

25

ANNUAL REPORT



Contents

Introduction	5
List of annexures	
1 President's report	9
2 Strategic plan	11
3 Industrial	13
4 Recruitment and organising	25
5 Membership statistics	29
6 Support and operational staff	33
7 Early childhood education and care (ECEC)	35
8 Principals	41
9 ELICOS	43
10 Child protection	45
11 Professional engagement	47
12 Union training	51
13 Media and communications	53
14 Social justice	63
15 Women and Equity Committee	65
16 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee	69
17 Environment Committee	73
18 Information technology and data management	75
19 Canberra	77
20 Newcastle	79
21 Lismore	81
22 Wollongong	83
23 National/international	85
24 IEU partners	89





IEU Secretary Carol Matthews, centre, and Deputy Secretary David Towson met with NSW Deputy Premier and Education Minister Prue Car in May.

Introduction

2025 has been a year of steady progress in securing gains for members across both political and industrial arenas. We have continued to strive to deliver the best possible outcomes for our members through dedicated union efforts.

Political change

The election of the Federal Labor government in May 2022, followed by its re-election in May 2025, enabled the consolidation of gains achieved for workers and unions during its first term.

There were many legislative reforms that helped IEU members (see more details in the National/ international annexure).

Changes to the rules governing multi-employer bargaining were crucial in independent schools, where the prospect of a single interest authorisation so alarmed employers that they ultimately conceded to key union demands previously deemed out of the question. This is because the rights of unions and workers are greatly enhanced in single interest bargaining.

The requirement that a union must consent before a multi-enterprise agreement is put to the vote has also significantly changed the power dynamic in sector-wide bargaining within Christian schools.

The new supported bargaining stream has been utilised in long day care where 46,000 employees and over 500 employers are now covered by a

multi-employer agreement negotiated by the IEU and other unions. This agreement was initially approved by the Fair Work Commission (FWC) in December 2024 to cover 12,000 employees and 60 employers. The union is still pursuing a supported bargaining agreement with 103 NSW preschools.

Delegates' rights have greatly strengthened the role of the union rep in workplaces and facilitated the participation of reps in union training.

Improvements in the federal government's paid parental leave scheme and the rights to parental leave under the *Fair Work Act* have benefitted new parents. The rules about the right to request flexible work arrangements have also been tightened to benefit workers.

Unions applauded the election of the NSW Labor government in May 2023 and education unions welcomed the significant teacher pay rises achieved in October 2023.

The government has delivered improvements in work health and safety including legislating for industrial manslaughter to be a criminal offence.

Claim farming (where the making of a child abuse claim is incentivised by payments of commissions) was outlawed in NSW in April 2025 although members still face claims initiated prior to the commencement of the legislation.

The NSW government has, however, disappointed unions with the proposed changes

to workers compensation. Under the proposed changes, it will be harder to make claims based on psychological injury and significantly more difficult for workers to receive support for such injuries after two-and-a-half years. These proposed changes are still before the Upper House and subject to a long-running Upper House inquiry.

The IEU is also disappointed with the failure of the NSW government to engage with the FWC in relation to our claim for a multi-employer agreement applying to NSW preschools, which are funded solely by the NSW government.

The union has been extensively lobbying NSW MPs and held a rally on 15 October as part of a Day of Action calling for additional funding for preschools. The rally, attended by more than 1000 people, was addressed by our preschool ambassadors, IEU Secretary Carol Matthews, and MPs Abigail Boyd and Sarah Mitchell.

Successful independent schools campaign

In 2024, as part of the bargaining for new AIS multi-enterprise agreements (MEAs), the union campaigned in 250 NSW and ACT AIS independent schools under the slogan 'Now's the Time', with distinctive blue and pink campaign colours.

This campaign was highly effective in engaging members and achieved significant improvements in pay and conditions for both teachers and support staff – see the Industrial annexure and the Recruitment and organising annexure for more information.

A key element of the 'Now's the Time' campaign was the use of a digital petition not only as a means to an end (the supported bargaining application), but also as an organising tool.

The union is exploring the use of petitions in other independent school campaigns to measure and increase member engagement.

Catholic systemic schools

Negotiations for new EAs commenced with 10 Catholic dioceses (not including Broken Bay) on the expiry of the previous EA in October 2024 and agreement was reached fairly quickly on pay rises, within the framework of pay increases in government schools.

However, negotiations continued for months on the union's claims for improved conditions. A vote is scheduled for late October on the Catholic systemic schools EA covering nine dioceses with a separate EA to apply to the Parramatta diocese.

In late 2024, agreement was reached with Broken Bay diocese following negotiations on a new EA and Operational Framework.

In December 2024, 92.5% of staff voted in favour of the agreement with 85% of full-time staff participating in the ballot. This reflected significant improvements in pay and conditions for both teachers and support staff employed by the diocese.

Other industrial work

The Industrial annexure has details of all the bargaining in schools and ECEC services and other work to assist members that is undertaken by union staff.

A record \$4.4 million was recovered for members in 2025 (nearly double the figure recovered in 2024).

Disputes involving reportable conduct allegations against members have increased by about 50 per cent in the past 12 months – such cases are extremely stressful for members and require significant union resources to ensure the member receives the best possible outcome.

Stride to Grow 2030

The union launched our strategic plan, *Stride to Grow 2030*, at the 2024 AGM.

Developed following consultation with IEU members, Council, Executive and staff, the plan established key priorities including member growth, a stronger union voice, continuous operational improvement to better serve members, achieving wins for members, clear policy and decision-making processes and understanding AI.

Over the past year, the Executive has implemented many of the specific recommendations and we continue to work on the implementation of others.

The work of implementing the strategic plan recommendations has been enhanced by a survey of our whole membership conducted in mid-2025.

Recruitment and organising

Recruitment is core business for the union. The Recruitment and organising annexure outlines some of the specific measures adopted over the past year to improve recruitment and retention of members and the further work we need to do.

Financial pressures are emerging as a barrier to non-members joining and as a major factor in member resignations. This perception must be addressed as a priority in 2026. The annexure also describes how we have embedded a recruitment focus into all our campaigns.

Support and operational staff

Key industrial issues affecting support staff are brought into focus in the Support and operational staff annexure. The union continues to explore ways to improve communications and build member engagement with this group of members.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC)

The major area of work for our ECEC team has been our two supported bargaining MEAs and the 'Unite for Change' campaign for improved preschool funding from the NSW government. The application for a supported bargaining MEA for NSW preschools is still before the FWC.

In addition, the team has been tireless in representing the views of members to state and federal government agencies, lobbying MPs and even giving evidence in parliamentary inquiries.

Professional engagement

The union has engaged extensively with peak bodies in the education sector at the state level as well as federally. A varied program of professional development has been provided to members, with the offerings based on member feedback.

Members have also been supported in relation to teacher accreditation, with a significant demand for support arising from members seeking to access Band 3 (Experienced Teacher) under the previous

AIS Teachers MEA (85 members were assisted in AIS schools in 2024). This demand is expected to diminish with changes to the Teachers MEA that commenced in April this year.

In 2025, our reps training program has expanded, assisted by the new delegates' rights under the *Fair Work Act*.

Media and communications

Our media and communications team goes from strength to strength. The range of publications, social media posts on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, press releases, and media coverage that is produced by this small team is hard to believe.

Social media engagement is growing, with Facebook attracting more than 1 million views in the last year, more than double the figure for the previous year.

The quality of our print publications continues to increase. Other recent initiatives include two new series of informative and eye-catching fact sheets and posters, designed for use by members and organisers alike.

Committees

The work of our Women and Equity Committee, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee and Environment Committee is set out in the relevant annexures. Members and IEU staff provide great support for this important work.

Information technology, data management and other operational issues

The union continues to strive for operational improvement. There is an ongoing focus on enhancing technology, as detailed in the Information technology and data management annexure.

Significant improvements to our records management system began in 2024 with the assistance of an external consultant, and we are continuing to build on that work.

Cybersecurity remains an ever-increasing concern, which we are actively addressing, as outlined in the annexure.

In 2025, we engaged an HR Leader to improve our own HR processes and documentation. We also conducted a WHS audit and will implement the recommendations arising from the audit.

Although we have made progress, there is still work to be done in these areas.

Regional offices

Our new office in Wollongong opened in April 2025 to the great excitement of staff and members. It will be a fantastic hub for union activity in a city known for its union values.

The vital work of our Canberra, Lismore and Newcastle offices is detailed in the annexures. It is great to have some return to normality for our Lismore office, which was devastated in the 2022 floods, with staff only returning to the premises in mid-2024.

IEU Executive and staff

I would like to express my strong appreciation for the work of the Executive who complete their three-year term at the end of October.

They have always been supportive of IEU staff, including the other elected officials and myself.

I will particularly miss the good humour and good sense of Glenn Lowe in his role as President and all those members who are not continuing on the Executive.

The annexures to this report (which I have mentioned only briefly) reflect the vibrancy and growing maturity of our union.

I would like to thank all the staff for their hard work and professionalism, but, in particular, express my appreciation to the full-time leadership team – Deputy Secretary David Towson, and Assistant Secretaries Lyn Caton and Amanda Hioe – for their support.

I also wish to thank Helen O'Regan who plays an invaluable role in Executive and Council meetings as well as supporting me in my job as Secretary.

Together we make a great team.

Carol Matthews Secretary



President's report

Reflections on leadership

Writing this report brings with it mixed emotions. I feel enormous pride and deep honour in having had the opportunity to serve the IEU, yet this is accompanied by a sense of loss as my tenure as President comes to an end.

Presenting this annual report is, above all, a celebration of a year defined by resilience, solidarity and achievement.

Together, we have strengthened our collective voice, defended the rights of members and secured meaningful gains.

Our shared action continues to shape fairer workplaces and build a stronger future for all educators and the communities we serve.

Change and the role of the IEU

Opportunities created by change are constant in education, yet it often feels paradoxical – everything is shifting, but unfortunately true reform moves at a glacial pace.

Nowhere is this tension more visible than in face-to-face situations in schools and early childhood centres, where educators must continually adapt to the evolving expectations of students, parents and society at large.

Educators consistently identify areas in need of reform, yet the decision-making structures responsible for enacting change are slow to acknowledge and address these realities.

This disjunction places unnecessary strain on schools and undermines the profession's ability to meet the evolving needs of students and communities. Against this backdrop, the IEU's role is more critical than ever. Educators are asked to innovate without adequate support.

A second-term Labor government provides an important opportunity that must be seized to secure lasting improvements in conditions and resources, ensuring educators can continue to meet society's ever-changing demands with strength and resilience.

Membership growth

A key focus this year has been implementing the strategic plan – *Stride to Grow 2030* – which prioritises growing member density and overall membership. While this may sound straightforward, in practice it is a challenging task due to a variety of issues.

Organisers, school representatives and active, vocal members continue to play a vital role as advocates, encouraging growth and fostering engagement within their staffrooms.

However, responsibility for building our union rests with all of us.

Membership growth is not simply a number – it is the foundation of our collective strength and the basis of our bargaining power.

A powerful demonstration of this came through the highly successful 2024 AIS campaign, which achieved remarkable engagement in chapters not traditionally known for activism or density.

This achievement was amplified through excellent promotion by our Publications and Communications team, ensuring it was widely recognised as a success story.

Achieving wins for members

In addition to campaigns, improving membership density must also involve highlighting the many positives delivered by our talented team.

One of the most effective ways to demonstrate the value of belonging to the union is by promoting the wins we achieve for members.

Recovered entitlements, in particular, provide a clear and compelling example of the benefits of membership. In 2025, the IEU recouped \$4.4 million in underpayments for members.

This outstanding result is a testament to the skill and commitment of our recovery team and a powerful reminder of the direct benefits of IEU membership.



IEU NSW/ACT Branch President Glenn Lowe (centre) pictured with Executive Assistant Helen O'Regan and Secretary Carol Matthews.

ECEC gains

Another standout victory of the year was the hard-fought win for early childhood education and care (ECEC) staff employed in long day care centres.

After years of being undervalued, their dedication and professionalism have finally been recognised through meaningful improvements in pay and conditions.

This success was only possible because of the tireless efforts of IEU Industrial Officers working alongside members who spoke out, stood together and demanded change.

The result is significant: a 10% backdated pay rise, followed by a further 5% increase in December.

This achievement is a powerful reminder of what solidarity can deliver when we raise our collective voice.

Closing reflections

As I conclude my time as President, I do so with immense gratitude for the trust and solidarity of you, our IEU leaders and our members.

The strength of the IEU lies not in any individual, but in our collective commitment to fairness, respect and justice.

The IEU must continue to be a vocal, relevant force in human rights advocacy.

When educators stand up for justice, they not only protect their profession – they model courage, compassion and integrity for the next generation. In doing so, we create not just better schools, but a better world.

Glenn Lowe President



Strategic plan

Implementation update - Year One

The IEU Council endorsed the union's first strategic plan, *Stride to Grow 2030*, at the 2024 AGM.

In the past 12 months, the union has acted on the following recommendations:

- increase investment in media and communications: appointment of a Digital Manager and employment of a full-time Digital Communications and Social Media Campaigner. Metrics from Campaign Monitor illustrate high open and click through rates relative to similar organisations
- develop fit-for-purpose human resources systems, policies, processes and training: employment of HR Leader, internal WHS Audit, adoption of staff platform and file plan system, training and standardised use of membership enquiry system
- improve role clarity: HR Leader reviewing and redrafting role descriptions
- increase the union's social media presence: data demonstrates increased use across all platforms
- create a weekly and annual working rhythm: Elected Officers meeting scheduled each Monday, Industrial Officers meet fortnightly
- survey members to inform IEU value proposition: nationwide survey through Engaged Strategy as reported at August Council. Commencement of implementation on recommendations of survey
- equip organisers with better 'recruitment tools': training and targeted pamphlets and recruitment materials
- review the organisational structure of the IEU: this review is under way along with the implementation of clearer reporting guidelines.

While membership targets set in the strategic plan were set for 2030, it is good to note that the membership statistics located in this report confirm we have made progress on the following goals:

- growth in support staff numbers
- growth in traditional and non-traditional 'non-union' schools (especially independent schools).

Listed actions for next year include:

- conclude implementation of WHS recommendations
- continue to implement recommendations from nationwide survey results and work with other IEU branches to share learnings
- commence recruitment drive in 2026
- identify and knock down barriers to entry (simplified membership forms)
- tailor membership offering to potential new members in target sectors (tailored membership forms for ELICOS members)
- create a weekly and annual working rhythm (Organiser workgroup meetings planned every two to three weeks with Team Leaders meeting individual organisers regularly)
- convert corporate knowledge into online information for members (to be actioned through the History Project).

David Towson Deputy Secretary

Industrial

Introduction

The work of the industrial team has been dominated by bargaining for members in Catholic systemic schools and members in independent schools represented by the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AIS).

The expiry of the one-year Catholic systemic enterprise agreement (EA) in October 2024 was the signal for the start of bargaining for a new EA. NSW public sector settlements set the framework for pay increases but bargaining for improved conditions and the ACT teacher pay settlement extended until July. As we go to press, it is anticipated the vote on the EA will be conducted in the last week of October.

A key focus of the union's work in 2024 and early 2025 was pursuing improved pay and conditions for teachers and support staff in NSW and ACT independent schools. Significant pay rises and improved conditions were eventually achieved after seven months of intense bargaining and campaigning. The union was able to use the threat of the new bargaining stream of single interest bargaining (introduced in the Secure Jobs, Better Pay amendments to the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)* from June 2023) to pressure employers to agree to better outcomes, particularly for teachers where membership strength was greatest and the campaign most effective.

Early childhood education and care was also an area where significant breakthroughs were achieved because of the new bargaining streams. The first supported bargaining multi-employer agreement (MEA) was made by the Fair Work Commission (FWC) in December 2024 on application by the IEU and other unions to apply to teachers and educators in long day care services. The IEU is also before the FWC seeking an MEA to apply to NSW preschools.

In addition to bargaining, the annexure outlines two matters that the union has successfully arbitrated before the FWC – one relating to a

flexible work application and another relating to transitional provisions for parental leave under the new Independent Schools MEAs. Beyond these, the union has been dealing with a broad range of issues, including pay discrepancies arising from misclassification or incorrect application of transitional arrangements during classification structure changes, as well as enforcement of new entitlements introduced through recent amendments to the *Fair Work Act*.

Catholic systemic schools and dioceses

NSW and ACT Catholic systemic schools EA

Members in Catholic systemic schools are covered by the *NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2023*, which was approved by the FWC in December 2023 with an expiry date of October 2024.

The IEU has been engaged in enterprise bargaining since October 2024 for new EAs covering teachers and general employees in Catholic systemic schools across 10 dioceses in NSW and ACT (not including Broken Bay). Prior to negotiations commencing, Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) indicated it would pursue a separate EA, expected to mirror the terms of the central systemic EA.

Informed by member surveys and consultation with the NSW/ACT Branch Council, the union's log of claims placed strong emphasis on workload changes. Key concerns included out-of-hours work, diverse student needs, data and compliance demands, meetings, professional development days and class sizes. The IEU also sought pay increases to match those achieved by teachers and support staff in government schools and improved leave entitlements for general employees. Agreements on pay and conditions in NSW government schools for both teachers and support staff were finalised in October 2024 between the NSW government and the unions.

Pay increases were achieved by the union reflecting those awarded in government schools:

- NSW teachers: 3% in October 2024 (already paid), 3% in October 2025, and 3% in October 2026.
- ACT teachers: around 3% in August 2025, 3.5% in August 2026, with 2027 increases subject to future negotiations.
- NSW and ACT general employees: 4% from July 2024 (already paid), 3% in July 2025 (to be paid once the EA commences) and July 2026, with 2027 increases to be negotiated.

However, by May 2025, diocesan employers had rejected several core conditions claims, including those related to professional development, meeting caps and leave improvements for general employees. The IEU had specifically sought two workload measures adopted for teachers in NSW government schools:

- the inclusion of all briefings and before/after school meetings within the 10-hour per term limit on meetings for teachers, and
- a requirement that at least half of all pupil-free days be teacher-directed for planning and preparation.

Following the breakdown of negotiations concerning these claims, the union launched a petition in early May to gauge member support and encourage collective endorsement by members of the claims.

When the petition closed in early June, it was clear there was member support for, but limited engagement in, a campaign to pursue outstanding workload and leave claims. There appeared to be little prospect of a campaign resulting in protected industrial action, which was seen as necessary for the union to have any chance of success.

