elsewhere."

Hilton Gumbys said skilled workers are not created overnight, so careful planning is required to not only train new workers, but ensure workers with existing skills are not lost to the industry.

"With defence, it can take a long time for a project to actually get up and running. But then when it is operational, you need people straight away. If the workforce isn't there and isn't available, it's a major problem.

"You often hear about the so-called 'valley of death' after a major project winds down, so there needs to be better coordination of projects so that workers are not lost to the industry."

South Australian Branch Secretary Peter Bauer was also part of the delegation, and he said defence and aerospace was a crucial area for growth - particularly in his state.

"If the right policies are not in place, the opportunities created by projects such as the construction of new naval frigates and submarines will be missed."

Peter Bauer said that while Labor politicians were prepared to open their doors to workers, no representatives of the Liberal or National Parties made themselves available to speak to the delegation.

"Considering the urgency of the issues and what's at stake, in relation to skills and the capability of the country to maintain its defence sovereignty, I think it's very disappointing that Federal Government MPs weren't willing to engage with us," Peter said. ●

Women's uniforms on the shelves at Qantas

Women aircraft maintenance engineers and aircraft appearance staff can finally wear uniforms designed for women after a successful campaign by workplace delegate Jeyda Archbold.

The new uniforms have been trialed and tested, and are now on the shelves, which means women engineers no longer have to wear baggy, ill-fitting threads.

Jeyda got the idea for the campaign – and the confidence to execute it – at an AMWU delegate training session.

"I was doing my first block of delegate training, and I was asked just a simple question: what size shirt do I wear?" she recounted.

"I said 'is it male or female sizing?' and the trainers kind of thought it was funny that I was asking that question. That triggered a discussion about what we wear at work, and how it was not right that women should have to put up with wearing men's clothing.

"So when I went back to work, I sent a couple of emails off, and that led to me having meetings with the uniforms department and with management. The more I spoke to people about it, the more they realised they should get behind me because it should have happened a long time ago."

But despite growing support from colleagues, Jeyda did run into some resistance.

"There were a few times where I had to push a little bit," she said. "In particular, when I first had a meeting with the uniforms department, they tried to tell me this sort of change would happen over years, and that it was very difficult to do.

"Then they claimed the uniform was already unisex. So I took my vest off and I was just standing there with my shirt tucked into my pants and I said, 'with all due respect, does this look unisex to you?'

"They were just looking at each other – they didn't know what to say because it was pretty much past my belly button."

Jeyda was also made to go through the hoops of getting letters signed by senior managers authorising the project to go ahead. This could have resulted in long delays, so Jeyda took advantage of a work social event to lock in the support she needed.

"I went along to a staff sausage sizzle and saw one of the managers, so I just went up to him in front of a group of workers, told him what we were doing, and asked him if he would sign up," Jeyda said.

"He was put on the spot, and wouldn't dare say no!"



From left: Elizabeth Sharp, Vicky Caetano, AMWU delegate Jeyda Archbold, and Elaine Tang with the new women's uniforms.

Another sticking point in the negotiations was the provision of smaller socks.

Jeyda said the argument over socks lasted for a year – during which time she staged her own personal protest by only wearing AMWU-branded 'every step of the way' socks!

"During this last hurdle I made it clear to my managers that I did not want them to fund the project until I was happy with the final product being provided," she said.

"Once the uniforms managers realised they needed my approval to 'go live', they met my final demand to provide smaller sized socks and made them available."

The final uniforms – which includes shorts, pants, boots, tailored shirts and socks – have now been distributed to workers at Qantas' Australian sites and its facility in Los Angeles.

Jeyda became a workplace delegate after being told that she was virtually doing the role anyway, so she might as well do the training and make it official.

Coming from a union family, where her father was a workplace delegate, taught Jeyda that sometimes it takes a 'squeaky wheel' to achieve change. Jeyda said that her experience in fighting for women uniforms has also taught her about the value of persistence.

She also hopes that the success of the campaign will encourage more women to speak up about their needs in the workplace.

