

AEU NT Member Bulletin 8/2020

24 June 2020

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Branch Conference going ahead 12-13 September

With biosecurity zones lifted and covid restrictions being eased, we have set a date for our annual Branch Conference to go ahead.

The AEU NT's 2020 Conference will take place in Darwin at the Hilton on the weekend of 12-13 September. All sub-branches are encouraged to elect a delegate to attend and to put forward matters for consideration by our highest decision-making body. Costs for elected delegates to travel to the event are met by the AEU NT and release from work duties will be arranged if required.

As the event will now take place after the NT election on 22 August, the focus will be on understanding the Territory's political and economic landscape and also preparing our log of claims as we move into public sector bargaining next year.

[Registration forms are available at our website](#). Make sure your sub-branch is represented – the deadline is Friday 31 July (the end of Term 3, week 2).

NT borders are opening – what does it mean?

Last week the Chief Minister announced that as of Friday 17 July, people entering the NT will not be required to undergo a 14-day quarantine period.

This means that should members wish to travel interstate during the coming school holiday period, you can do so without quarantining upon your return so long as you arrive from Friday 17 July onwards, and without any loss of pay for school-based staff so long as you are ready for the resumption of Term 3 on Monday 20 July.

There is still nervousness in some quarters about the coronavirus re-emerging in the NT and the threat it poses to people living in remote communities, based on a rising number of cases in Victoria. The NT Government has not ruled out that some additional measures may be imposed on public servants who have travelled interstate, such as testing and, possibly, quarantine. You may be required to submit a form explaining where you have travelled and we recommend members maintain a travel log for ease of reference.

Election just two months away – what do we want for education?

The NT election is now less than two months away, with the poll to be held on Saturday 22 August. We encourage all members to take part in the democratic process by [ensuring you are enrolled to vote](#) – the deadline to enrol and update your details with the NTEC is Friday 31 July.

The AEU NT has produced a five-point plan of the key asks we are putting to the main political parties seeking commitments in five priority areas: school resourcing, staffing, special education, infrastructure and Indigenous employment.

We are still hoping to organise online forums with candidates early in Term 3 – stay tuned.

Next phase of Permanency Project

So far this year a further 46 teachers have been converted from fixed period contract to permanent status under phase 1 of our joint project with DoE. Whilst that is positive news, the AEU NT appreciates it does not go far enough to reduce the high proportion of our workforce who are fixed period employees.

As part of actions for phase 2 of the project, we are due to discuss in the coming month with senior HR officers the situation of all fixed period teachers who have multiple years of consecutive contracts.

We already have some members registered with us who seek permanency but for whom the current process has not been successful. We would like to build that list and request that you let us know if you are a fixed period teacher with more than two years of consecutive contracts and would like to be considered for permanency. [You can do so via the enquiry page on our website](#). Please confirm your current school and some basic details of your contracts (terms and/or years worked). We will continue to keep members informed about this campaign.

Food security inquiry – request for submissions

A federal parliament is currently holding an inquiry into food prices and food security in remote communities. We know this impacted on our members and the wider population in communities during the biosecurity lockdowns, with shortages of key goods and price gouging in some cases. The inquiry's terms of reference state: *"This investigation should pay particular attention to the availability and pricing of fresh and healthy foods in remote community stores. The Inquiry will also consider licensing and regulation as well as the governance arrangements for remote community stores across Australia, and what action, if any, that the Australian Government and State and Territory governments could take to address price gouging in Remote communities."*

The committee has requested submissions as brief as one or two pages by 30 June. If you have something to add based on how your community was affected, please [consider making a submission](#).

Office arrangements over the break

Our office will be open as normal (8.30am-4.30pm, Monday to Friday) over the school holiday break to respond to member queries.

End of financial year tax information

Next week, correspondence will be issued to all members who have paid membership fees to the Branch over the past year. You will be able to use this information to claim a deduction when completing your tax return.

Please note that over the past year we have been migrating member information, including financial transactions, to a new database. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the correspondence you will receive – should you have any queries about your listed contribution total, please contact the office for a manual review.

Let us know ASAP if your workplace, contact details or income have changed

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