After consultation with the IEU Executive, union officers continued negotiations to finalise the agreement without pressing those specific items further.

In late August, parties were finalising the drafting of the agreement, including diocesan annexures. The proposed agreements will operate for a three-year term, expiring in October 2027, consistent with the NSW government school award for teachers. A Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) clause has also been agreed, allowing for discussions on a one-off payment if CPI exceeds 4.5% from July 2026.

In addition to pay increases, the IEU achieved key improvements including:

- superannuation paid on employer paid parental leave
- non-initial primary carers may access 12 weeks paid parental leave within 24 months of birth (not limited to a period of 12 months as previously)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees entitled to three days paid cultural and ceremonial leave annually
- delegates' rights formally recognised, with some terms exceeding the model clause
- trade trainers included under the EA for the first time, acknowledging their vocational education role (referred to as trade instructors in the CSPD agreement)

- Lead Teacher now included with the Highly Accomplished teacher classification and allowance
- access to long service leave in short blocks for general employees
- ability to meet with employers to negotiate a COLA one-off payment, further increases for general employees in July 2027, and further increases for ACT teachers in 2027.

While diocesan employers have resisted matching NSW government workload measures, the union continues to pursue improvements through Work Practices Agreements. The IEU anticipates the EA will be put to a vote by the end of October 2025.

Broken Bay diocese EA

After four months of constructive negotiations from September to December 2024, the union recommended a yes vote on a new EA, the *Catholic Schools Broken Bay Enterprise Agreement 2024* and Operational Framework (OF) for staff employed by Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB). The EA and OF will apply to teachers and support staff employed in Broken Bay schools.

The new EA and OF, endorsed by 92.5% of staff in a December ballot, took effect on 1 January 2025 and will run until December 2028.

The EA pay and conditions set a new standard. The agreement delivers a 13% pay increase over four years, providing for increases of 3.5% back paid from 1 October 2024; 3.5% from 1 October 2025; 3% from 1 October 2026; and 3% from 1 October 2027.

By October 2025, CSBB teachers will earn 2.5% more than their NSW Department of Education counterparts, with support staff earning substantially more than in comparable government roles. Pay protection ensures all staff remain at least 1.5% ahead of Department rates.

The EA and OF also provided significant wins in working conditions. These included continued additional release for collaborative coaching; additional classroom support for K-6; nine staff development days in 2025-2026; the specific provision of a right to disconnect outside working hours; expanded paid partner leave and continued super during parental leave; and a \$100 per night camp allowance for teachers.

The EA also provides for stronger job security and an enshrined union voice. The EA secures permanency for key roles from 2026 and enforces minimum daily hours for part-time teachers. This EA also strengthens the union's role, allowing for greater collaboration with CSBB to hold them accountable on key issues, including workload concerns, student behaviour management and learner diversity, and workplace safety.

While this EA represents major progress, the IEU continues to pursue key priorities such as increased release time, smaller class sizes and greater support for inclusive education.

Principals EAs - Catholic systemic schools

Bargaining commenced in April 2025 for three separate EAs: Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS), Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD), and

the other eight Catholic dioceses (excluding Broken Bay). As in the bargaining for the Catholic systemic schools EA, CSPD has indicated its intention to establish a standalone EA for principals.

The IEU made claims that aligned with those achieved for teachers and general employees, including:

- improved access to paid parental leave for non-initial primary carers
- superannuation payable on paid parental leave provided by the employer
- introduction of paid ceremonial and cultural leave.

Employers agreed to annual salary increases of 3% in October 2024, October 2025 and October 2026 in line with teachers.

During bargaining, the parties also discussed revising the classification structure to group schools with up to 450 enrolments into one band and creating a new band for schools with more than 1800 enrolments. Based on feedback from members, the IEU claimed the introduction of an allowance for principals managing K-12 schools to recognise the complexities in managing primary and secondary schools.

In addition to the bargaining, the IEU is also pursuing diocesan-specific claims through direct engagement with individual dioceses.

Principals in Broken Bay are covered by an EA that was approved by the FWC in April 2024 but expires at the end of 2025.

Catholic Schools Office Maitland-Newcastle EA

Employees of the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle voted in support of a new EA in 2024, *Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Employees Enterprise Agreement*, which was approved by the FWC in December 2024. This followed a protracted enterprise bargaining process where IEU members participated in protected industrial action through the 'Hear Our Voice Too' campaign.

The campaign was a call back to the IEU's 'Hear Our Voice' campaign for Catholic systemic school members, which drew on the connection IEU CSO members felt to their previous roles in Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle schools. For many years, CSO employees received the same pay rises as teachers covered by the central Catholic systemic EA. However, for the first time, the employer sought to pay a different pay increase to CSO employees.

While the IEU was not successful in achieving the same percentage pay rises for CSO employees as teachers in schools, there was a significant improvement in the rates of pay for school-based psychologists who are employed through the CSO. As a result of pay increases for Department of Education psychologists, psychologists employed in the CSO had been earning significantly less than their government-employed colleagues, but this has now been rectified.

Catholic independent schools

ACT Catholic Congregational Schools MEAs

The IEU successfully bargained for two replacement MEAs for teachers and support staff at Daramalan College, Marist College and St Edmund's College. The MEAs received

overwhelming support, with about 80 per cent of employees participating in the vote and over 95 per cent voting in favour of the MEAs.

The new MEAs brought in line the timing of salary increases for teachers and support staff across the three schools. Under the MEAs, all employees will receive annual salary increases in October each year. Teachers received 6% in 2024, 4% in 2025 and 4% in 2026. Support staff received 4% in 2024 (in addition to a 2% increase in April), 4% in 2025 and 4% in 2026.

In addition to salary increases, the IEU secured several significant improvements to working conditions, including:

- a substantial increase in paid parental leave for the initial primary carer, rising from 14 to 24 weeks, available to all employees commencing parental leave after 1 April 2025
- an additional 12 weeks of paid parental leave for non-initial primary carers, which can be taken within 24 months of the child's birth or adoption (applicable to children born or adopted after 1 April 2025)
- introduction of one day of paid special leave per annum for all employees, and up to five days of paid emergency disaster leave for support staff
- recognition of union delegate rights, including access to paid time to attend union training with four weeks' notice.

Model A Catholic independent schools MEAs

Bargaining commenced in early September for new NSW Catholic independent schools Model A MEAs, which will cover teachers and support staff employed in Model A schools. The current MEAs expire in December 2025. The bargaining team is in the process of finalising the log of claims with members.

AIS independent schools MEAs

The IEU had commenced bargaining for new AIS MEAs for teachers and professional and operational staff in NSW and the ACT in May 2024.

In December 2024, agreement was reached with the AIS on all three MEAs. These were endorsed by a majority vote in February 2025 across 250 schools, with the Teachers MEA and NSW PAOS MEA commencing on 9 April 2025, and the ACT PAOS MEA on 28 March 2025. All employees received back pay from 1 February 2025.

Teachers

Following the last report in October 2024, the IEU intensified its campaign for a single interest employer authorisation in independent schools. A majority of teachers in 123 out of 245 schools supported the IEU's petition for single interest bargaining for the Teachers MEA, significantly increasing pressure on employers.

On 25 November 2024, the IEU lodged a bargaining dispute and application with the FWC to seek authorisation to bargain under the single interest bargaining stream. In response, on 26 November 2024, the AIS filed three applications to force a vote on their proposed Teachers MEA and the two PAOS MEAs. The AIS applications were scheduled for hearing on 19 December 2024.

As a result of sustained member advocacy and the proceedings before the FWC, the AIS made several key concessions in the days before the hearing:

- The IEU claim for a workload transparency clause: schools are now required to provide clear information to teachers regarding face-to-face teaching hours, extra-curricular activity expectations and release time for leadership roles. This represents a significant step forward in workload transparency for independent school teachers.
- Improvements to the unfair transitional arrangements:
 - teachers with four or more years' experience at Proficient will transition to the top step, resulting in a pay rise in 2025 of between \$12,000 and over \$20,000 (depending on their current MEA).
 - all existing teachers classified as Band 3 – Experienced Teacher or Senior Teacher 1 will receive the Accomplished Teacher allowance. This guarantee will continue to apply if the teacher moves to another MEA school in the future.
 - existing Band 3 teachers and Senior Teacher 1 teachers are entitled to receive both the Accomplished Teacher allowance and a Leadership position allowance if they are in a leadership position when the new MEA commences.

As a result of these concessions, the IEU withdrew our opposition to the making of the MEAs. These outcomes marked significant progress in achieving improved transparency, recognition and remuneration for teachers in independent schools.

Professional and operational staff (PAOS)

The newly named PAOS MEAs were broadened to include a wider range of employees. The expanded coverage now incorporates a new instructional services stream for sports coaches and music tutors (except those engaged individually), as well as human resources managers and marketing services staff.

Both the NSW and ACT PAOS MEAs provide for the following annual wage increases:

- 1 February 2025 – 4%
- 1 February 2026 – 4.5%
- 1 February 2027 – 4%

In NSW, a modernised classification structure was implemented, aligning with the modern award.

This new structure establishes a common competency framework across all occupational groups, ensuring fairer and more consistent pay alignment. Key improvements include:

- a dedicated classification stream for ICT services
- introduction of 12-monthly incremental salary steps for School Assistants
- faster salary progression for most occupational groups, based on 12 months of service rather than full years
- new higher-level classifications for School Assistants in curriculum and resources roles within laboratories and libraries, recognising higher qualifications and experience.

Due to transitional arrangements, some categories of PAOS employees received increases above the annual percentage.

Improved parental leave

The new MEAs also delivered significant improvements in paid parental leave including:

- the 14 weeks of paid parental leave will count as service for the purposes of salary progression and leave accrual. Employees will also receive superannuation on the paid parental leave.
- an employee who is not the initial primary carer will be entitled to two weeks of paid parental leave at the time of birth or adoption. If that person becomes the primary carer within 12 months of the birth or adoption, they are now entitled to an additional 12 weeks paid parental leave.

Second-round bargaining

In May 2025, the AIS initiated second-round bargaining with the IEU for four additional independent schools:

- Chrysalis Steiner School – Teachers and PAOS
- Hartford College – Teachers and PAOS
- Mackillop Education Waranara School – Teachers only
- Newcastle Waldorf School – PAOS only.

The second-round MEAs extend all the benefits of the main MEAs, except back payment. Voting on these MEAs was conducted in August 2025.

The Teachers MEA commenced on 8 September 2025, and the PAOS MEA commenced on 12 September 2025.

Christian schools represented by Christian Schools Australia (NSW and ACT)

Bargaining has resumed for MEAs applying to teachers and general staff in Christian schools represented by Christian Schools Australia (CSA) in NSW and the ACT.

Bargaining commenced in September 2023, but was suspended from around August 2024 due to the inadequate pay offer by employers over the proposed term of the MEAs.

NSW Christian schools

Forty schools are covered by the proposed MEAs in NSW, not including Southern Highlands Christian School which opted out of the proposed MEAs due to financial constraints.

For teachers, there have been some improvements to the initial pay offer that resulted in the suspension of bargaining.

Key agreed outcomes for teachers and general staff include:

- improvements to the new parent bonus moving to 24 weeks from 1 July 2025 and 26 weeks from 1 July 2026
- introduction of new clauses including the right to disconnect and delegates' rights (with a reduced notification period for training of only four weeks).

NSW teachers will receive the following pay increases during the life of the MEA which has a nominal expiry date of 31 March 2027:

- February 2024 - 7% (already paid)
- October 2024 - 4% (already paid)
- October 2025 - 3.5%
- February 2026 - 1.5%
- October 2026 - 1.5%.

From 1 July 2026, these Christian schools will introduce a new seven-step classification structure in line with the scale applying in NSW government and Catholic systemic schools.

For non-teaching staff, the IEU secured the following pay increases:

- February 2024 - 4%
- February 2025 - 4%
- February 2026 - 4%
- February 2027 - 3%

The two MEAs for Christian schools in NSW are close to finalisation and the union anticipates the vote will be later this year.

ACT Christian schools

Two MEAs apply to teachers and general staff in three ACT Christian schools: Emmaus Christian School, Trinity Christian School and Brindabella Christian College.

However, bargaining for replacement MEAs in the ACT came to a halt given the financial and governance difficulties experienced by Brindabella in late 2024 and 2025.

Following the acquisition of Brindabella by Christian Community Ministries (CCM), bargaining resumed for MEAs to cover Emmaus Christian School and Trinity Christian School.

The proposed MEAs have a nominal expiry of December 2026 as the schools are reluctant to make pay offers for 2027 given uncertainty about the pay outcome in ACT government schools.

During bargaining, CSA agreed to IEU's claim for an increase in paid parental leave to 20 weeks, given the delays in finalisation of the MEAs.

For teachers, the two schools implemented the shorter seven-step classification structure in July 2024. As a result of the change, teachers received an increase in salaries ranging from 3% to 10.4% depending on their registration as Proficient teacher and teaching experience.

Subsequent pay increases are as follows:

- July 2025 - 3.2% - 3.8%
- February 2026 - 1%
- July 2026 - 0.5%

The pay offer accepted by the IEU for general staff in ACT Christian schools is:

- July 2024 - 3.75%
- July 2025 - 3.75%
- July 2026 - 3.75%

Drafting of the MEAs will continue for the remainder of 2025 and voting is likely to occur next year.

Seventh-day Adventist schools

A new EA for teachers employed in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) schools in the North NSW Conference was approved in April 2025.

The agreement included the introduction of a seven-step classification structure to bring SDA

schools into line with NSW government, Catholic diocesan and independent schools.

Although there were generous pay increases across all classification levels, some teachers were not translocated to the top level even though they had significant teaching service.

Bargaining for a new support and operational staff agreement has been put on hold while a review of the classification structure is undertaken.

Interim pay increases have been paid for 2025.

Bargaining is underway for new EAs for teachers and professional and operational staff in SDA schools operated by the Greater Sydney Conference. The current agreements do not expire until January 2026.

Features of the union's log of claims include pay and classification structures consistent with recent AIS agreements, paid parental leave in line with other non-government school employers and access to pro rata long service leave after five years.

The Conference has agreed in principle to the introduction of 14 weeks' paid parental leave for both the initial and non-initial primary carer. It has also agreed to shorten the proposed term of agreements to three years for teachers and two years for professional and operational staff to align with the bargaining cycle in the independent schools sector.

The union is seeking a pay protection clause to ensure teachers are not adversely impacted by the term of the proposed agreement extending beyond that applying to AIS schools.

Support staff in Catholic systemic schools

The Catholic diocesan employers and the union are currently negotiating for the *NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2025*. The union has been unable to achieve improved leave for support staff as part of the bargaining, with employers adamant in their refusal to increase long service leave.

The union reached agreement with Catholic employers on pay equivalency with NSW government school support staff in 2023 and this was reflected in the terms of the *NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2023*, approved by the FWC in December 2023. Members received increases in July 2024 pursuant to the 2023 EA, but the July 2025 wage increases have not been paid by Catholic employers as they are waiting until the new EA is made.

The union and employers agreed on changes to the classification structure and translocation arrangements by way of the Interim Settlement, which was formalised in the *NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2023*. However, the union is still addressing matters where employers have failed to correctly implement these changes, including the translocation of some senior administrative employees in small regional schools and the reclassification of employees to the new Aboriginal Educational Officer classifications.

Given the complexity of the translocation and back pay calculations some significant delays were experienced by members in receiving back pay.

The *Catholic Schools Broken Bay Enterprise Agreement 2024* was finalised towards the end

of 2024, with pay rates maintaining a premium of 1.5% above the main EA.

Support staff in independent schools

Throughout the latter half of 2024, the union negotiated with the AIS for replacement MEAs for support staff employed in independent schools in NSW and the ACT.

The *Independent Schools NSW (Professional and Operational Staff) Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025* was approved by the FWC in April 2025. The EA covers 234 schools, incorporating schools previously covered by the Independent schools MEA, the Christian schools MEA, single EAs and the modern award.

The employers sought significant changes to the classification structure, while maintaining 10 separate occupational groups. The union achieved additional pay increases to address the significant pay disparity across all occupational streams when compared to the same roles in other government and non-government schools.

Learning support staff working in schools for specific purposes was an area of focus during bargaining, with the union achieving the introduction of incremental salary steps within classifications levels and higher annual increases for 2026 and 2027.

However, members have significant concerns about their working conditions, including the continuing pay disparity, work health and safety and supervision requirements where teachers are not present. The union is continuing to campaign around these issues for learning support roles in Aspect schools and satellite classes throughout NSW.

The *Independent Schools ACT (Professional and Operational Staff) Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025* (approved in March 2025) was more straightforward, with the only major change to the classification structure being the inclusion of counsellors and psychologists for the first time.

Single employer school EAs

NextSense EA

In 2024, NextSense (formerly the Royal Institute of Deaf and Blind Children) commenced negotiations for a new EA.

IEU members who work in the NextSense school, early childhood settings and in satellite classes – except for a small group of education employees – were for the first time being brought into the organisation's own EA rather than being covered by an iteration of the Independent schools MEA.

The NextSense EA covers occupational groups for the entire NextSense service with employees represented by several unions.

These groups include allied health staff, academic staff and broader operational staff.

The IEU NextSense chapter was concerned that being rolled into the NextSense EA would potentially reduce their pay and conditions, below those generally applying in the schools sector.

As a result of the solidarity of IEU members, they achieved in the *NextSense Employees' Enterprise Agreement 2024-2026* (approved by the FWC in August 2025):

- back pay to July 2024
- pay parity with education colleagues

- condition parity with the broader education sector
- a brand-new NextSense Education operational framework.

Trinity Grammar School

In late 2024, Trinity Grammar School made the decision to withdraw from the IEU/AIS bargaining for new Teachers and PAOS MEAs and commence enterprise bargaining for two single Trinity EAs, one for teachers and one for PAOS employees.

The IEU participated in bargaining with the AIS representing Trinity, alongside several other employee bargaining representatives. Following several meetings, the EAs were put to the vote and approved by the FWC in April and July.

The Trinity Teachers EA mirrors the Teachers Independent Schools MEA on the expectation that Trinity Grammar School can re-enter the Teachers MEA when the next EA is negotiated in 2028.

The Trinity PAOS EA is different from the new Independent Schools PAOS MEA because the pay structure of the previous support and operational staff MEA has been retained. However, Trinity employees have benefited from pay rises, backpay and the same improved conditions as PAOS staff in the MEA. It is intended that Trinity Grammar School PAOS employees will remain on a single EA in the future.