Finally, Jeyda said she would like to thank everyone who gave her a helping hand along the way.

There are women's committees operating in NSW, Victoria, and South Australia. These committees are open to all AMWU women. If you're interested in getting involved, call your State Branch. ●

"That triggered a discussion about what we wear at work, and how it was not right that women should have to put up with wearing men's clothing."

Getting our rail manufacturing sector back on track

The story of Australia's multiple rail gauges is the classic cautionary tale of what can go wrong when people (or governments) don't talk to each other.

Different gauges are far from the only inconsistency between states when it comes to the rail networks.

Each network has developed its own standards and specifications. What's more, the states also go their own way when it comes to ordering new trains, leading to sharp peaks and troughs in demand.

All of this makes it hard for local suppliers to build up the economies of scale to make them competitive with overseas rivals.

That's why State and Federal Governments not only need to talk to each other, they need to work hand-in-hand if rail manufacturing is to deliver on its potential for the Australian economy.

The Co-Convenors of the AMWU National Rail Committee, Keith Lang and Ash Mabbitt, went to Canberra during September to chew the ears of Federal politicians, and press home the need for action on rail manufacturing.

They had a busy schedule, meeting with Senators Tim Ayres and Glen Sterle, and MPs Murray Watt, Brendan O'Connor, Catherine King, Ged Kearney, Louise Pratt and Tanya Plibersek.

Keith, the NSW Branch President and a worker at Sydney Trains, said that he and Ash had two clear messages for the politicians.

"One was that we wanted a national approach to rail procurement, because the current way that the states currently manage it is ad hoc, and that creates a whole heap of peaks and troughs that the industry can't sustain," Keith said.

"And the other message was around skills: keeping the skills that we've got, bringing on apprentices, fixing up TAFE and making sure that Australia has a sustainable rail manufacturing industry into the future."

Ash, who works at Alstom Rail in Ballarat, said the boom-bust nature of the industry meant workers had little security of employment.

"Alstom Rail is in a little bit of crisis at the moment," Ash said. ●



Top: As (left) and Keith out front of Parliament.
Clockwise from left: Keith and Ash with Ged Kearney, Tim Ayres, Murray Watt and Louise Pratt.

The global fight to eradicate asbestos

Australians are well aware of the deadly dangers posed by asbestos, but the fight to end the use of this toxic substance is far from over.



Asbestos is still being found in imported goods as diverse as pre-fabricated housing, locomotives, and even crayons.

Developing countries are still playing catch-up when it comes to recognising the risks of asbestos and putting in place laws and regulations to protect workers and their communities.

AMWU National President Andrew Dettmer sits on Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA's Committee of Management and has been closely involved in the Asbestos: Not Here, Not Anywhere campaign.

The campaign has been running for several years and has focused on countries in the south-east Asian region including Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

Now the campaign is stepping up the pressure on the Asian Development Bank to make sure that no development funds and no Australian money supports asbestos products. Australia provides over \$12 billion to the Asian Development Bank, which in turn provides tens of billions of dollars in loans and grants in Asia.

This money is not properly regulated to ensure that no asbestos products are used in development and aid projects. Currently, the Asian Development Bank prohibits investments that include raw asbestos, but it does not prohibit

asbestos cement sheeting. This means that victims of natural disasters can be sheltered under roof sheeting contaminated by asbestos.

We're asking every AMWU member to support the APHEDA campaign by signing the No Australian Money in Asbestos: Not Here. Not Anywhere petition calling on the Treasurer to make sure that no Australian money finances asbestos in Asia by closing the loophole that allows for asbestos products to contaminate humanitarian aid and development. You can sign it online here: www.megaphone.org.au/p/ADBAsbestos

Rotterdam Convention

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is also continuing to push for White Asbestos (also called Chrysotile Asbestos) to be listed on the Rotterdam Convention - the multilateral treaty which guides countries on the regulation and importation of hazardous chemicals and pesticides.

If a chemical is listed on Annex III of the convention, then it can only be traded with "prior informed consent" from the importing country.

Progress, however, has been slow - to say the least.