Indie Education

The NSW/ACT Branch, along with IEU Vic/Tas and WA, are leading negotiations for a single EA covering Indie Education schools nationally. Indie Education operates schools that offer alternative education, and the schools are spread across Australia.

In this round of bargaining, the key changes agreed include:

- a simplified teacher classification structure based on years of service (Levels 9-11 of the Indie Education employee classification levels)
- introduction of Level 12 specifically for Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers
- paid cultural and ceremonial leave for all employees
- a cap of 18 hours per week for face-to-face teaching, with other duties capped at 19.5 hours, subject to reasonable additional hours not exceeding 5.25 hours per week
- a nationally consistent school calendar, including uniform public holidays across all Indie Education schools.

The IEU anticipates the EA will go to a vote by the end of Term 3, with a view to finalising the agreement by year-end, in time for the next scheduled pay increase.

Disputes

AIS non-initial primary caregiver parental leave dispute

A dispute between the IEU and Monte Sant' Angelo (C2025/2991) was heard before Deputy President Slevin of the FWC on 2 May 2025.

The matter concerned the interpretation of clause 19.1(c) of the *Independent Schools (Teachers) Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025* (Teachers MEA).

The issue arose after a teacher employed by Monte Sant' Angelo was denied 12 weeks' paid parental leave on the basis that he had already accessed two weeks' leave under the old MEA before the new MEA commenced. The IEU disputed the employer's interpretation of the transitional provisions.

Submissions were filed by both the IEU and AIS, representing the school. On 24 July 2025, a written non-binding recommendation was provided by Deputy President Slevin that accorded with the IEU's position. Following some pressure from the union, Monte and other schools affected by the dispute agreed to follow the recommendation and grant leave to the affected employees.

Brindabella Christian College

In 2024, Brindabella Christian College failed to pay superannuation to employees. Despite undertakings concerning payment of superannuation by Brindabella in a dispute notified by the union to the FWC in May 2024, problems continued in late 2024.

In February 2025, the IEU was notified by its members that ordinary fortnightly pay had not been received. The union lodged a dispute with the FWC in February 2025 (C2025/1420) to ensure members were paid and address concerns about incorrect personal leave accruals. This occurred in the context of widespread publicity about serious liquidity problems facing the school and litigation by the ATO and others against the school. At FWC hearings, the school agreed to implement methods to pay its staff correctly. On 5 March 2025, the school entered voluntary administration, with Deloitte appointed as administrators. All outstanding wages were paid by 7 March 2025 and staff entitlements, including superannuation and leave accruals, were checked.

The administrator's report published in late July revealed significant failures in administration and governance. The school was subsequently purchased by CCM, which is covered by its own EA.

The union consulted members about whether the existing instruments (expired MEAs) or the CCM EA should apply. CCM wants its EA to apply and gave undertakings in relation to improved pay and parental leave. Members are seeking additional undertakings in relation to personal/carer's leave, paid parental leave and long service leave.

CCM applied to the FWC in August for an order that the CCM EA apply to general staff employees employed in the early learning centre. The union does not oppose this application. In September, CCM lodged a second application that the CCM EA applies to teachers - IEU will press for the additional commitments in relation to leave.

Flexible work dispute

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) were amended and strengthened in the Secure Jobs, Better Pay legislation, with effect from July 2023. The changes included the capacity for the FWC to determine a dispute over a flexible work request. Further, there was a critical strengthening of consultative obligations of the employer in determining a request for an FWA. The new laws now require

an employer to have genuinely tried to reach an agreement with the employee, to have had regard for the consequences on the employee and to have regard to the nature and size of the employer's operation (s.65A(3) (a), (c) and s.65 (5) of the *Fair Work Act*).

Naden v Catholic Schools Broken Bay was one of the first cases to test these new provisions. In this matter, our member, Naden, sought to work part-time in her substantive REC role. While Naden was unsuccessful at first instance, before Commissioner Matheson, she was successful on her appeal to the Full Bench of the FWC and was granted flexible work arrangements in full, by order of the FWC - *Naden v Catholic Schools Broken Bay Trust* [2025] FWCFB 82.

The Full Bench was critical of CSBB's 'tardiness' in taking more than 70 days to determine the FWA, which requires a determination be made to a written request within 21 days. The decision of Commissioner Matheson was overturned because the Full Bench held that any failure to discharge the consultative obligations in s65A (3) of the Act, in full, could see the employee's FWA granted by the FWC. In Naden's case, it was held that CSBB had not demonstrated that it considered the consequences of not granting the FWA for Naden (s.65(3) (c)). This failure saw the decision of Commissioner Matheson quashed and Naden's FWA granted.

The decision highlights the serious consultative obligations that employers must discharge in considering an FWA. The decision also highlighted the substantial barriers that women in leadership positions with carer's responsibilities face.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) Supported bargaining - long day care MEA

The IEU, along with the AEU and UWU, achieved the first ever supported bargaining agreement utilising the 'supported bargaining' laws created by the Albanese government in its Secure Jobs, Better Pay legislation.

Supported bargaining laws are directed at sectors of the economy where work is not properly valued, including overwhelmingly feminised sectors such as aged care and ECEC. The multi-employer agreement, the *Early Childhood Education and Care Multi-Employer Agreement 2024-2026* (ECEC MEA), was approved by the FWC on 17 December 2024 and covers long day care services in the ECEC sector across Australia.

Teachers and educators received a 10% funded increase backdated to 2 December 2024, a 3.5% increase from 1 July 2025 and will receive a further Commonwealth funded 5% increase from 1 December 2025. There are currently more than 500 employers and 46,000 employees covered by the MEA, a significant increase on the original 63 employers.

The agreement was negotiated with the funder of long day care services, the Commonwealth government, who under the new supported bargaining laws, was ordered by the FWC to participate in the bargaining. The Commonwealth also provided the 15% pay uplift ("ECEC WRP") for other Commonwealth-funded ECEC services that had an industrial instrument that ensured the 15% pay rise was fully passed on to employees.

ECEC supported bargaining - NSW preschools MEA

There are around 710 preschools in NSW that are funded by the NSW government under the Start Strong program.

The sector faces a growing workforce crisis in attracting and retaining staff due to several factors, including the fact that wages are up to 30% below those in schools. Because the Commonwealth government's ECEC 'wage retention payment' is not provided to NSW preschools, wages are now also below those in long day care services.

The IEU launched the Unite for Change campaign for NSW preschools in April 2024, seeking pay equity with school settings. In July 2024, the IEU filed a supported bargaining application seeking the NSW government step up and fund preschools to provide fair wages to teachers and educators in NSW preschools.

In September 2024, the FWC granted the IEU's supported bargaining authorisation (B2024/852 IEU and Community Preschools), finding that low rates of pay prevail in NSW preschools. Bargaining for a supported bargaining agreement for NSW preschools formally commenced in October 2024 and the NSW government has been participating in the bargaining, by order of the FWC, since December 2024.

Since March 2025, there have been detailed discussions in the FWC including case studies and analysis provided by the IEU and Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) (representing services). Further, by direction of the FWC, the NSW government has been forced to provide particulars of its funding arrangements. The analysis has established that the NSW government does not have a costed funding model and is not aware of the costs involved in operating a preschool. The IEU's and CELA's case studies show services cannot fund fair wages and conditions under current funding arrangements. A supported bargaining agreement cannot be secured without the NSW government addressing the funding needs of the sector.

The FWC will hold a hearing on the funding arrangements in NSW preschools in around October 2025 and hopefully issue a recommendation that the union can use politically.

The IEU Preschool Ambassadors and Secretary Carol Matthews met with numerous state politicians in mid-September and at a morning tea on 14 October.

A Day of Action was held on 15 October to publicise our call for more government funding, with a rally in Martin Place.

NSW Health ECEC Award

Following bargaining that commenced in mid-2024, the new *Teachers' (NSW Health Early Childhood Education and Care Centres) Salaries and Miscellaneous Conditions Award 2024* was made by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) on 30 May 2025. The three-year award replaces the 2023 award and introduces significant improvements for teachers in NSW Health early childhood centres.

Key outcomes include a new five-tier classification structure aligned with the federal *Educational Services (Teachers) Award 2020*,

modernising pay and reflecting teacher accreditation standards under NSW law. A new educational leader allowance replaces the previous nominated supervisor allowance. Pay rates were translated to apply the highest available rate per classification, benefiting all staff with increases up to 19% from December 2024 (resulting in pay rises between \$5000 and \$14,000). In addition, this award now meets the criteria for the NSW government to claim the ECEC WRP, promising further increases of 10% above modern award rates.

All other employment conditions are set under the relevant *Public Hospitals Conditions Award*.

NSW Health crib breaks dispute

Early childhood teachers employed by NSW Health are entitled to paid crib breaks as part of the conditions of the *Teachers' (NSW Health Early Childhood Education and Care Centres) Salaries and Miscellaneous Conditions Award 2024*. The exception to this entitlement is where there is an agreement in writing between the employer and employee.

Following concerns raised by IEU members, the union found employees were not being paid crib break entitlements and, as a result, had been underpaid in respect of this entitlement for several years. The IEU sought to resolve the matter directly with the employer of the impacted centre, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, however this was not successful.

With the assistance of the NSW IRC, the parties were able to reach an agreement for the back payment of entitlements to IEU members. The IEU recovered a total of \$63,000 for members employed at the Lorikeet Early Learning Centre in St George Hospital.

ECEC enterprise agreements

The following EAs were negotiated over the last 12 months. For more details about each of these, see the ECEC annexure.

Burgmann Early Learning Centre EA

The *Burgmann Anglican School Early Learning Agreement 2023*, the EA that applies to the early learning centre and pre-kindergarten attached to The Burgmann Anglican School, expired on 31 January 2025. Teachers, educators and administrative staff are covered by the Burgmann Early Learning EA rather than the Independent Schools MEAs. Negotiations for a replacement EA commenced in May 2025. The IEU's log of claims focused on parity with the 2025 Independent Schools MEAs. Negotiations have been progressing well, and the union is confident that the EA will be finalised in September 2025.

KU Children's Services EA

More than 12 months after agreement was reached with KU, the IEU lodged a dispute with the FWC because it had still not received a finalised draft of the EA. KU provided a draft within two days of the dispute notification. The *KU Children's Services Teachers Enterprise Agreement 2024-2026* was finally approved by the FWC in July 2025. Members are enjoying 4% annual increases to salaries and allowances and improved conditions.

Goodstart Early Learning EA 2024

The *Goodstart Early Learning Enterprise Agreement 2024* covers 16,000 teachers and educators in more than 650 centres across Australia who were among the first workers in the sector to receive the 15% wage rises funded by the Commonwealth government under the ECEC WRP. After a lengthy bargaining process, the Goodstart EA was approved by the FWC in December 2024, with new provisions that better reflect members' workplace needs.

SDN EA

The *SDN Enterprise Agreement 2025* includes 3% annual pay increases for preschool teachers and educators. Long day care teachers and educators will receive the 15% Commonwealth-funded pay increase. The SDN EA was voted up by 93% of employees and approved by FWC in July 2025.

Western Sydney University Early Learning Limited (WSUELL) EA

The *Western Sydney University Early Learning Limited Enterprise Agreement 2025* was approved by the FWC in July 2025. The EA includes a 4% increase in August 2025, 3% in August 2026 and 3% in August 2027, in addition to the ECWRP of 10% backdated to 2 December 2024 and a further 5% from 1 December 2025.

Mission Australia EA

The *Mission Australia Services Delivery Enterprise Agreement 2024* was approved by the FWC in November 2024.

Young Academics Early Learning Centres (YAELC) EA

The IEU reached agreement with YAELC on their first EA on 1 May 2025, the *YAELC Enterprise Agreement 2025*. The EA includes a 10% government-funded increase to salaries backdated to 2 December 2024 with a further 5% from 1 December 2025. The EA was approved by the FWC in June 2025.

Uniting Early Learning Enterprise Agreement

The *Uniting Early Enterprise Agreement 2023* was varied by the FWC in May 2025 to enable teachers and educators employed in long day care services to access the ECEC WRP increases of 10% backdated to 2 December 2024 and a further 5% from 1 December 2025.

UOW Pulse

The IEU and UWU assisted UOW Pulse to vary its existing *Pulse Children's Services Agreement 2022* to access the ECEC WRP. The FWC approved the variation in April 2025. Early childhood teachers and educators received the ECEC WRP funded increases backdated to 2 December 2024.

Post-secondary education

The IEU has been involved in negotiations with several colleges for new EAs in 2025. These colleges include Navitas Skilled Futures, UOW College, Taylors College and WSU the College.

Disputes

See a summary of data about disputes on page 22.

Enterprise agreements

See a list of EAs approved by the FWC to which the IEU is party on page 23.

Michael Aird Industrial Officer
 Neal Bent Industrial Coordinator
 Liam Crisanti Industrial Officer
 Samantha Danalis Industrial Officer
 Emma Ford Industrial Officer
 Nadia Gubbay-Nemes Industrial Officer
 Amanda Hioe Assistant Secretary
 Wendy McMurdo Industrial Assistant
 Carolyn Moore Industrial Officer
 Deborah Weston Industrial Assistant

Summary of disputes

Disputes by employer					
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Catholic systemic - previously CEO	176	100	154	119	204
Catholic independent - previously CER	25	14	16	5	22
AIS/non-systemic	161	62	81	83	112
ECEC	20	9	7	13	26
Special	1	-	2	-	5
Business colleges	4	-	1	-	1
English colleges	2	3	2	4	-
Post secondary (other)	2	-	3	-	2
Miscellaneous	1	4	1	1	6
Total	392	192	267	225	378

Disputes by nature					
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Accreditation	6	1	-	1	-
Assessment/appraisal	33	25	24	16	4
*Casual employment - includes casual conversion	-	-	-	-	1
Child protection	52	36	58	54	80
Classification	30	2	6	5	14
Conditions	27	7	13	5	-
Contract of employment (includes variation, new contract review) - previously letters of appointment	4	3	8	6	13
Disciplinary issues (performance and conduct) - includes suspension					
- previously disputes/grievance procedures	11	6	10	2	71
Enterprise agreements/awards	13	1	3	5	-
Fixed-term employment					
- previously temporary appointment	14	2	3	1	5
General protection	2	2	1	2	3
Harassment/discrimination/staff conflict/bullying	35	22	36	14	36
Leave - annual/maternity/sick/long service/other	18	10	12	7	13
*Overpayment	-	-	-	-	6
Promotions positions	2	3	1	1	3
Restructure/redundancy/redeployment					
- previously redundancy/amalgamation/closure/redeployment	47	12	19	17	40
*Right to request flexible work arrangements	-	-	-	-	3
Superannuation	1	-	2	1	-
Termination of employment (includes dismissal and resignation) - previously (threat) termination/ suspension/dismissal	58	36	39	54	43
Wage claims - previously money	27	16	16	19	16
Workers compensation (return to work)					
- previously workers compensation	10	3	14	13	22
Worker health & safety	2	3	2	2	4
*Workload and WPA issues	-	-	-	-	1
Total	392	192	267	225	378

*New category as of October 2024

Recovery of money

Monies recovered for the year September 2024 to September 2025 were \$4,390,365.

Workers compensation

The union referred 39 members to the union's solicitors for advice regarding disputed workers

compensation claims this year. As well, some 66 members have ongoing worker's compensation matters.

Thirty-three members were referred to the union's solicitors under the legal benefits scheme.

List of agreements**Independent Schools**

Independent Schools (Teachers) Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025
Independent Schools (Teachers) Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025 (2)
Independent Schools ACT (Professional and Operational Staff) Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025
Independent Schools NSW (Professional and Operational Staff) Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025
Independent Schools NSW (Professional and Operational Staff) Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025 (2)
Independent Schools NSW (Teachers) Carinya Christian School Agreement 2025
Seventh-Day Adventist Schools (North New South Wales) Ltd Teachers Enterprise Agreement 2025-2027
Sydney Church of England Grammar School Teachers Agreement 2025-2027
Trinity Grammar School Professional and Operational Staff Agreement 2025
Trinity Grammar School Teachers Agreement 2025

Catholic Schools

Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese Limited - Counsellors Enterprise Agreement 2024
Support Staff (Daramalan College, Marist College Canberra, and St Edmund's College Canberra) MEA 2025
Teachers (Daramalan College, Marist College Canberra, and St Edmund's College Canberra) MEA 2025

Early childhood education and care

Albury Preschool Kindergarten Inc. Employee Enterprise Agreement 2024
Bega Valley Pre-Schools Teachers Agreement 2024
Caterpillar House Occasional Childcare Association Inc Enterprise Agreement 2025
Early Childhood Education and Care Multi-Employer Agreement 2024-2026
Goodstart Early Learning Enterprise Agreement 2024
KU Children's Services Teachers Enterprise Agreement 2024-2026
SDN Enterprise Agreement 2025
UOW Pulse Operations Agreement 2024
Western Sydney University Early Learning Limited Enterprise Agreement 2025

Business College

ATWEA College Enterprise Agreement 2025

English College

Kaplan Australia Group Enterprise Agreement 2024

Awards

Teachers' (NSW Health Early Childhood Service Centres) Salaries and Miscellaneous Conditions Award 2024

Recruitment and organising

Organising in 2025 has been guided and informed by our strategic plan - *Stride to Grow 2030*.

This plan sets ambitious goals to increase membership density and member engagement.

This year presented opportunities to analyse and assess how we recruit and retain members in an environment of significant growth in the non-government education sector.

While we continue to recruit at a steady rate, retention remains a challenge for the union.

'Financial reasons' has become the second highest reason for resignation after retirement.

It is an important task for the union to address the perceived dispensability of union membership for those resigning for financial or other reasons over which we have influence.

Over the past year, the organising program has prioritised data collection, visibility, engagement and resource development, targeted projects, campaigns and events.

Data collection

In March, surveys were conducted with both new members and non-members.

The 'Now's the Time' campaign in 2024 provided email addresses for almost 3000 non-member teachers in MEA schools, and we were able to utilise this information to survey potential members.

One thousand new members who joined between 1 January and 30 March 2025 were also surveyed about their motivations for joining the union.

The survey responses provided clear insights into what motivated new members to join and what obstacles prevented membership.

As expected, new members valued the union's role in improving salary and working conditions, as well as individual support and protections.

The survey affirmed overwhelmingly that new members join because of an invitation from a workplace rep or colleague.

This highlights the need for continued investment in school-based reps. Supporting and

developing this group is an ongoing priority for the union.

Non-members identified financial barriers as the largest obstacle to joining the union.

This raises questions about how they perceive the value of the union and what steps are necessary to shift this value proposition. This is also true for retention.