"This issue has been raised at the Rotterdam Convention for the best part of 17 years, and they have yet to deal with it in any conclusive way," Andrew said.

"There was a glimmer of hope

this year, when a number of African nations such as Cameroon pressed for a breakthrough. But really this is years away from any sort of solution."

The determination of countries such as Russia, Zimbabwe, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Ukraine to block the global regulation of White Asbestos though the Rotterdam Convention has made it all the more important for countries like Australia to stay vigilant. The AMWU successfully proposed at ACTU Congress in 2018 that we campaign for a stand-alone treaty on asbestos.

"This would be modelled on the Minamata Treaty which deals with mercury in all its forms," Andrew said,

"It would mean that this deadly substance would finally be controlled by a UN Treaty, signed up to by all of the countries which ban it (over 60 currently), and be a foundation for the final eradication of this deadly substance from use, manufacture and construction."

Andrew is concerned, however, that the Morrison Federal Government has lost interest in pursuing international action on asbestos.

"It seems to us that the Australian Government has dropped the ball in a quite significant way, and that gives the pro-asbestos lobby a chance to say 'oh asbestos isn't a problem any more'."

"At the recent conference in Bangkok, no Australian Government representative was present.

"We really need the Australian Government to step up, not step back."

Leading the Way

But while politicians dither, organisations like Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA and the AMWU are busy working on the ground.

Andrew Dettmer said that AMWU members should take pride in the role their union has played in bringing the scourge of asbestos to the world's attention.

"The AMWU led the way in ensuring people who are affected by deadly asbestos diseases can get access to specialists to help and be properly compensated.

"The second thing we did was to get the Australian Government to ban asbestos.

"And the third thing we did was to hold James Hardie to account for its failure to protect workers from its asbestos-based products.

"But we can't stop now. We'll continue the international fight, because until it's regulated internationally, we'll still get asbestos-containing materials coming into Australia."

Support the campaign by jumping online and signing the petition today! ●

AMWU Financial Accounts 2018/19

Please find below the Union's financial summary for 2018/2019. The Union's full accounts can be found on the internet at http://www.amwu.org.au/the union/rules_policies_and_elections. If you would like a free printed copy of the full Financial Reports, please call the AMWU Helpdesk on 1300 732 698 or email amwu@amwu.org.au

How are these financial reports prepared?

Our financial year ends on the 30 September. At this point, the Union's external auditors scrutinise our accounts and provide a report on their compliance with Australian accounting standards and the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act. Following their adoption by the National Council, they are made available to members and lodged with the Registered Organisations Commission. The same process applies to the accounts in each state.

What information is included in these reports?

The reports include: Income and expenditure; commercial relationships; the members of our governing bodies; your representatives on the industry superannuation funds; the salaries of our highest paid officials and significant detailed information on the accounts of the Union.

How are my dues protected?

We have a proud tradition of good governance and financial management, supported by solid policies and procedures, and overseen by the National and State Councils, the Audit, Risk & Investment Committee and the Union's external auditors.

We have strict controls around credit cards, purchasing, conflicts of interest, and gifts and hospitality. Our Union's Officers also attend Union Governance & Financial Training.

What happens to your Union dues?

All AMWU membership dues are paid to the National Union and money is allocated to the State Branches according to budget policy. Your Union dues are listed as Contributions in our accounts.

A significant portion of membership dues go to support the Organisers and Staff whose job it is to provide industrial and bargaining support to members and to build the Union by encouraging new members to join. The Union also employs a number of legal, education, communications and policy specialists to defend the interests of members and a range of people to keep the union functioning in finance, IT and asset management etc.

Your dues also support a range of direct member services and products including the Helpdesk for industrial support, AMWU Care for 24hr counselling, and a range of insurances such as emergency transport and journey cover where it's needed.

The Union also allocates \$2.10 per quarter for each member to the Political Fund to ensure that we engage in national and state political debate on behalf of our members and to maintain our affiliation with the Australian Labor Party.

Does the Union make money in any other way?