The retention of members who resign for financial or other reasons over which we have influence is critical for the growth of the union and must be a priority in 2026.

In addition to survey data, the union has mapped join and resignation data - overall, by sub branch, and by employer - to better understand factors that affect membership growth and loss.

Mapping our density trends has allowed us to better identify where and why members are joining and leaving the union, enabling us to target our recruitment processes - for example, there is a need to dedicate energy and resources to members in their first 24 months of membership, the period in which they are most at risk of relinquishing membership.

Whole of membership survey - Engaged Strategy

The union commissioned a survey of all members, conducted by Engaged Strategy between 13 June and 8 July 2025, to assess engagement and identify areas where the union performs well and where improvement is needed. More than 3000 members responded to the survey.

Responses to the survey were scored out of 10, with a mean satisfaction score of 8.0 or higher considered desirable. Respondents who gave scores of 9 or 10 were classified as "Promoters," scores of 7 or 8 as "Passives" and scores between 0 and 6 as "Detractors." Subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters yields the Net Promoter Score (NPS).

The IEU's NPS is 53 - a strong result that reflects positively on member sentiment and engagement.

The functional elements of the member experience are robust, with respondents consistently viewing the union as highly professional, knowledgeable and reliable.

Emotional drivers – a key to member loyalty – include feeling supported, cared for and valued, which members consistently identified as the most important emotional aspects of their relationship with the union. Members also believed the union is making a positive difference, with a mean score of 8.3 – another key driver.

Other findings include:

- 66 per cent of respondents are Promoters, who make an average of four recommendations per year to others to join the IEU. Promoters' key themes: support and representation, protection and security, negotiation and working conditions
- "Super Promoters" – those making eight or more recommendations annually – highlight: support during issues/crisis and advocacy for pay and conditions
- 21 per cent are classified as Passives, making an average of 2.6 recommendations per year. Passives' key themes: support and representation, communication, negotiation and working conditions, membership value and fees
- 13 per cent are classified as Detractors, who still recommend the union to colleagues, averaging 1.6 recommendations per year. Detractors' key themes: support and representation, negotiation and working conditions, membership value and fees.

Membership loyalty is high, with even Detractors indicating they are likely to remain members. The top reason people join the union is peer recommendation, cited by 59 per cent of respondents.

The top two drivers of engagement are Organisers and Industrial Officers, both of whom perform strongly.

Union publications and communications scored highly, with most respondents finding the content clear and easy to understand. Most also consider the current communication frequency ideal.

NPS results are segmented by sub branch, workplace type (Systemic, ECEC, Independent, Christian schools, ELICOS), Organiser, role (teachers, support staff, casual employees), length of membership and gender.

On the issue of teacher workloads, members reported that additional responsibilities and paperwork are the biggest contributors to work intensification.

Opportunities identified for the union include;

- greater engagement with members who joined within the past 12 months
- utilising promoters in campaigns
- improving the website
- increasing workplace presence through visits.

Visibility, resources and engagement

Union visibility in schools remains critical for both retention and recruitment of new members.

In 2025, we have continued to prioritise school visits across all sectors, with a focus on finding new ways to access members who do not attend traditional chapter meetings.

This has included trialling small events – linking members and reps within schools or across schools – in a social environment outside of the school gates.

Organisers have been supported and encouraged to be innovative in the ways we engage and network with members and prospective members.

We have worked to develop a sense of belonging, inclusion and the collective (with the focus on being a part of something greater than the individual). Building relationships with reps and members will continue to be a priority.

Resources also form an important part of union visibility. We have worked to produce new materials, including recruitment posters and an information series designed to recruit members and inform them about rights and entitlements.

In addition to small events, we have energised sub branch meetings by ensuring organisers promote attendance and reps are invited to share a drink and meal to build networks and relationships across the sub branch. These actions have been effective in increasing engagement.

Union event

In 2025, we undertook our first networking event in Sydney. The event was held on 20 June (pre-June Council) to thank and acknowledge the exceptional work undertaken by IEU reps from across NSW during the 'Now's the Time' campaign in independent schools represented by the AIS.

In addition to acknowledging exceptional work and commitment, the event was an opportunity for reps, who often work in isolation, to develop relationships, networks and supports.

The union received very positive feedback, with reps referencing inclusion, support, energy and, most importantly, enjoyment.

Having a positive, fun experience is essential in encouraging members to participate in union activities. The bingo was a huge success.

We thank the IEU Executive for supporting the event, as well as IEU staff who were critical to its success. Of course, we thank all reps who attended and look forward to future events.

Targeted schools program

The targeted schools program was introduced to explore diverse ways to recruit, while supporting organisers to effectively map workplaces and prioritise rep and member engagement.

Schools are fast-paced, busy environments and many factors inhibit the capacity of members to make a lunch time or after school union meeting or find the time to have union conversations.

The program is designed to examine what actions or structures enable members to participate in and engage with the union, and what resources are most valued and effective.

Five organisers are involved in the program – Luke Breen, Emily Cranney, Peter Criticos, Jennifer Tait and Sean van der Heide.

Group members identified two schools each based on agreed criteria and worked closely with reps to explore effective recruitment and engagement strategies

This includes reaching out to specific work groups, offering networking opportunities



outside of school, supporting reps with additional resources and training, and focusing on supporting each other with strategies and ideas.

Activities are monitored and mapped to determine the effectiveness of each event on recruitment and retention. Program outcomes will guide the union in planning and prioritising actions in the future.

Campaigns

Now's the Time - independent schools

In Term 4 of 2024, the union conducted our 'Now's the Time' campaign seeking to engage teachers and support staff in bargaining for new MEAs in 250 independent schools.

Pay and conditions offers for both teachers and support staff were initially inadequate.

To apply leverage on employers, the union commenced the process of obtaining a single interest bargaining authorisation in relation to the Teachers MEA by asking teachers (including non-members) to sign a petition in support of the authorisation.

By December 2024 more than 50 per cent of teachers had signed our petition in 125 schools, but the authorisation could not be granted by the FWC until after the expiry of the current MEA in February 2025.

Despite this difficulty, the AIS made key concessions in the bargaining in late December due to the support and engagement of our members (see Industrial annexure for details).

The 'Now's the Time' campaign was highly successful because it galvanised reps and chapters in schools where previously there had been only limited engagement with the union and it has fundamentally changed the way we organise in independent schools.

A success of the Now's the Time campaign is the inclusion, for the first time, of a workload transparency clause in the MEA.

Under clause 16.5, employers must inform teachers on appointment and from time-to-time of the following:

- the usual number of face-to-face teaching hours per week or per cycle for a full-time teacher
- the general requirements in relation to extra-curricular activities
- any reduction in face-to-face teaching hours for teachers in leadership 1 and 2 positions.

Despite the apparent clarity, schools have not readily complied and often been unwilling to provide information in an easily accessible or transparent way.

Organisers have been actively seeking to enforce the clause across 250 schools, including at sites where membership is low. But there is still much work to be done in terms of securing transparent work arrangements for teachers in AIS MEA schools.

Catholic systemic EA

Organising in the Catholic systemic sector continues to be strong, but it was challenging to engage members in a campaign where salary increases had been settled (based on increases in NSW government schools).

While the union sought to improve conditions, particularly teacher-directed pupil-free days, further limitations on meetings and improved long service leave for support staff, employers were steadfast in their refusal to agree to these claims.

The union ran a petition campaign on these issues but buy-in from members was limited.

Model A

The Model A agreement applies to seven Catholic independent schools and expires on 31 December this year.

Density across Model A schools is relatively strong and, given they are a discrete group of about 600 members, this bargaining presents organising opportunities for the union.

Organisers have undertaken intense visits and are monitoring impact to assess what methods of communication and engagement are most effective in supporting union growth.

Aspect

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) in Aspect schools are a group requiring special attention by the union. Aspect employs many LSAs who undertake challenging and often unsafe work.

Members are covered by the AIS MEA where salaries are currently 18.9 per cent behind NSW government and Catholic systemic schools.

For teachers, the union ran a single interest bargaining campaign, but our limited support staff membership prevents us from taking similar action. However, the union recognises that the current salaries paid to these members are not fit-for-purpose and we have launched a campaign to challenge these inequities.

As with all campaigns, we need to increase density and engagement to be successful.

Organisers working with Aspect schools have focused on recruitment in this space and we hope to see a positive wage outcome for members.

Member support

Organisers working in the IEU undertake complex work in supporting individual members every day.

Members are represented throughout child protection allegations, disciplinary matters, performance, code of conduct and bullying, to name but a few.

The work undertaken by organisers in this space must be acknowledged. This work is of critical importance to the union in terms of both recruitment and retention. We also thank reps who have supported members in these matters.

Membership growth

Stride to Grow 2030 presents new opportunities for the union to focus resources on organising and target strategies that facilitate growth.

The year has been about consolidation, review and building strong structures for the union into the future.

The IEU continues to maintain positive recruitment across all sectors of the union.

Our goal for 2026 is to continue to target recruitment, while undertaking a stronger examination of where the union must invest resources to ensure we do not lose members, particularly those in their first two years of membership.

Therese Fitzgibbon
Organising Coordinator

Tertiary initiatives

The university engagement and recruitment team continues its role in supporting students, building relationships with universities and laying the foundations for future union growth.

This year has been characterised by renewed on-campus activity, strong student engagement, and successful initiatives to encourage the next generation of union members.

Organisers have been active across campuses, with a particular focus on Western Sydney University (WSU), University of Sydney, University of NSW and University of Notre Dame.

Engagement included information stalls, faculty-based presentations and targeted outreach to students in education programs.

The union currently has more than 250 student members. This year, 116 students signed up for membership at our major campus events, demonstrating both a renewed interest in unionism and the impact of maintaining a consistent presence.

The team also prioritised building relationships with education faculty staff to ensure the IEU remains visible and accessible to students during their professional preparation.

Many of the students we met are already working casually in schools, raising important conversations about rights, conditions and early exposure to union support.

The team delivered tailored sessions on workplace rights, professional responsibilities and transitioning into the profession.

These sessions were positively received, with students valuing practical advice about contracts, entitlements and workload expectations.

It was particularly encouraging to see many students already understood the importance of collective action, with several noting their interest in becoming active members and workplace representatives once they commence teaching.

The flagship event for 2025 was the combined stall and presentation day at WSU, where the team partnered with staff and faculty to reach hundreds of students.

Alongside recruitment, we facilitated discussions on casualisation in education, highlighting the importance of timely union engagement.

The team also trialled new outreach formats at smaller university campuses, including informal drop-in sessions and digital engagement strategies.

Feedback indicates a mix of face-to-face and online resources provides the best accessibility for students balancing study, work and practicum requirements.

The team is preparing for the 2026 academic year by:

- reviewing its presence at regional campuses
- strengthening ties with practicum coordinators to embed union information into placements
- supporting student members in transitioning to full membership once they commence employment, and
- developing a clearer student representative network to encourage stronger peer-to-peer engagement.

Luke Breen, Peter Criticos, Josef Dabbs, Jennifer Tait
University Engagement and Recruitment team

Membership statistics

Member type/school category	
Teachers	
Early Childhood Centres	979
ELICOS/Business Colleges	194
Miscellaneous/IEU	51
Non-Systemic Schools	8,379
Principals	547
Systemic Schools	14,227
Unemployed/LWOP/Parental/Retire/Life	1,376
Without Category	240
Subtotal	25,993
Support Staff	
Early Childhood Centres	47
ELICOS/Business Colleges	34
Miscellaneous/IEU	22
Non Systemic Schools	1,464
Systemic Schools	3,057
Unemployed/LWOP/Parental/Retire/Life	78
Without Category	23
Subtotal	4,725
Students	
Students	256
Subtotal	256
Total members	30,974

Members by classification	
Classification	Number of Members
Teacher	
Full-time	17,280
Part-time	5,927
Casual/extended casual	1,404
LWOP/parental leave	568
Unemployed	157
Retired	643
Support staff	
Full-time	2,110
Part-time	2,470
Casual	71
LWOP/parental leave	21
Unemployed	18
Retired	39
Trainee	1
Exempt from dues	
Students	256
Life members	9
Total members	30,974

Members and schools by branch

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Workplaces by category

Systemic schools	619
Non-systemic schools	598
ELICOS/Business colleges	556
Early childhood centres	4734
Miscellaneous/IEU	5

Workplace visits by category

Systemic schools	706
Non-systemic schools	530
ELICOS/Business colleges	48
Early childhood centres	96
Total workplace visits	1,380

Statistics 01/10/2024 to 01/10/2025

Support and operational staff

Catholic systemic schools

The Catholic diocesan employers and the union are currently renegotiating the *NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2024*.

The proposed agreement covers nine dioceses, with a separate EA already concluded for Broken Bay diocese and a carve out of the main agreement for Parramatta diocese progressing alongside the main EA.

Despite reaching agreement around establishing pay equivalency with NSW government schools for many non-teaching roles in 2023, the July 2025 wage increases for NSW public sector employees are yet to be implemented by Catholic diocesan employers.

There is an in-principle agreement for the rates to be applied with back pay but not until the new EA is made.

The Broken Bay EA was finalised towards the end of 2024, with the rates maintaining a premium of 1.5% above those in other dioceses and NSW government schools.

It is anticipated that the Parramatta EA will mirror the main EA.

The union and Catholic diocesan employers agreed on changes to the classification structure and translocation arrangements by way of an interim settlement that was formalised in the *NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2023*, which was ratified on 21 December 2023.

However, the union is still addressing matters where employers failed to correctly translocate some senior administrative employees in small regional schools, as well as moving employees to the new Aboriginal Education Officer classifications.

Given the complexity of the translocation and back pay calculations, significant delays were experienced in receiving back pay.

Many members sought the assistance of union officers to assess their back pay and ensure

they were correctly reclassified, with some administrative staff members seeking assistance to apply for reclassification to Level 5.

Independent schools

Negotiations between the union and AIS continued in the latter half of 2024 for replacement agreements for support staff working in independent schools in NSW and the ACT.

The *NSW Independent Schools (Professional and Operational Staff) Cooperative Enterprise Agreement* was finalised in the FWC in April 2025.

The EA covers 234 schools, incorporating schools that previously operated under the MEA, Christian Schools MEA, single EAs and the modern award.

The parties undertook a significant reworking of the classification structure, providing a consistent and clear classifications framework, while maintaining 10 separate occupational groups.

The union also achieved some measures to address the significant pay disparity across all occupational streams when compared to the same roles in other schools across the government and non-government sectors.

Learning support staff working in schools for specific purposes were an area of focus during bargaining, with the introduction of incremental salary steps within classification levels and annual increases for 2026 and 2027 at a greater percentage than other occupational groups.

Concerns for these members include work health and safety and supervision requirements where teachers are not present. The union continues to campaign around these issues for learning support roles in Aspect schools and satellite classes throughout NSW.

The *ACT Professional and Operational Staff Agreement 2025* was more straightforward – the only major change to the classification structure was the inclusion of wellbeing employees in roles such as counsellors and psychologists for the first time.

Bargaining for support staff members is ongoing in independent Catholic schools, Seventh-day Adventist schools and several diocesan offices.

For details of these agreements please see the Industrial annexure.

Changes to the *Fair Work Act* in December 2023 introduced a two-year limit to the use of fixed-term contracts for the same position, except in some narrowly defined circumstances.

These legislative changes also limit the use of successive temporary contracts. This has resulted in many members, especially those working in learning support roles attached to defined funding, gaining job stability and security through permanent appointments.

Member participation

Activist support staff members continue to provide guidance and support to officers about addressing the industrial and professional needs of non-teacher members, regularly informing union officers about issues as they arise.

Seven support staff members have been elected to the IEU Council and there are two support staff members on the IEU Executive.

There are 120 support staff reps, six of whom are Indigenous. These reps support members and promote the union. Numerous support staff reps have participated in reps training sessions.

World Support Staff Day

International World Support Staff Day is celebrated annually on 16 May. Union members were encouraged to celebrate the vital role support staff play in their school.

This year's theme was safe and secure work for those working in undervalued and insecure roles.

The IEU acknowledged the day for members in a video message, focusing on how teaching and learning could not happen without the hard work and dedication of support staff, and how our members are making a difference in their schools by becoming informed, active and engaged.

In Port Macquarie, 27 support staff from a range of roles and schools across the mid north coast held a social event to celebrate World Support Staff Day.

Organised by Tracy Bancroft and Vickye McKechnie, the event created space for connection, recognition and solidarity – and laid the groundwork for future activities, including a second gathering planned for December.

Tracy and Vickye's leadership has been central to re-energising support staff engagement across the region.

Communications

Articles on matters relevant to our support staff members are featured in editions of *Newsmonth* and *IE*.

Social media is one of the primary tools for communication. As well as the IEU's Facebook page, the Facebook group for support staff members has seen some growth and significant activity over the last year.

The group currently has 485 members. It is an invaluable way to communicate directly with our support staff members, allowing for quick distribution of information.

The format also allows the sharing by members of their stories and experiences. It also enables them to ask questions and access information directly from the union in a safe and supportive format.

The group's administrators produce content, refer matters and seek advice from other officers.

Membership

Membership data shows an increase in support staff members, with an additional 24 members in 2024-25, including a significant rise in members working in diocesan education offices.

Support staff membership data at the time of publication were:

Category	NSW/ACT
Systemic schools	2869
Independent schools	1363
Christian schools	62
ECEC	41
English & business colleges	34
CEO offices	166
Other/retired members	105
Total	4640

On 15 August 2025, there were 4606 support staff members – 15 per cent of the union's overall membership.

Carolyn Moore Industrial Officer

Early childhood education and care (ECEC)

Professional engagement ECEC Council

The ECEC Council met four times in the past 12 months. Discussions at this year's meetings focused on workforce shortages, increasing workloads, preschool supported bargaining and the Unite for Change campaign.

Congratulations to our successful nominees Melinda Gambley (North Coast - Clunes Community Preschool), Jodie Wiggins (Mid North Coast - St Joseph's Early Learning), Jane Courtney (South Coast - Tathra Preschool), Megan Parkes (Hunter Valley - KU Kintaiba Early Learning), Amy Martin (Busy Bees - Killarney Heights), Michelle Thompson (Shore Preparatory Preschool) and Sonia Sohail (Treehouse Early Childhood Centre).

We also bid farewell to Phillipa Maher (Valla Community Preschool), Elizabeth Price (Gloucester Preschool) and Natalie Oldenburg (Busy Bees) who will not be returning to Council.