Yes, our Rules provide that when an Officer represents members on an external Board, Directors fees are paid directly to the Union. The Union also earns money from financial investments in shares and property.

In addition, the Union has a 49 per cent share in Wageguard, an Income Protection firm, to ensure that these policies operate in the best interest of members. All income from this investment is used to fund products and services for members.

How does the Union make decisions on investment?

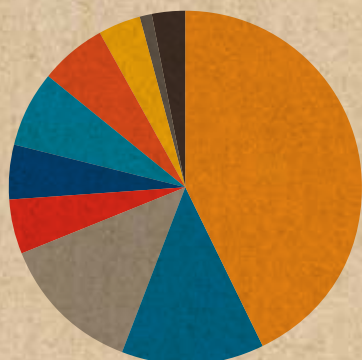
All investment decisions are taken on the recommendation of the Audit, Risk & Investment Committee which engages professional, external advice and support. The investment portfolios comply with the United Nations Principles of Responsible Investment and all Officials and Officers are subject to the AMWU Conflict of Interest Policy.

Is the Union in a good financial position?

The Union is in a good financial position, despite significant decline in some of the major manufacturing industries and a subsequent loss of members in recent times. Your National Council has been making prudent investment and expenditure decisions appropriate to the circumstances.

An operating surplus of \$3,263,660 for the 2018/19 financial year was achieved. In support of a significant restructure of the Union over the past two years, the National Conference authorised a deficit operational budget for 2018/19. Despite this, the overall financial position of the Union improved during the year due to better-than-projected membership dues income, an increase in external rental income, and the payment of a higher-than-average investment dividend from Protect which is a redundancy trust covering a number of our members working in construction in Victoria.

AMWU Expenditure 2018/19



National Union Snapshot 2018/19

Income from Members	\$33,953,212
Other Income	\$14,608,499
Total Income	\$48,561,711
Expenditure	\$45,298,051
Assets	\$195,685,317
Highest Salary Paid	\$121,521
Union Agreements in 2018	338

Employees - Industrial and membership support	43%	Building Expenses	7%
Employees, Administration, Finance etc	13%	Other Member Services	6%
State Council Expenditure	13%	Communications	4%
Specific Project Funds - Strategic Plan, Education, Hardship and Political	5%	Affiliation Fees	1%
Depreciation	5%	Other Expenses	3%

First EA puts Cranbourne Transit mechanics in the passing lane

The small group of mechanics at Victorian bus company Cranbourne Transit have secured their first ever Enterprise Agreement, with some help from their union.

The agreement will deliver a substantial pay rise and improved conditions.

AMWU Organiser Vince Pepi says discussions over an agreement started in March 2019, and members voted to endorse it six months later in October. So while it took some time, the result was well worth the effort.

"The increase in pay works out at about 19 per cent in total, over the life of the agreement," Vince said.

He said the agreement also delivered clarity around the defined hours of work for the mechanics.

"They've now got a set spread of hours, and any shift outside of that spread will attract a shift loading, which they've never had before," Vince said.

"The loadings give them an extra 12.5 per cent in the morning, or 18 per cent in the afternoon, on top of the increases to base pay.

"And we were also able to negotiate an improvement to their break down allowance for being on-call."

Cranbourne Transit is owned by the Pulitano Group, which also owns Mansfield Mt Bulla Bus Lines in Victoria, and Bus Queensland. In Victoria, the bus industry is dominated by bigger players such as Ventura, Transdev and CDC.

But under their new agreement, the mechanics at Cranbourne Transit will have wages and conditions that are comparable to their counterparts in the larger companies.



AMWU members at Cranbourne Transit are happy with their first ever Enterprise Agreement.

"We'll keep working across the sector to bring wages and conditions at these smaller companies in line with the industry standards," Vince said. ●

IN BRIEF

AMWU WOMEN REPRESENT AT WIMDOI



From left: Jessica and Steph (NSW), Tracey (Victoria) and Jo (SA).

Rank and file AMWU women Jessica, Steph, Jo, and Tracey attended the Women in Male Dominated Industries and Occupations (WIMDOI) Conference in Devonport in November. WIMDOI provides an opportunity for women to come together and discuss the issues facing them.