ACECQA

Organiser Lisa James and Assistant Federal Secretary Veronica Yewdall met with ACECQA to raise members' concerns regarding the assessment ratings process under the National Quality Framework, including excessive and duplicative documentation, underqualified assessors without experience in early childhood settings, inflexible and unreasonable deadlines, and flawed reports completed by the NSW Regulatory Authority.

As a result, ACECQA revised their training for authorised officers to include the fact sheets on educational program/documentation that were developed in consultation with the IEU.

NSW Regulatory Authority

Lisa James, Veronica Yewdall and Secretary Carol Matthews participated in quarterly meetings with the NSW Education Department's Early Childhood Directorate including Sharon Gudu (executive director, NSW ECEC Regulatory Authority),

Nicholas Backo (director, Statewide Operations Network and relieving executive director) and Laura Dawson (director, communications and engagement team ECEC).

Topics of discussion included the ongoing training of authorised officers, concerns regarding workloads, difficulties in attracting and retaining teachers, 'under the roof' ratios, challenges with the uploading of information to the NSW Regulatory Authority portal, child protection and the investigation process.

Also discussed were recommendations from the NSW parliamentary inquiry into ECEC and the Wheeler Review.

Carol Matthews met Upper House MP Abigail Boyd regarding Standing Order 52, which allows the NSW Legislative Council to order the production of government documents. The union requested that names of individual teachers and educators not be released in documents relating to breaches of the national regulations.

NSW parliamentary inquiry into ECEC

Carol Matthews, Lisa James and member Janene Rox gave evidence at a hearing of the inquiry on 13 August at NSW Parliament House in Sydney.

The inquiry was established in March after media reports of child abuse and mistreatment in early childhood settings. The IEU's submission to the inquiry included 25 recommendations on pay and conditions, work health and safety, prioritising relationships with children over excessive documentation, staff-child ratios, funding for children with additional needs and improving the safety and wellbeing of children.

There needs to be ongoing support and funding for providers that demonstrate the best outcomes for children - that is, not-for-profit providers.

Without pay and conditions comparable to those offered to primary school teachers, it will be challenging to stem the sector's chronic workforce shortages.

Churning out more teachers by rushing them through shortened degrees is not the solution.

Only 30 per cent of early childhood teacher graduates choose to work in the sector, and so many of those who commence employment end up leaving the profession.

NSW ALP Education and Skills Committee

Industrial Officer Michael Aird and Organiser Lisa James were invited to speak at the NSW ALP Education and Skills Committee meeting on 8 July.

Lisa spoke about the IEU's submission to the ECEC inquiry and Michael detailed the lack of progress in the preschool supported bargaining case due to the reluctance of the NSW government to provide funding to improve salaries and conditions in community-based preschools.

Committee Chair Denise McHugh drafted the following motion:

That the Tamworth Branch of the Australian Labor Party:

1. Acknowledges the critical role of early childhood teachers and educators in supporting children's development, education, and wellbeing.
2. Calls on the NSW and federal Labor governments to:
 - deliver pay parity between early childhood educators and their school-based counterparts
 - reduce excessive paperwork and compliance burdens to allow more meaningful time with children
 - reform the funding model to prioritise not-for-profit and community-based providers over for-profit operators
 - improve support for children with additional needs through increased targeted funding and professional development
 - strengthen oversight and regulation of the sector, ensuring fair workplace practices and consistent, qualified assessment processes
 - enforce compliance to protect educators from underpayment, unsafe conditions, and exploitative employment practices.
3. Affirms that public funding in early childhood education should support quality, equity, and workforce wellbeing – not profit at the expense of children or staff.

NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

Lisa James is the IEU representative on the NESA Early Childhood Reference Group. Responsibilities include attending meetings and consulting on reforms to teacher accreditation, including the introduction of the new maintenance of accreditation and HALT policies.

IEU national ECEC meeting

Lisa James attended a meeting on ECEC facilitated by the union's federal office on 12 August 2025.

Topics included:

- the status of federal ECEC reforms and professional issues
- emerging ECEC union coverage issues
- developments in ECEC multi-employer bargaining
- options in our sector to access the ECEC WRP.

University presentations

Tina Smith was asked to present to third year (leadership and management class) and final year (workplace rights and responsibilities, pay and conditions) early childhood students at the University of Sydney. Dr Erin Harper said our presentations are "incredibly popular".

ECEC supported bargaining - NSW preschools MEA

The union launched a campaign in 2024 for better pay and conditions for teachers and educators in community-based preschools across NSW.

Since the campaign's launch 103 NSW community preschools have been named on the supported bargaining application.

The application was filed in July 2024, with the first FWC hearing held in August 2024.

A year on, the case remains before the FWC, with the most recent conference held on 20 August 2025, led by Deputy President Judith Wright.

Attending on behalf of the IEU were Organiser Kate Damo, Industrial Officer Michael Aird and IEU preschool ambassadors Janene Rox (Cronulla Preschool Kindergarten), Melinda Gambley (Clunes Community Preschool), Jodie Cox (East Maitland Preschool), Margaret Gleeson (Keiraville Community Preschool), Bridget Isichei (Byron Bay Preschool) and Raelee Smith (Muswellbrook Preschool).

The August conference was also attended by representatives from Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) and the NSW government.

Deputy President Wright instructed the NSW government to formally respond to the detailed case studies and contentions provided by the union and CELA.

Disappointingly, the NSW government has not altered its position, continuing to refuse to fund a supported bargaining EA for preschools.

The NSW government continues to assert that current funding is adequate, despite the IEU and CELA presenting evidence that the model fails to support professional recognition, the attraction and retention of teachers and educators, and the long-term sustainability of dedicated preschool services.

The union strongly rejects this position and maintains that the NSW government cannot continue to evade the funding issue while relying on empty rhetoric.

The IEU and preschool ambassadors have been escalating action, with the following initiatives:

- parliamentary lobbying days: 10-11 September 2025
- local campaigning: Ambassadors are lobbying local MPs and encouraging preschools listed on the supported bargaining application to contact their state representatives seeking support for pay increases
- campaign events:
 - member information session (via Zoom) - Wednesday 27 August 2025
 - morning tea hosted by Independent MP Roy Butler in support of the campaign - Tuesday 14 October 2025
 - Day of Action for preschools - Wednesday 15 October 2025.



IEU preschool ambassadors at the Fair Work Commission in July. From left: Jodie Cox, Margaret Gleeson, Melinda Gambley, Raelee Smith and Janene Rox.

Supported bargaining - long day care MEA

The union attended case conferences throughout 2024 to negotiate a supported bargaining agreement with the representatives of 63 employers, including G8 Education, CELA and ABL (representing the Australian Childcare Alliance).

On 7 August, the Commonwealth government announced funding for a 15% pay increase (10% from December 2024 and a further 5% from December 2025) for teachers and educators in long day care services.

The *Long Day Care Multi-Employer Agreement* was approved by the FWC in December 2024. Teachers and educators received a 10% pay increase backdated to 2 December 2024, a 3.5% increase from 1 July 2025 and will receive a further Commonwealth-funded 5% increase from 1 December 2025.

There are currently more than 500 employers and 46,000 employees covered by the MEA, a significant increase on the original 63 employers.

For more details, see the Industrial annexure.

ECEC WRP project

The union has received approximately \$700,000 in federal funding under the Workforce Retention Program (WRP) to employ staff in a project to assist children's services to access WRP funding.

The IEU has employed three staff members who have been contacting long day care services and out of school hours services to ensure that services are aware of the steps they need to take to access the funding - specifically coming under the Early Childhood Education and Care Multi-Employer Agreement 2024-2026 or making another industrial instrument that secures the funding for employee wages.

The three staff employed in the project commenced in March this year and will continue until June 2026 and are doing a great job reaching out to employers, including some that may not be union friendly.

KU Children's Services Teachers Enterprise Agreement 2024-2026

More than 12 months after agreement was reached with KU, the IEU lodged a dispute with the FWC because we had still not received a finalised draft

of the EA. KU provided a draft within two days of the dispute notification.

The EA was finally voted on by employees and approved in July 2025. Members are enjoying 4% annual increases to salaries and allowances, Director's office time is increased to a minimum of two days per week plus 15 discretionary days per year to complete enrolments, funding applications and centre accreditation documentation.

Educational leaders receive four hours per week non-contact time and teachers' programming/ planning time increased to five hours per week.

Also included are two child-free days per year, five days paid leave for declared disasters and five days paid leave for declared pandemics, two days of paid cultural leave for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, up to 15 weeks paid parental leave and a 20 per cent discount on the gap fee for employees' children attending KU long day care centres.

Goodstart Early Learning Enterprise Agreement 2024

After a lengthy bargaining process, the *Goodstart Early Learning EA* was finalised in December 2024, with new provisions that better reflect members' evolving workplace needs.

The Goodstart EA covers 16,000 teachers and educators in more than 650 centres across Australia.

Key improvements in the EA include:

Pay increases

- pay rates now sit 10% above the Award (funded by the federal government, plus a 5% premium paid by Goodstart)
- from 2025 onwards, employees will receive an additional 5% increase or the annual wage review increase (whichever is greater) each calendar year of the agreement.

Annual leave

- the threshold for directing employees to take annual leave has been lifted from six weeks to eight weeks
- employees can now cash out up to four weeks of annual leave per year (previously limited to two weeks), provided a balance of four weeks is maintained.



Clockwise, from above: IEU Preschool Ambassador Melinda Gambley and Assistant Secretary Amanda Hioe; IEU member Trudy Beale, IEU Organiser Tina Smith and Campbelltown MP Greg Warren at Bradbury Preschool; the Start Strong, Pay Fair campaign at Gumnut Preschool in Bowral.



Educational leader's allowance

- teachers who are educational leaders will advance one step above their classified step
- teachers already at the top of the classification structure will receive an allowance of \$2.24 per hour in addition to their base rate.

Holiday leave trial

- a trial between Christmas and New Year 2024 will encourage families to self-select to keep children at home. Evaluation due by June 2025
- employees can choose to take leave over this period, with written confirmation they will not be refused if applying, nor compelled to take leave if they choose not to.

New types of leave

- grandparent leave: Up to 52 weeks unpaid leave for employees caring for grandchildren following birth or adoption (effective 1 July 2025)
- reproductive Leave: Up to five unpaid days per year for reproductive health issues (eg IVF, menstrual disorders)
- gender transition leave: Up to 52 weeks unpaid leave for employees undergoing gender transition (effective 1 July 2025).

Parental leave enhancements

- stillbirth leave: Permanent employees remain entitled to the full paid parental leave period
- pregnancy loss leave: Permanent employees entitled to three days of paid leave.

These improvements represent significant progress in pay equity, workplace fairness, and staff wellbeing.

SDN Enterprise Agreement 2025

The SDN EA includes 3% annual pay increases for preschool teachers and educators. Long day care teachers and educators will receive the 15% Commonwealth-funded pay increase.

The EA includes four hours of non-contact time per week for teachers and educational leaders and one day for the completion of Transition to School Statements, as well as paid parental leave of up to 12 weeks.

Pro-rata long service leave will be accessible and paid out on termination after five years of service.

The practicum supervision allowance will be paid to the supervising teacher and SDN will facilitate improved access to professional development. The SDN EA was voted up by 93 per cent of employees and approved by the FWC in July 2025.

Western Sydney University Early Learning Limited (WSUELL) Enterprise Agreement 2025

Approved on 14 July 2025, the WSUELL EA includes a 4% increase in August 2025, 3% in August 2026 and 3% in August 2027, in addition to the ECEC WRP 10% backdated to 2 December 2024 and further 5% from 1 December 2025. An educational leader allowance has been included for the first time.

Teachers will receive one additional paid day of leave during the end of year closedown, 17 days of personal leave per year, an increase in long service leave to 10 weeks after 10 years of service and up to 14 weeks of paid parental leave at the minimum wage rate. In addition, Transition to School statements will be completed during work hours and 16 hours of non-contact time will be provided to provisional teachers to assist them to gain Proficient Teacher accreditation.



More than 1000 early childhood teachers and educators, parents, children and supporters gathered in Martin Place, Sydney on 15 October as part of the IEU's Start Strong, Pay Fair campaign.

YALC Enterprise Agreement

The IEU reached agreement with YALC on their first enterprise agreement on 1 May 2025.

The EA includes a 10% government funded increase to salaries backdated to 2 December 2024 with a further 5% from 1 December 2025.

Teachers will be paid overtime for attendance at staff meetings, training and parent "meet & greets" held outside normal work hours.

Teacher centre managers will receive 12 "benefit days" per year, an additional form of paid leave.

A loyalty bonus will be paid to employees for achieving continuous employment milestones: \$250 (one year), \$500 (three years) \$2,000 (five years) and \$4,000 (10 years). Teachers will have a 30-minute paid lunch break plus a 20-minute paid tea break.

The EA was voted up by 97% of employees and approved by the FWC in June 2025.

Member Support

NSW Health long day care centres

Members raised concern with their employer in September 2024 that teachers were being underpaid by South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD).

No progress was made despite several discussions, prompting members to ask the IEU for direct assistance.

The IEU wrote to the employer in October 2024. NSW Health responded that teachers had always worked 8.5 hour shifts (incorrect), signing in and out each day constituted a written agreement that teachers would work 8.5 hour shifts with an unpaid meal break (incorrect), and the IEU needed to prove no agreement had been made for unpaid meal breaks (this was not supported by the wording in the award).

A dispute was lodged with the NSW IRC in March 2025, with NSW Health arguing that even

if teachers are entitled to a paid meal break, it would not agree to back pay. Commissioner Muir indicated that if teachers were entitled to a paid meal but had not been paid for their break, they would be entitled to back pay.

The parties subsequently reached a settlement, totalling \$63,381 on behalf of four members who were not paid for their lunch breaks.

Unfortunately, SESLHD are still refusing to back pay a member who no longer works at the centre. In early 2024, two other local health districts agreed to back pay members for unpaid meal breaks in their centres.

Campaigns

G8 Education - petition for paid parental leave

G8 has more than 400 centres Australia-wide and recorded a profit of \$65 million in 2024, according to its annual report.

The lack of employer-funded parental leave exacerbates financial challenges after the birth of a child and forces mothers to return to work sooner than they would like.

It also perpetuates the 'motherhood penalty', which sees mothers earn \$2 million less in lifetime earnings when compared to fathers.

Federal Secretary Brad Hayes attended the G8 AGM held on 29 April in Brisbane. Brad presented the signed IEU's petition in support of shareholder lobby group SIX's resolution calling on G8 to provide paid parental leave for teachers and educators. Almost 30 per cent of shareholders voted in favour of the introduction of paid parental leave at G8. This unfortunately fell short of the majority required and was not adopted by the board.

Kate Damo, Lisa James, Tina Smith Organisers

Principals

The IEU thanks all principal members for their unwavering support and engagement over the past year.

Once again, principals have carried significant responsibility, guiding schools through the evolving educational landscape while balancing the needs of staff, students, parents and broader communities.

Although 2025 has not seen the disruptions of the height of COVID, its legacy continues to shape the work of school leaders.

Pressures from staffing shortages, wellbeing concerns and increasing compliance requirements have been compounded by the ongoing financial and social impacts of the pandemic years.

Within this challenging context, the Principals Sub Branch has remained a strong, active and collective voice for leaders in Catholic systemic, Catholic independent and other independent schools across NSW and the ACT.

Sub branch activity and meetings

The Principals Sub Branch continued to meet regularly, providing a vital space for principals to share experiences, develop strategies and ensure their perspectives influence broader union decision-making.

- **AGM:** Held on 22 February, the AGM reaffirmed members' commitment to mutual support and professional advancement.
- **Regular meetings:** Hybrid meetings on 17 May and 2 August ensured strong participation from both metropolitan and regional dioceses.
- **Executive leadership:** The union sincerely thanks sub branch Executive members Chris Egan, Niamh Marzol, Noeleen O'Neill, and Silvana Rossetti for their leadership. Special recognition goes to Noeleen O'Neill for her dual role as a delegate to IEU Council and her ongoing advocacy for principals.

Particular appreciation is extended to Anthony Weir, who concluded more than a decade of service to the sub branch.

Anthony's dedication leaves a lasting legacy, and the union acknowledges his tireless advocacy for principals in Sydney Catholic Schools.

IEU officers and Executive members continued contributing to sub branch meetings, ensuring strong alignment between diocesan initiatives and union-wide campaigns.

Assistant Secretary Amanda Hioe's updates on the industrial landscape for principals have been particularly valued.

Professional learning and networking

Over the past year, principals participated in a range of IEU activities and professional learning opportunities, reinforcing leadership skills and contributing to the Catholic education community.

The principals delegation – Anthony Weir, David Crawford, Niamh Marzol and Noeleen O'Neill – attended Council meetings regularly, providing informed perspectives on issues of local and national significance and helping shape union policy and advocacy.

The 2025 Association of Catholic School Principals (ACSP) conference in the Hunter Valley gathered more than 350 Catholic primary principals to reflect on evolving leadership roles.

The IEU proudly sponsored the Welcome Event, connecting with members in attendance.

ACSP President Iris Nastasi highlighted the impact of values-driven leadership, while Catholic Schools NSW Chief Executive Dallas McInerney reaffirmed the importance of principals' voices in governance and announced a leadership program to address generational gaps.

The latest wellbeing survey revealed rising workloads, administrative pressures and mental health challenges, while also highlighting principals' resilience and dedication.

Across three days of professional learning, spiritual renewal and collegial connection, participants explored how courageous, values-based leadership equips students to navigate today's complex social and cultural environment.

Australian Primary Principals Day on 1 August celebrated principals' essential work, with the IEU highlighting members' contributions through social media.

Headlines eNews, launched in 2016, continued to provide timely updates and professional insights. This year's *Headlines* included interviews with Natalie Devenish, principal of St Dominic's College, Kingswood and long-serving IEU member Elizabeth O'Callaghan OAM, reflecting on careers and leadership experiences.

Key themes such as workload, wellbeing and sustaining effective leadership were consistently explored, offering practical guidance and inspiration.

Principal members also contributed to *Newsmonth* and *IE*, sharing experiences and insights, further strengthening the union's role as a hub for professional learning and collegial support.

EA negotiations

A major focus this year has been preparation for the 2025 Catholic systemic Principals EA negotiations. Principal members have played a vital role in shaping the IEU's claim across the three relevant industrial instruments.

Key issues identified include:

- **Wellbeing:** Genuine employer commitment, mentoring programs, and dedicated resourcing for wellbeing initiatives.
- **Classification and remuneration:** Addressing anomalies in salary bands that disadvantage principals moving between schools.
- Protecting principals during school closures, amalgamations, or restructures through consultation and salary maintenance.
- Recognising the complexity of school leadership, including P-12 settings, early learning, VET, special needs and before/after school care.
- Reviewing the 10-year ceiling on principalship at one school within Sydney Catholic Schools.
- **Compliance:** Clearer identification of compliance requirements, with consultation before new initiatives are introduced.
- **Professional growth:** Ensuring consistent access to professional learning, renewal programs, and sabbatical opportunities across dioceses.

Independent schools

The IEU's principal membership has grown in Catholic independent and other independent schools, including Christian, Islamic, and special needs schools.

Over the past year, the union supported principals in:

- interpreting and enforcing industrial provisions
- clarifying contracts and appointment letters
- navigating governance challenges with school boards and councils
- managing workload expectations
- addressing restructuring and redundancy matters.

A dedicated Zoom forum for independent school principals is scheduled for October, focusing on employment security, workload, and broader education policy.

Employment security and disputes

Employment security continues to be a pressing concern.

Discussions with Catholic dioceses, the Association of Independent Schools and the Christian schools sector addressed appraisal processes, contract renewals and fair dispute resolution.

The IEU intervened in several individual disputes this year, with outcomes including:

- continuation in current roles with support
- appointment to alternative principal positions
- transfer to other leadership roles with salary maintenance
- access to leave or financial settlements.

The union consistently advocates for fair, transparent processes while resisting inappropriate use of wellbeing surveys and the AITSL Principal Standard for disciplinary purposes.

Valuing principals

At every stage, the IEU has reaffirmed that principals are central to school and community success.

They carry responsibility for both teaching and learning and the wellbeing of staff, students, and families.

The sub branch has provided vital solidarity for principals facing challenges from staffing shortages, parental behaviour, financial pressures, and increasing compliance burdens.

The union deeply values its principal members' leadership, who advocate not only for themselves but also for their staff and communities.

IEU work across industrial, professional, and policy fronts reflects the strength of this partnership.

Looking ahead

As 2025 progresses, the IEU remains committed to:

- finalising systemic Principal EA negotiations
- expanding support for independent school principals
- continuing to challenge unnecessary compliance burdens and unfair workloads
- advocating for genuine professional recognition, including pathways for renewal, professional learning, and career sustainability.

Whatever challenges lie ahead, the IEU stands ready to work alongside principals to protect, support, and enhance their role as leaders in schools and communities.

Lyn Caton Principals Organiser/Assistant Secretary

ELICOS

Post-secondary education takes in a wide range of sectors, including ELICOS (English language colleges), business colleges, VET schools, community colleges and other private providers.

Many of these educational facilities focus exclusively on the international student market, while others serve more domestic markets.

International students

It was a difficult year for the post-secondary education sector, especially for those centres more deeply involved with international students.

Student arrivals boomed in the aftermath of the pandemic, with pent-up demand seeing numbers surge from around 300,000 at the end of 2022 to well over half-a-million by the end of 2023.

The federal government introduced restrictions in 2024 to limit student arrivals, which took effect this year.

Overall numbers remain robust, but a sharp downturn in commencements indicate that the pipeline is slowing.

Engaging with members

IEU membership remains stable, with 223 members as of August, an overall increase of 11 members on this time last year.

The bulk of IEU members are clustered in the ELICOS (English-language teaching) area, though vocational college membership continues to edge up.

Since 2024, IEU officers have taken a more pro-active approach to engaging with the sector, making several right-of-entry visits to various colleges to talk about the benefits of IEU membership and seek feedback from staff about how best to serve the sector.

These calls have had some effect, with some new members joining after these visits.

The bulk of IEU membership in the sector remains at the large colleges, primarily UTS College, UNSW College, Taylors College, and Navitas Skilled Futures.

The union has been able to engage with members at each of these colleges in 2025, with enterprise bargaining taking place at most of these centres (see Industrial annexure for details about these agreements).

Sadly, the sector is still rife with concerning practices by employers, and the IEU has assisted several members with unfair dismissal and general protections claims.

The IEU has also chased up several underpayments on behalf of members.

Given how close to the wind some colleges sail in regard to industrial obligations, this element of IEU work will remain ongoing.

Kendall Warren Organiser

Child protection

Child protection cases

For the period September 2024 to September 2025, there were 80 child protection cases finalised by the IEU.

Increases in the number of reportable conduct notifications in NSW and ACT highlights the importance of members familiarising themselves, and complying, with the obligations detailed in their employment contract, employer policies and current NSW/ACT child protection legislation.

Members are reminded that while confidentiality must always be maintained in any child protection investigation, they are not prevented from contacting their IEU organiser to seek confidential advice, support and representation in their matter.

NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme

Data from the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) annual report 2023-24 shows there were 2405 reportable conduct notifications.

The education sector accounted for 43 per cent (1026 of 2405) of notifications, with 30 per cent of these (380 of 1026) from the ECEC sector.

Non-government independent schools had 144 notifications and Catholic systemic schools had 127, which represented a 52 per cent increase in reportable conduct notifications.

Most notifications from schools (58 per cent) involved allegations of a sexual nature. The schools sector has been impacted by the increase in historical allegations arising from civil and national redress scheme claims (most of which involved sexual offences).

The IEU has successfully sought the intervention of the OCG on several occasions relating to relevant entity investigations into reportable conduct allegations.

The OCG attended to 52 complaints relating to relevant entity investigations. Complaints that met the threshold of a reportable conduct complaint, were consistent with those made in previous years, specifically:

- a failure to notify a reportable allegation
- inadequacy in the risk assessment or the risk management action taken, or related communication with involved parties
- the length of time for an investigation, or
- a failure to provide procedural fairness.

Relevant entities are required to provide a response to any OCG recommendations made relating to a complaint received in the investigation of reportable conduct allegations.

ACT Reportable Conduct Scheme

During Quarter 1 and 2 of 2024-25, the ACT Ombudsman received 114 reportable conduct notifications from designated entities.

The largest number of notifications (40) came from both government and non-government schools, with 18 from the ECEC sector.

During the ACT Reportable Conduct Practitioners Forum held in mid-November 2024, the ACT Ombudsman reported allegations presented to any employee at the start of an investigation into reportable conduct should explain the scope of the investigation and clearly describe the alleged behaviour by:

- setting out specific incidents of observable behaviour in clear, objective language
- stating when and where the behaviour is alleged to have happened
- separating multiple incidents so that each can be tested on its own
- avoiding terms or descriptions that require the employee or witnesses to interpret their meaning when providing a response.

The ACT Ombudsman received four complaints relating to the ACT Reportable Conduct Scheme. The ACT Ombudsman cannot override a designated entity's decision or compel them to follow any comments or recommendations made.

NSW Working with Children Check

To further strengthen the NSW Working with Children Check (WWCC), on 5 August 2025 the NSW government introduced the *Child Protection (Working with Children) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025* into Parliament to amend legislation including the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* and *Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010*.

Key changes include:

- the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) no longer being responsible for reviewing WWCC decisions

- the OCG through an expert advisory panel will be responsible for reviewing WWCC decisions
- an approved ECEC provider must ensure that a person who has applied for but has not yet been granted a WWCC clearance does not remain at the premises while children are being educated and cared for.

Russell Schokman Policy Advisor

Professional engagement

In 2025, the IEU strengthened its commitment to members by advancing the professional voice of teachers, continuing our advocacy to reduce workload pressures and presenting tailored professional development (PD).

Our focus has remained clear: strengthening the voice of the profession while ensuring equitable, practical and sustainable conditions for members.

Engagement with peak bodies

This year the IEU continued its active engagement with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and other peak bodies.

Our submissions on the Teacher Accreditation Manual and Professional Experience Policy emphasised two key principles: restoring the professional voice of teachers and addressing workload concerns.

On professional experience, we advocated for meaningful support for pre-service teachers and conditionally accredited teachers.

Specifically, for conditionally accredited teachers, we recommended up to 0.4 FTE release from face-to-face teaching to ensure teachers can complete course requirements, alongside appropriate release time for mentors and coaches.

This position reinforced our broader campaign for realistic, sustainable workloads and meaningful pathways in the profession.

For the first time, the IEU has been represented on the Non-Government Schools Not-For-Profit Advisory Committee, which provides advice to the Minister on compliance by schools with section 83C of the *Education Act*.

Professional development

Over the past year, the IEU also delivered a series of PD courses designed to meet the evolving needs of members.

These sessions were informed by data collected from attendee feedback forms, ensuring our offerings remain relevant, responsive and impactful.

By listening directly to delegates, we have been able to identify priority areas and provide learning experiences that address the many challenges in education.

Centre for Educational Measurement and Assessment (CEMA)

In partnership with Dr Jim Tognolini and the University of Sydney's Centre for Educational Measurement and Assessment, we delivered four courses in 2025, attended by members across sectors. These courses are designed to build assessment literacy and strengthen teachers' capacity to make valid, reliable and equitable judgements about student learning.

The courses were:

- *Foundations of assessment literacy* – empowering teachers to design tasks that capture student learning and use evidence effectively.
- *Creating consistent and effective rubrics* – practical strategies for developing rubrics to monitor growth and ensure consistency.
- *Fairness and validity in assessment* – understanding and mitigating threats to validity to promote equity.
- *Consistent and comparable judgements* – strategies for minimising error and achieving reliability across whole schools.

The focus throughout was teacher-centred, practical and directly aligned with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

Support staff PD

At the start of the year, the IEU invested in tailored professional development for support staff.

Leadership and communication expert Beth Berghan delivered a workshop entitled *Effective strategies for workplace success: Strengthening communication for support staff*.

This program equipped participants with practical skills for assertive communication,

navigating difficult conversations and advocating for their professional needs.

Feedback highlighted the value of scenario-based learning, which tackled real workplace challenges in contexts such as classroom support, front office management and parent interactions.

The IEU is committed to ensuring professional development opportunities extend to all members of the school community, recognising the critical role support staff play in student learning and school culture.

Transforming difficult conversations

Members in schools and early childhood centres also had the opportunity to take part in *Transforming difficult conversations: Shifting from avoidance to alignment*, facilitated by leadership coach and Conversational Intelligence practitioner Sarah Moore.

This session equipped participants with neuroscience-based frameworks and practical tools to move from defensiveness to collaboration, strengthen professional relationships and build more cohesive workplaces.

Feedback shows members valued the immediate applicability of strategies to foster trust and improve communication.

Our kids & the digital world

In addition to these initiatives, members also engaged in *Our kids & the digital world: Insights, impacts & ideas for educators*, an online session facilitated by experienced teacher and founder of Inform & Empower, Marty McGauran.

The workshop unpacked the latest online trends, role of gaming and artificial intelligence in young people's lives. It also examined new legislation to restrict social media access to users aged 16 years and over. Participants valued the up-to-date insights and reported greater confidence in their understanding of online safety.

This session reinforced the importance of IEU members staying informed and advocating for safe and supportive learning communities.

Regulation: Theory & Practice

Continuing this focus on practical, classroom-ready support, members also took part in Regulation: Theory & Practice, an online session led by Chey Clinton and Olivia Kearney, co-founders of The Culture Collective.

The workshop explored the five domains of regulation: biological, emotional, cognitive, social and prosocial – and the common stressors that influence student behaviour.

Participants reported that the strategies shared gave them greater confidence in managing behaviour proactively, supporting student engagement and creating calmer, more connected learning environments.

Feedback also highlighted the value of strengthening educators' own self-regulation to remain constructive in challenging moments.

Beginning and early career teachers

Support for early career teachers has remained a priority, particularly as the challenges of workload and accreditation requirements persist.

The IEU continues to advocate for structured mentoring, reduced teaching loads and professional learning opportunities that address the realities of classroom practice.

Experienced/Accomplished Teacher accreditation

Support for Experienced/Accomplished Teacher accreditation has continued in 2025.

Eighty-five members given assistance in 2024 were successful in achieving Experienced Teacher accreditation.

The current AIS MEA has returned to a steps model and the Band 1, Band 2, Band 3 model has been replaced.

In the past, teachers remained on Band 2 – \$107,461 – and were required to undertake Experienced Teacher accreditation to move to Band 3 – \$122,765. This was a significant increase of \$15,304 in their salaries.

Under the new steps-based salary scale, teachers will be able to progress to the top pay scale, Step 2.5, currently \$127,281, without having to complete the ISTAA process. The Accomplished teacher allowance will attract an additional \$4979 on top of the Step 2.5 salary scale.

The evidence collection period was from February 2024 to August 2025.

Members were able to submit their portfolio between April and August and members who submitted early received their results quickly.

Members are now required to have evidence for 20 descriptors from Standards 1, 2, 3 and 5, including five descriptors that can be met by a classroom observation.

In addition, members may choose four descriptors that do not require evidence. Standards 4, 6 and 7 are met by a principal attestation.

Most schools have taken a sensible approach to this and have not required further documentation.

Accomplished Teacher accreditation is still complex and requires a large time commitment. Given the change in the salary scale, fewer teachers have undertaken the process this year.

Members who completed the accreditation commented that their reason was more about becoming an Accomplished Teacher and less about the allowance. They considered it was a positive move for their career, and the evidence was based on their classroom practice.

In 2025, the IEU assisted 45 members from the following schools: Al Sadiq College, Yagoona; Amity College, Leppington; Arndell College, Oakville; Aspect Riverina, Albury; Clarence Valley Anglican School, Grafton; The International French School, Maroubra; Frensham, Moss Vale; Malek Fahd, Greenacre & Horsley Park; Meriden School, Strathfield; McDonald College, Strathfield; Minarah College, Green Valley; Mount Annan Christian College, Mount Annan; Pittwater House, Collaroy; Queenwood, Mosman; Sapphire Coast Anglican College, Bega; SCEGGS Redlands; Scone Grammar; Scots College, Bellevue Hill; St Luke's Grammar School, Dee Why; St Scholastica's College, Glebe; Thomas Hassall Anglican College, Middleton Grange; Trinity Anglican College, Albury; Wollondilly Anglican College, Tahmoor.

IEU staff dashboard and internal systems

Investment in staff systems has continued, with enhancements to the IEU staff dashboard streamlining work processes and promoting a more professional image.

New automated tools have simplified tasks such as formatted chapter lists, sub branch reports and training attendance sheets.

Acknowledgement for much of the conceptual and technical work in improving this system goes to Trong Duong.

These improvements have reduced administrative burdens, allowing staff to focus on direct member support and advocacy.

Staff changes

In 2025, we farewell Max Furby, who has provided assistance in the Professional Engagement area since 2024.

Max's good nature and professionalism have been greatly valued, and we wish him every success in his future roles.

Pat Devery Professional Engagement Coordinator
Christina Ellul Professional Officer
Liz Finlay Professional Officer



The IEU reps training program provides workplace representatives with the knowledge, skills and confidence to advocate effectively for their colleagues.

Union training

The IEU reps training program has continued to attract strong participation from reps across NSW and the ACT.

The program equips workplace representatives with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to advocate effectively for their colleagues.

The training covers:

- understanding where working rights and obligations originate
- identifying what constitutes union business and opportunities for organising and recruitment
- supporting members, particularly when required to meet with a principal or employer
- building strong, active and well-organised chapters.

Alongside the practical skills, reps training provides an invaluable opportunity for networking. Participants can workshop issues and compare approaches with colleagues from other schools, strengthening collective knowledge and solidarity.

One of the major impacts we have seen this year is the positive effect of the federal government's delegates' rights legislation.

This legislation guarantees union representatives can access paid training leave during work hours, driving greater demand for courses while also reducing the financial burden on the union.

During negotiations for the Catholic systemic agreement, employers advised the union that they supported the reps training program, noting that

well-informed union reps help schools run more effectively.

Reps also benefit from enhanced rights and protections when representing members and communicating in the workplace.

IEU reps training sessions in 2025 have been well attended, with courses delivered in metropolitan, regional, and rural venues across NSW and the ACT.

A total of 196 reps undertook the training in 2025. These participation numbers continue to demonstrate the value of the program in building stronger, more confident workplace representatives.

We look forward to welcoming even more reps into training in the year ahead.

Pat Devery Professional Engagement Coordinator

Date	Targeted Sub Branches	Venue	Final Numbers
19 Feb	Central Coast, Central Metropolitan, Cumberland, Ku-ring-gai, Lansdowne, Metropolitan East, Northern Beaches, Northern Suburbs, Penrith/Blue Mountains, South Coast, Southern Suburbs	IEU Wattle St, Ultimo	22
28 Feb	Central Coast, Central Metropolitan, Cumberland, Lansdowne, Metropolitan East, Northern Beaches, Northern Suburbs, Penrith/Blue Mountains, South Coast, Southern Suburbs	IEU Wattle St, Ultimo	21
6 Mar	South Coast, Southern Suburbs	Sage Hotel, Wollongong	12
12 Mar	Mid North Coast	Westport Club, Port Macquarie	8
14 Mar	Hunter Valley/Newcastle	Noahs on the Beach, Newcastle	17
28 Mar	Monaro, South East	Quality Inn Dickson, Canberra	30
1 Apr	Central Coast, Northern Beaches, Northern Suburbs	Gosford Golf Club, Gosford	12
3 Apr	Central Coast, Central Metropolitan, Cumberland, Ku-ring-gai, Lansdowne, Metropolitan East, Northern Beaches, Northern Suburbs, Penrith/Blue Mountains	Penrith RSL, Penrith	21
2 May	North West	Tamworth Hotel, Tamworth	9
23 May	Riverina	Atura Hotel, Albury	6
30 May	Central West	Dubbo RSL Club, Dubbo	10
2 Sep	Northern Beaches, Northern Suburbs	Killara Golf Club, Killara	28

Media and communications

The IEU's communications inform and advocate for teachers and support staff through print publications (*Newsmonth*, *IE*, *Bedrock*) and digital channels (website, social media, email updates, *NewsExtras*, *eNewsletters*) as well as through the mainstream media.

We engage with and influence both broad and targeted audiences including members, employers, politicians and government, policy and decision makers, parents, the wider community, and other unions and activists.

Media

The IEU has featured regularly in the media throughout 2025 with positive coverage generated by media releases and outreach to trusted journalists.

The IEU is also regularly approached for comment by metropolitan, regional and community media on industrial and professional issues, giving the union valuable opportunities to advocate for members.