Jessica, who works at Simplot in Kelso, near Bathurst said it was a great experience to meet women from all around the country and learn about a range of issues from the superannuation gap through to family and domestic violence.

"I think it's really important that as many women members as possible get to go to things like this, because I learnt so much that I could take back to my factory. When we were discussing the super gap I realised that everyone who works part-time in my workplace is a woman, because they've got caring responsibilities not just for their kids but often for their ageing parents as well. So when I got back, the first thing I did was bring all the women together and said, 'alright, what are you doing to sort your super out'," Jessica said. ●

Community Kitchen dishes up ten years of good deeds



AMWU WA State Secretary Steve McCartney helped Peel Community Kitchen celebrate ten years.

The AMWU Western Australian Branch is a proud supporter of the Peel Community Kitchen – a community-based organisation dedicated to providing food for people and families in need in the Mandurah area.

The Kitchen serves up around 130 healthy meals from 9:30am to 1pm, Monday to Friday, from its home base in Mandurah's Sutton Street Hall. It even provides free haircuts once a month, enabling patrons to get a trim with their tucker.

The AMWU has been a proud supporter of the Peel Street Kitchen since 2016. In fact, AMWU Kwinana delegate Shane Williams is on the kitchen's Committee of Management (good on you Shane).

The Kitchen recently celebrated its tenth anniversary, so WA Branch Secretary Steve McCartney and local members joined Mandurah Mayor Rhys Williams to help out. They even turned up with some cake and steak for the occasion! ●

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DELEGATE PROFILE

Hilton Gumbys

Union to the Hilt.

After nine years as a workplace delegate at BAE Systems in Adelaide, Hilton Gumbys says it's the things that happen behind the scenes that show the power of trade union membership.

On one hand there's the cycle of negotiating Enterprise Agreements and representing workers in the workplace, and on the other hand there's the task of political campaigning and mobilising workers so that they can have a louder voice on the national stage.

Hilton has had plenty of experience with both sides of that equation, but in the past few months he's had a first-hand view of the way unions operate at the political level – volunteering on the Change the Rules campaign during the Federal election, being nominated as Co-Convenor of the AMWU's Defence and Aerospace Committee, and participating in that committee's delegation to Canberra.

Walking the halls of Parliament House and holding meetings with politicians and senior public servants showed Hilton that being part of a union really does open doors.

"The AMWU gives you these opportunities," Hilton says.

"I mean, you can be a rank and file member, but there's also the potential to pursue things a little bit further. For me, to be on a committee like the Defence and Aerospace Committee, and then to go to Canberra and actually spend the day in Parliament House is a real privilege – and an eye-opener."

Hilton has worked in defence manufacturing for over 30 years – machining and assembling components for programmes such as the F35 Joint Strike Fighter and the Evolved Sea Sparrow Missile among others. It's the Nulka Active Missile Decoy, however, that Hilton says he's most proud of.

"The Nulka is a hovering rocket," he explains, "that actually talks to an incoming missile threat.



"It's mounted on warships, so it actually talks to the threat and attracts it away from the ship. It was developed after the Falklands War where Exocet missiles were a problem, and it's Australia's longest running and most lucrative defence export program.

"And to my knowledge, it's still the only foreign munition deployed on U.S. warships."

In between enterprise negotiation cycles, Hilton and his fellow workplace delegates at BAE Systems have been trying to increase awareness of the Agreement within the workplace.

"We're slowly empowering the members here to know their own Agreement. It means that people are more likely to recognise when something is not right, and they're also more prepared when they come to us, which we've found really helpful."

Hilton and his wife Ros, who is a teacher and active member of the AEU, enjoy life in the great outdoors – camping, bushwalking, snorkelling, fishing and cooking good food.

Having recently become empty nesters, they should probably be looking forward to spending more time out in the bush.

"I'm definitely looking forward to it," says Hilton, "but work's just ramped up here, and we're doing a lot of overtime, so the outdoors might have to wait." ●



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