Media releases

Statements to the media since the 2024 Annual Report:

- 17 Sep 2025: Workforce crisis continues - NSW government misses the mark on preschool funding
- 10 Sep 2025: Community preschools in crisis - Union demands action from NSW government
- 22 Aug 2025: Child safety - Union welcomes national reforms, but more needs to be done
- 15 Aug 2025: Attorneys-General meeting - Union supports working with children reforms
- 13 Aug 2025: NSW Upper House Inquiry - Union calls for child safety over profits
- 31 July 2025: Union welcomes child safety legislation - and calls for more reform
- 25 July 2025: Administrators' report: End of sorry saga at Brindabella Christian College
- 23 July 2025: Early childhood teachers union welcomes child safety legislation
- 04 July 2025: Child safety: Union calls for considered response after shocking allegations
- 12 May 2025: Unions look forward to working with Labor Ministers to deliver education reforms
- 03 Apr 2025: Australia's education unions condemn Dutton's attack on teachers (joint statement of federal IEUA, AEU, NTEU)
- 26 Mar 2025: Welcoming a federal budget prioritising all levels of education
- 18 Mar 2025: Claim farming ban: Union welcomes Bill to end predatory practice against innocent teachers
- 17 Mar 2025: Systemic crisis: IEU statement on Four Corners expose of ruthless childcare operators
- 07 Mar 2025: New chapter begins for Brindabella Christian College
- 07 Mar 2025: Union celebrates hard-won pay rises on International Women's Day
- 05 Mar 2025: Brindabella Christian College enters voluntary administration
- 03 Mar 2025: Unpaid wages: Union takes Brindabella Christian College to task in FWC
- 26 Feb 2025: Unpaid wages: Union takes Brindabella Christian College to Fair Work Commission
- 24 Feb 2025: Union demands answers from Brindabella Christian College
- 14 Feb 2025: Union condemns "claim farmers" for sexual abuse scam against innocent teachers
- 12 Feb 2025: IEU calls on one of Australia's largest childcare providers to fund paid parental leave
- 30 Jan 2025: IEU condemns antisemitic attacks
- 19 Dec 2024: Christmas win: New deal for independent school teachers and staff
- 11 Dec 2024: Education union welcomes reform to parental activity test
- 14 Nov 2024: Historic deal to lock in big pay rises for long day care staff set for vote
- 14 Nov 2024: Christmas pay rise for 16,000 early childhood educators (joint statement with ACTU, UWU and AEU).



Secretary Carol Matthews in August told 7News: "It's really hard to balance profit with the interests of children."

Media coverage

Selection of the IEU's media coverage since the 2024 Annual Report.

- 17 Sep 2025: Secretary Carol Matthews interviewed on 2SM Radio about NSW government announcement of \$100m funding for community preschools
- 11 Sep 2025: Secretary Carol Matthews provided interviews with SBS Radio and ABC Radio's NSW Drive program on the funding and staffing challenges in NSW community preschools.
- 10 Sep 2025: 10 News First, 5pm, Secretary Carol Matthews interviewed on the funding and staffing challenges in NSW community preschools.
- 22 Aug 2025: Secretary Carol Matthews provided interviews and news grabs about the national meeting of education ministers and reforms to child safety in the early childhood education and care sector (see media release 22/8 above): Triple M; ABC Radio Canberra; ABC News Radio (Rachel Hayter), AAP and interview on 2CC Canberra.
- 19 Aug 2025: Secretary Carol Matthews interviewed on 2CC Canberra about the closure of SDN Bluebell Belconnen early childhood centre, and other issues in the sector.
- 19 Aug 2025: Deputy Secretary David Towson interviewed on ABC Radio Central Coast re restructuring in several schools in the Broken Bay Diocese.
- 15 Aug 2025: Following meeting of Attorneys-General (see media release 15/8 above), Secretary Carol Matthews gave news grabs to 2GB, 2SM, 2QN (Deniliquin).
- 13 Aug 2025: Secretary Carol Matthews on 7News, noon edition, ahead of giving evidence at NSW Upper House Inquiry into the Early Childhood Education Sector (see media release 13/8 above); also, 10News outside NSW Parliament House (link expired).
- 13 Aug 2025: (see media release 13/8 above) IEU giving evidence at NSW Upper House Inquiry into the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector, Secretary Carol Matthews gave interviews and provided news grabs on child safety for: 2GB (Mark Levy); Triple M (Steve Zois); 2SM; MixFM; ABC Radio Newcastle (Paul Culliver).
- 13 Aug 2025: Childcare educators warn new measures are a 'band-aid' fix, Daily Telegraph, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "Teachers and educators are leaving the sector at unprecedented rates due to burnout and dissatisfaction, particularly from excessive workloads caused by the volume of paperwork – this takes them away from their core duty of educating and caring for children. The IEU calls for a clampdown on centres that manipulate staffing ratios to avoid their legal obligations of ensuring adequate supervision and preventing safety breaches."
- 01 Aug 2025: ABC Radio Sydney Mornings Kathryn Robinson interviews Secretary Carol Matthews after man charged with child abuse offences in out-of-school-hours care in Sydney.
- 01 Aug 2025: ABC TV News, 7pm, Secretary Carol Matthews provides news grab about safety training after abuse allegations in early childhood centres.
- 01 Aug 2025: Calls for tightening safety training after Sydney child care centre abuse allegations, ABC online, Secretary Carol Matthews said the child safety standards which apply in schools must also be applied to the early education and OSHC sectors. "In a school it is absolutely commonplace that the school every year will conduct child safety training, reportable conduct training and record that the staff have completed their training," she said. "We are astonished that it is not currently a requirement that all staff are trained in child safety and reportable conduct."
- 26 July 2025: Brindabella school directors diverted funds for 'personal gain': parents, Canberra Times, The Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT condemned directors' actions, with Secretary Carol Matthews saying questionable decisions were made about paying for a robot dog instead of paying staff wages. "Members will be disappointed but not surprised to see the extent of mismanagement and poor governance outlined in the report," she said.
- 25 July 2025: Brindabella Christian College may have been trading insolvent for years, administrator finds, ABC online, Carol Matthews is the Independent Education Union of Australia's

NSW/ACT Branch Secretary, representing many of the college's teachers. "I think at the time, our members were really upset and frustrated about what the way the school was being managed, but I'm sure they didn't understand the full extent of the problem," she told ABC Radio Canberra.

- 25 July 2025: ABC, 2SM, 2CC (Canberra) Secretary Carol Matthews provides news grabs about Brindabella Christian College administrators' report.
- 25 July 2025: Secretary Carol Matthews interviewed on ABC Canberra Radio Breakfast Ross Solly (at 1hr 52mins) about Brindabella Christian College administrators' report.
- 24 July 2025: Early childhood teachers union backs new safety legislation, calls for stronger protections, The Sector, "Carol Matthews, Secretary of the IEUA's NSW/ACT Branch, said the union supported tough action against services that prioritise profits over the wellbeing of children. The union also welcomed the government's broader child safety agenda, which includes a nationwide educator register, mandatory training, and improved reporting mechanisms for staff who are legally required to report concerns."
- 23 July 2025: The government wants sweeping childcare reform after 'sickening' abuse allegations - here's how it will work, 9News online, "The IEU supports cutting federal funding from providers that do not prioritise child safety and those that put profits ahead of the children they care for," said NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews.
- 23 July 2025: 2SM, Mix 106.3, Hit 104.7 Canberra, Secretary Carol Matthews provided interview and news grabs on federal Bill to strip funding from substandard early childhood education providers.
- 17 July 2025: How well is the ACT's Working with Vulnerable People scheme working?, The Region (Canberra) "It only picks up criminal records or serious reportable conduct allegations," secretary Carol Matthews said. "Better information-sharing protocols are needed to close gaps."
- 04 July 2025: Triple M, 2SM, Secretary Carol Matthews provides news grabs on union response to child safety allegations in early childhood education and care (see media release of 4 July above).
- 04 July 2025: Childcare unions push back on CCTV surveillance in daycare centres, The Australian, Independent Education Union NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews questioned the use of CCTV, especially in bathrooms and nappy change areas where they are now banned. "We don't think CCTV is the answer ... it's important that you deal with the staff culture as a preventative measure," she said. "Rather than catching people after the fact, we think it's preferable to build an environment in which those incidents don't happen in the first place."
- 24 July 2025: Early childhood teachers union backs new safety legislation, calls for stronger protections, The Sector; Carol Matthews, Secretary of the IEU's NSW/ACT Branch, said the union supported tough action against services that prioritise profits over the wellbeing of children. "The IEU supports cutting federal funding from providers that do not prioritise child safety and those that put profits ahead of the children they care for," Ms Matthews said.
- 23 July 2025: The government wants a sweeping childcare reform after 'sickening' abuse allegations - how it will work, 9News, The Independent Education Union, which represents early childcare teachers in Australia, said it welcomes the proposed reform. "The IEU supports cutting federal funding from providers that do not prioritise child safety and those that put profits ahead of the children they care for," said NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews.
- 12 June 2025: More than 80 teachers quit in two years amid allegations of 'toxic' work culture at Al Sadiq College, Daily Telegraph background provided: The union is not aware of any alleged misappropriation of funds. We are not aware of any suggestion the school is about to close. Employers are legally obliged to provide a safe workplace. Secretary Carol Matthews said members had raised concerns around leave entitlements and procedures, staff turnover and teacher workloads. "The IEU supports our members at the school who have raised legitimate workplace concerns with their employer," Ms Matthews said.
- 17 May 2025: Future is bright: Fresh start for Brindabella amid government conditions, Canberra Times; Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "We are pleased to see that one of the conditions of registration is that staff are to be no worse off in terms of their employment entitlements. Of course, a change of ownership will always raise transitional issues, and we look forward to discussing these with the school's new owner."
- 16 May 2025: Mother's legal case says school expulsion 'discriminatory' due to disability; The Australian; Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "It's a constant struggle to find a balance between the rights of a child with behaviour issues and the rights of other students and staff. Members regularly report challenging behaviour from students as a major workload stress. Teachers are constantly calling for additional staff to support children with extra needs."
- 26 Apr 2025: Editorial and half-page ad, annual May Day liftout, Newcastle Herald.
- 17 Apr 2025: ABC TV Canberra, Organiser Anthony Telford on potential new owner for Brindabella Christian College (Christian Community Ministries).
- 10 Apr 2025: Teachers reveal violence, threats and enormous workload are forcing them to quit, Daily Telegraph, quoting Secretary Carol Matthews: "Employers must take immediate and decisive action in response to any cases of harassment of school staff. There must be a policy of zero tolerance of harassing or worse behaviour in every workplace, and in every school."
- 02 Apr 2025: News grabs for Mix 106.5 FM ACT on 3-4 month audit extension time for Brindabella Christian College provided by ACT Organiser Anthony Telford, "We welcome the

thorough work of the administrator, these things take time, we are aware that some members may well have claims of underpayment and this will take time to sort out but we are optimistic the school has a bright future."

- 27 Mar 2025: Families to save thousands of dollars on childcare fees under new plan, Daily Telegraph/Courier Mail/NT News, quoting Secretary Carol Matthews, "It means many more children will have access to vital early education regardless of their parents' employment status. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are the ones who stand to benefit most."
- 26 Mar 2025: Federal budget 2025: Sector generally positive about Labor's education efforts, Education HQ, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted, "Combined with the capping of indexed increases to HECS debts last year, new teachers will have access to much needed financial relief as they begin their new career in the classroom."
- 05 Mar 2025: Brindabella Christian College goes into voluntary administration, Canberra Times, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "The IEU welcomes this development, and we hope it will provide some reassurance and stability for staff, students and the entire school community. The union will also be seeking clarity about the school's long-term position."
- 05 Mar 2025: Brindabella Christian College enters voluntary administration as Deloitte says school will operate normally for now, ABC online; Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "There's been a lot of confusion about what has actually been happening there, and we think it's really good to have a clear understanding with an external person appointed."
- 03 Mar 2025: Dozens unpaid: Brindabella pursuing 'alternative funding' to pay teachers, FWC told, RiotACT, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "We had no choice but to take Brindabella to the Fair Work Commission to try to compel the school to pay its staff in full and on time."
- 24 Feb 2025: Secretary Carol Matthews on ABC TV Canberra discussing Brindabella Christian College.
- 23 Feb 2025: Some Brindabella Christian College staff not paid amid ATO court action, ABC online, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "The matter needs to be dealt with in an orderly way so we would encourage members to turn up for work but obviously they are very distressed and I think feel betrayed."
- 12 Feb 2025: Secretary Carol Matthews on 2GB pressuring G8 for staff paid parental leave.
- 12 Feb 2025: IEU member Martin Mullen joins Workplace and Industrial Relations Minister Murray Watt for a press conference in Parliament House, Canberra, to mark the one-year anniversary of the Closing Loopholes legislation.
- 04 Feb 2025: 'Big breakthrough': Private schools to disclose teachers' extra hours under new deal, SMH; Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "We've achieved a big breakthrough in that independent school employers will now be required to notify teachers of face-to-face teaching loads, extra-curricular requirements and the reduction of face-to-face teaching time for teachers in leadership positions."

- 30 Jan 2025: Antisemitic graffiti found at Sydney Jewish school, homes and shopping centre, 9News; Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "It is heartbreaking that on the first day back at school, staff, students and parents should be faced with antisemitic hate speech."
- 18 Dec 2024: Brindabella Christian College staff call for board to resign immediately, Canberra Times: "We must make our view clear that the governance of the college has not been practised in a way that is consistent with the faith basis of the school," the staff letter said.
- 14 Nov 2024: Biggest multi-employer bargaining agreement grants 15% pay rise to childcare staff, The Australian, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: The 15 per cent wage increase would boost the pay of early childhood teachers – who have a four-year university degree – to \$107,000 by the end of next year. For the lowest-paid workers, wages will rise \$91 per week to \$1002.
- 14 Nov 2024: Low-paid workers win 10% pay rise in time for Christmas, The Australian
- 14 Nov 2024: Secretary Carol Matthews provided early morning news grabs about lodging long day care supported bargaining agreement to 2GB, MixFM, Triple M, 2SM.
- 13 Nov 2024: It's astronomical: Early childhood educators to get historic pay rise, Canberra Times.
- 10 Nov 2024: Sydney private school fees to increase by as much as 9 per cent, SMH, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted: "Some teachers in independent schools are paid less than in government schools, and our members are keen to see these inequities resolved."



Website (www.ieu.asn.au)

Here's a snapshot of the website's performance (25 Sep 2024 – 15 Sep 2025):

- 558,940 page views by 136,000 users
- 1.57 million events (page view, user engagement, first visit, session start, form visit etc)
- 110,000 visits from organic searches
- 65,000 visits from direct traffic (source unknown or user enters URL directly into browser)
- 50,382 visits from emails
- 8400 visits from social media
- over half of all users view the website from a mobile device (51.4%) while just under half visit from a desktop computer (47.7%) and tablets (0.9%).

We continue to use search engine optimisation (SEO) strategies to ensure every page and post has accurate and customised metadata and includes keywords to help the site rank in searches.

We update the site regularly to ensure the content is current and engaging.

Digital communications: Campaign Monitor

Campaign Monitor is the email platform we utilise to distribute NewsExtra bargaining updates as well as surveys, event promotion and our regular eNewsletters to specific membership segments.

Since moving to Campaign Monitor in 2024, we are experiencing consistently higher open rates and click-through rates as well as lower bounce rates.

Key observations (25 September 2024 – 17 September 2025):

- a total of 126 emails were sent to 471,718 recipients
- open rate of total emails sent was 60.1%
- number of clicks to the IEU website, an IEU petition or form was 87,604
- NewsExtra email updates have consistently high open rates of above 60%
- NewsExtra email click-through rates ranged from 12.6% to 60%
- email boosts of print publications: open rates consistently above 50%.



Social media

Facebook engagement continues with our content gaining more than 1.14 million views from September 2024 to September 2025. On Instagram, our content received 164,000 views with a reach of 27,500 from 486 posts and 180 stories.

Top 10 Facebook/Instagram posts

- 4 Aug 2025: Post marking 80th anniversary of the Hiroshima/Nagasaki atomic bombings
- 2 Jun 2025: Union win: From 1 July award wages will rise by 3.5%
- 31 Jul 2025: March for Humanity event promotion
- 8 Sep 2025: Start Strong, Pay Fair – NSW community-based preschool campaign
- 10 Sep 2025: Media Release: IEU calls on NSW government to boost preschool funding

- 31 Jul 2025: Photo of Carol Matthews speaking to ABC TV re child safety in ECEC
- 16 Aug 2025: Photo of the Principals' sub branch meeting
- 2 Aug 2025: *Newsmonth* 5 article on Catholic Schools Broken Bay
- 28 Aug 2025: Wear it Purple Day photo from IEU National Officers Forum
- 4 Jul 2025: Media Release calls for response after shocking allegations in ECEC sector.

Top 10 videos/reels: Facebook and Instagram

- 29 May 2025: Footage from the Liverpool worker's compensation rally
- 31 Jul 2025: Happy Primary Principals Day video message
- 23 Jul 2025: Union win: paid parental leave in Fair Work Commission
- 14 Aug 2025: IEU member Janene Rox at NSW parliamentary inquiry into child safety
- 4 Aug 2025: Aunt Mary Atkinson talks about the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day
- 13 Aug 2025: Carol Matthews interviewed on 7 News regarding child safety (ECEC)
- 6 Jul 2025: Carol Matthews interviewed on 2SM radio regarding child protection (ECEC)
- 26 May 2025: Video of speakers at the Sydney workers' compensation rally
- 9 Jul 2025: IEU's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee reflect on NAIDOC Week
- 17 Aug 2025: Carol Matthews at NSW parliamentary inquiry into child safety.

LinkedIn continues its consistently strong growth with followers engaging well with union-related updates, professional development and industrial content.

We have stopped posting to Twitter (X) and have established an IEUA NSW/ACT presence on Bluesky.

Video

Video content performs well across our social media channels, with vertical video format becoming more popular. This year we created videos to highlight the union's activities, update members, showcase mainstream media appearances and to amplify IEU campaigns or broader social justice issues.

Resources and campaign collateral

This year we've developed a range of materials for reps and organisers, with most downloadable from: www.ieu.asn.au/resources

- Recruitment posters (teachers and support staff)
- Unite for Change campaign t-shirt
- Red business cards with QR code to join
- Stronger together: How the IEU works liftout
- Women and Equity posters
- Know your workload flyer
- IEU 2025 Wall planner/calendar
- Reps' Handbook
- Information series with QR code
- First Nations calendar 2025
- Environment Grants promotion (print and online)
- Workloads liftout

Publications

Each year we produce eight editions of *Newsmonth* (six print and digital editions; two digital-only editions); two editions of *IE* magazine; and three editions of *Bedrock*. We replicate our publications online, distribute promotions via Campaign Monitor and share individual features on social media.

For digital editions of our publications:

- Current: ieu.asn.au/publications
- Archive: publications.ieu.asn.au



Newsmonth

Newsmonth incorporates industrial and campaign updates, union wins, member milestones, stories and snaps, sub branch reports, vox pops, professional development updates and columns from elected officials. We produce six print editions a year and two digital-only editions, all are replicated online, distributed via Campaign Monitor, and shared on social media.

Newsmonth#6 2025

Cover: Catholic systemic schools EA:

Union locks in pay rises

In post 18/8; broadcast 26/8, open rate 51%

Top five stories

- Catholic systemic schools: Union locks in pay rises, better conditions
- Union win: Parental leave dispute
- Union win: NextSense staff stand strong for gains
- 2025 Environment grants
- Election update: Have your say

Newsmonth#5 2025

Cover: Anti-bullying review - What teachers need

In post 14/7; broadcast 17/7; open rate 52%

Top five stories

- Anti-bullying review: What teachers need
- Catholic Schools Broken Bay: Union acts on coordinator restructure
- Child safety: IEU calls for careful solutions - not quick fixes
- New financial year: What it means for IEU members
- Brindabella Christian College: Clarity at last

Newsmonth#4 2025

Cover: Workers compensation - Our fight to protect your rights

In post 10/6; broadcast 19/6; open rate 55%

Top five stories

- Slow progress on an EA for Catholic systemic schools
- Respect for teachers: when parents cross the line
- Nationwide member survey
- Workers compensation: Our fight to protect your rights
- Solidarity shines: launch of new support staff network

Newsmonth#3 2025

Cover: Catholic systemic schools - Making progress on new EAs

In post 5/5; broadcast 7/5; open rate 50%

Top five stories

- World Support Staff Day
- Catholic systemic schools: making progress
- IEU member wins appeal, gains flexible work
- Read full digital edition
- Christian schools: Moving forward on new agreement
- Spotlight on reps

Newsmonth#2 2025

Cover: YES vote for independent school MEAs

In post 24/3; broadcast 28/3, open rate: 56%
First digital edition distributed in-house via Campaign Monitor in a far more accessible format and with a more modern, appealing look.

Top five stories

- Yes vote for independent school MEAs
- Catholic systemic schools: Strengthening your WPAs
- Change without the churn: New workload assessment tool

- Union condemns claim farming
- Spotlight on reps

Newsmonth#1 2025 (digital only)

Cover: Independent schools – New agreements ready at last
Digital only edition; broadcast 17/2; open rate 59%

Top five stories

- Independent schools: New agreements ready at last
- Catholic systemic schools: Towards a new EA
- Bargaining resumes in NSW Christian schools
- Shared wisdom: Top tips for new teachers
- Check your pay

Newsmonth#8 2024 (digital only)

Cover: History repeating: Teachers in independent schools face familiar conundrum
Digital-only edition, broadcast 10/12, open rate 58%

Top five stories

- Pay rises for members in Catholic systemic schools
- History repeating: The money or the box? (AIS schools)
- Catholic schools Broken Bay: Reaching a new salaries benchmark
- Spotlight on reps
- Sub Branch reports: Term 4

Newsmonth#7 2024

Cover: Independent schools: Now's the time for a better deal
In post 11/11, broadcast 15/11, open rate 53%

Top five stories

- Bargaining starts in Catholic systemic schools
- Independent schools: Now's the time for a better deal
- Catholic systemic schools: Pay rises for support staff on the way
- Independent schools: Professional and operational staff – bargaining not over yet
- 2024 IEU/TMB Environment Grant winners

IE magazine

IE is the union's nationwide professional journal. We produce two 36-page editions a year in collaboration with the union's VicTas and QNT Branches. Content includes in-depth profiles of prominent people in relevant fields, features on pedagogical research, member interviews, and analysis of education policy.

IE#2 2025

In production concurrently with the Annual Report
Features include:

- InFocus: Australian author Kate Grenville
- Anti-bullying review: Don't forget staff
- You're the voice: Bringing song to the classroom
- Unions through time: Multigenerational union families
- Beyond burnout: Moral injury in Australian schools



IE#1 2025

Cover: Healthy future: Australia's most sustainable schools
In post 5/5; broadcast 20/5; open rate: 54%

Top five stories

- Change without the churn: national Teacher Workload Assessment Tool
- Social media ban: help or harm
- The Educator Awards: Australia's most sustainable schools
- Link to digital edition of IE magazine
- Tackling harassment in schools

IE#3 2024

Cover: InFocus: Craig Foster

In post 11/11; broadcast 19/11; open rate: 47%

Top five stories

- InFocus: Former Soccerroo and human rights activist Craig Foster
- Teaching in a childcare desert
- Sex education: Countering pornography's insidious influence
- Special workloads liftout: Better practice, less process
- Hear her voice: An oral history of women in unions



Bedrock

We produce three editions of this 20-page publication for early childhood teachers a year in collaboration with the QNT Branch. *Bedrock* includes sector-wide industrial updates and covers issues such as childhood psychology, teaching STEM, member stories and embedding First Nations knowledge.

Bedrock#3 2025

At press concurrently with Annual Report 2025

Cover: Animal logic: What pets can teach us

Top five stories

- Animal logic: What pets can teach us
- Safety first: Putting children before profits
- Karen McKay: It's an honour (member profile)
- Working conditions: Staff support central to service quality
- Screen time: How to develop healthy habits for children

Bedrock#2 2025

Cover: "Grandfriends": How different generations learn from each other. In post 10/6; digital edition 27/6; open rate 59%

Top five stories

- Skilling up: new tools for teaching toddlers
- "Grandfriends": How different generations learn from each other
- Emotional labour: Ways to lighten the load
- Bright Sparks: Igniting children's curiosity
- Narragunnawali: Supporting reconciliation in early learning

Bedrock#1 2025

Cover: Jump to it: How to bridge the activity gap In post 24/3; broadcast 28/3; open rate 63%

First digital edition distributed in-house via Campaign Monitor in a far more accessible format and with a more modern, appealing look.

Top five stories

- Jump to it: How to bridge the activity gap
- Stay vigilant about psychosocial hazards
- Teaching in another tongue
- Worth a listen: Podcasts on early childhood education
- Enriched preschool program reduces youth crime

Bedrock#3 2024

Cover: Risky play empowering children

In post 11/11; digital edition 18/11; open rate 53%

Top five stories

- Member story: Risky play empowering children
- Unite for change campaign: Historic bid for better preschool pay
- Long day care staff to get big pay rises
- Four page liftout: Tips to reduce documentation
- Union joins Access for Every Child Coalition

Acknowledgement

The IEU's Media and Communications Team has again risen to the challenge of supporting members through print and digital communications and campaign resources.

We thank our members and acknowledge the team: Digital Communications Manager Katie Camarena; Graphic Designer Chris Ruddell; Media Advisor Andrew Taylor; Digital Communications and Social Media Campaigner Zoe Hercus; and Communications Contributor Tania Yardley.

Monica Crouch

Media and Communications Coordinator

Katie Camarena

Digital Communications Manager

Can't afford to join the union?

Or can't afford not to?

Did you know the IEU advocates for better pay and conditions, and provides individual support to members? Don't leave yourself unprotected.

Scan the QR code for more information



Just started teaching?

Here's what you need to know ...

The IEU can provide support and assistance to beginning teachers.

Scan the QR code for more information



Authorised by Carol Matthews, Secretary, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch

IEU Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch

WHEN WE SAY UNION, YOU SAY ...

Respect

Solidarity

Collective power

Professional voice

Fairness

Better pay and conditions

Rights at work

Authorised by Carol Matthews, Secretary, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch

Join today

Union fees are tax deductible



Scan here

IEU Independent Education Union of Australia

Independent Education Union

Amadeus music tutors chapter

Amadeus music tutors are uniting to form their own IEU chapter.

If you're a music tutor in Sydney Catholic Schools, this is your chapter. It's time to join for:

- industrial advice
- support for workplace issues
- clarification of your entitlements and obligations.

It's in your interests to organise for an enterprise agreement that covers music tutors. This is a legally binding document that spells out the terms and conditions of your employment.

The more members you have, the greater your bargaining power.

Join your Amadeus chapter and have your voice heard.

For more information:

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Authorised by Carol Matthews, Secretary, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch

Join the IEU
Union fees are tax deductible



Scan here

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PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

16 FACTS FOR 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

25 NOVEMBER THROUGH TO 10 DECEMBER

1. The 2024 theme is **Every 10 Minutes, a woman is killed. #NoExcuse. UNITE to End Violence against Women.**
2. Violence against women and girls remains one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world.
3. In Australia, 58 women were killed in domestic homicide in 2023 (up from 35 in 2022 and 33 in 2021). In the first 6 months of 2024, at least 39 women have been killed by men's violence.
4. On 28 April 2024, the Prime Minister declared a 'national crisis' of violence against women in Australia with one woman killed every four days.
5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are disproportionately represented as victims of intimate partner homicide.
6. Women are at increased risk of experiencing violence from an intimate partner during pregnancy.
7. In Australia, intimate partner violence is the greatest health risk factor for women aged 25-44.
8. Women with disability in Australia are twice as likely to have experienced sexual violence over their lifetime than women without disability.
9. Globally, more than 5 women or girls are killed every hour by someone in their own family.
10. In Australia, young women between 18-24 experience higher rates of physical and sexual violence than women in older age groups.
11. Violence negatively affects women's physical and mental health and wellbeing at all stages of life.
12. In Australia, domestic or family violence is the single largest driver of homelessness for women.
13. More than 1 in 3 women experience gender-based violence during their lifetime.
14. Globally, the estimated cost of violence against women is US\$1.5 trillion!
15. Less than 40% of women who experience violence seek help.
16. On 1 February 2023, new laws to provide 10 days paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave came into force after a strong campaign led by unions.

IEUA NSW/ACT is proud to support 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The global campaign runs annually from the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November to International Human Rights Day on 10 December.

IEU Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch

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Social justice

Social justice is an important part of the union's work, grounded in a strong commitment to fairness, equity and advocacy beyond the workplace. IEU members deeply value the union's commitment in this area. Much of this work is supported and guided by the efforts of the IEU's Environment, Women and Equity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committees.

Peace is union business

The IEU has a long and proud history of supporting social justice campaigns.

In the 1980s, the Independent Teachers Association (ITA), as the IEU was then known, through its affiliation with the NSW Labor Council (now Unions NSW), supported the African National Congress in its struggle against South Africa's apartheid regime.

In 1983, ITA members marched behind a "Teachers for Peace" banner alongside their counterparts from the Teachers Federation. This marked the beginning of the union's long-standing association with the Palm Sunday peace marches.

For many years, the IEU has been represented on the Palm Sunday rally planning committee along with other unions, church representatives and other allies.

In July, the IEU Federal Executive unanimously passed a resolution marking the 80th anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August 2025.

Union Pride

In March, IEU members joined ACTU President Michele O'Neil and unionists on the Union Pride float, 'No one left behind' in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.

This year's Union Pride float was dedicated to the union movement's ongoing solidarity and commitment to LGBTQIA+ colleagues across all industries and states: we are with you; no one left behind.

The IEU was represented by Professional Engagement Coordinator Pat Devery who marched alongside IEU members.

Palm Sunday rally

The IEU proudly attends the Palm Sunday rally and March for Peace every year. Once again, the IEU took responsibility for marshalling and collecting donations to cover the rally's costs.

This year's rally called for a global right to access education and live without the threat of violence and conflict. Education is key to eliminating racism, tearing down systemic barriers and empowering the most vulnerable to realise their full potential.

The IEU supports the right to access comprehensive education that strengthens respect for human rights and freedoms. As always, we are proud to stand with refugees. Refugees bring courage, resilience and hope to our classrooms and communities – and it is our collective responsibility to ensure they are welcomed with dignity and respect.

Stand with Gomeroi campaign

The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch has long supported the Gomeroi Nation and their campaign to stop Santos drilling 850 coal seam gas wells into the Pilliga.

On 6 May, the IEU joined other unions at a rally outside NSW Parliament to call on the NSW and federal governments to stop this mining project that will destroy land, water and the traditional lands of the Gomeroi.

The rally was timed to coincide with a long-awaited decision by the Native Title Tribunal about land rights. Sadly, the tribunal ruled against the Gomeroi – granting permission for Santos to proceed with the Narrabri gas project which risks destroying the Pilliga Forest and Gomeroi native title rights.

In September, the NSW government expressed support for the Santos gas project. Unions across



Top: IEU members joined a rally outside NSW Parliament House in May to protest the Narrabri gas project, which threatens the Pilliga Forest; below: Palm Sunday rally for peace.

NSW released a joint statement rejecting the Minns' government's stance on the gas project.

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews said: "No government can justify the environmental destruction and cultural vandalism of the Pilliga Forest for the sake of profit. Respecting the rights of the Gomeroi people means standing against this project and protecting Country for generations to come."

The IEU continues to support Unions NSW's Stand with Gomeroi campaign as the fight for climate, environment and native title justice goes on.

Edmund Rice Centre

The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch supports the work of The Global Centre for Social Justice and Advocacy Leadership (TGC), formerly known as the Edmund Rice Centre (ERC).

On 30 August, TGC released a statement saying it has made the difficult decision to wind down operations by the end of this year.

As a proud partner, the IEU acknowledges the work of the ERC over the past 30 years, especially its core commitment to social justice education.

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA

In solidarity with unions across Australia, the IEU has a long association and strong commitment to Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, the global justice organisation of the Australian union movement.

Many IEU members are also members of APHEDA and are represented at APHEDA events, forums and help promote the work of APHEDA.

Around the Globe

Around the Globe is a regular column in *Newsmonth* reporting on global justice issues and workers' rights. In 2024-2025, we reported on the global teacher shortage, the IEU's support of farmers in Timor Leste, the teachers' strike in Nepal, the ongoing situation in Myanmar, and the plight of women and girls in Afghanistan.

We stood with other Australian unions in the March for Humanity in August and other solidarity events that were reported in *Around the Globe*.

A collective effort

We acknowledge the support of Secretary Carol Matthews and Deputy Secretary David Towson, together with elected Executive and Council members whose steadfast support has been the backbone of the IEU's social justice work.

Our publications team also deserves special thanks for consistently capturing and amplifying these initiatives and bringing them to life. We owe gratitude to our IEU colleagues and members who do so much of the work in this space in their own time on top of their already full workloads and family commitments. Thank you for showing up in solidarity, digging deep to support vulnerable communities in times of need and waving the flag of social justice. Your commitment makes this ongoing work possible.

David Whitcombe Organiser

Katie Camarena Digital Communications Manager

Women and Equity Committee

This year has been one of progress for the Women and Equity Committee as we continue to advocate strongly for equity, diversity and inclusion across the non-government education sector.

More than 70 per cent of IEU members are women, and the Committee is committed to tackling the intersectional challenges faced by women at work, particularly workplace discrimination, harassment and economic inequality.

Guiding principles

The Federal Women and Equity Committee's charter, updated in June 2025, outlines five guiding pillars: equity, diversity, leadership development, involvement and activism, and political engagement.

Guided by these principles, the Committee works collaboratively with branches and union structures to promote equal pay and improved conditions, campaigns for equitable representation and empowers women members through leadership and educational opportunities.

Member voices and priority issues

Member voices played an important role in shaping the Committee's work in 2025. A survey conducted in March highlighted flexible work, the gender pay gap and women's leadership as priority issues.

Other topics ranked highly by members included justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and communities, defending and advancing the rights of diverse women and girls, issues affecting the LGBTIQ+ community, supporting trans and gender-questioning students and advocating for disability equity.

IEU women and equity resources

The union has developed resources on the positive duty under the *Sex Discrimination Act* to eliminate unlawful conduct on pay secrecy, and access to paid family and domestic violence leave.

A widely distributed poster on the entitlement to 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave has been welcomed as an accessible and practical resource for members.

Committee activities and engagement

The Committee has held two meetings so far in 2025 with another planned in Term 4.

Throughout the year, the Committee has strengthened its communication and advocacy.

New networks via email and WhatsApp enable faster sharing of information and coordination of events.

Resources on key issues have been rolled out across branches, while committee meetings and forums have focused on tackling harassment, rebuilding branch committees, supporting leadership development through delegate training and engaging with national workforce standards and child safety policies.

Close collaboration with the Industrial Committee has ensured strong advocacy in wage reviews and gender undervaluation submissions.

Yet ongoing challenges remain. The gender pay gap, undervaluation of female-dominated work, barriers to compensation for psychological injury and the under-utilisation of reproductive health and flexible work entitlements all demand continued focus.

The Committee is determined to maintain momentum, concentrating on advocacy in wage reviews and employment standards, expanding education and leadership opportunities for members, and continuing to challenge discrimination wherever it occurs.

Advocacy and activism

Commencing on 25 November each year, the IEU proudly supports the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign. The IEU creates and shares resources aimed at ending violence against women and girls.



Clockwise, from left: IEU members express solidarity with LGBTQ+ young people on Wear it Purple Day; IEU colleagues and members attend rallies in Bathurst, Sydney and Newcastle to mark International Women's Day.



On International Women's Day, members of the Committee stood shoulder-to-shoulder with IEU colleagues and members at rallies and events in Sydney, Newcastle, Bathurst and Canberra.

Equal Pay Day, marked on 19 August this year, drew attention to the extra 50 days women must work each year to earn the same as men.

In the private sector, women are still paid around 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, with entrenched workplace structures and gendered assumptions about roles continuing to play a major part in this inequity.

On 30 August, the NSW/ACT Women and Equity Committee stood with IEU colleagues from around Australia to draw attention to Wear It Purple Day. We created a solidarity video and shared a group photograph from the National Officers Forum.

National wins for working women

This year has seen some significant national wins for women workers. In July, the national minimum wage rose by 3.5% to \$24.95 per hour, a real gain above inflation that directly benefits women, who make up most award-reliant workers in education and healthcare.

Paid parental leave was extended from 22 to 24 weeks, with a portion specifically reserved for the second parent, encouraging more equitable sharing of caring responsibilities.

Employer superannuation contributions increased to 12% and are now paid during parental leave, a reform that will help address the persistent

gender superannuation gap, with women still retiring with around 20 per cent less super than men. Another breakthrough was the introduction of payments for student placements in feminised professions such as teaching, nursing and social work, reducing the financial strain on women and diverse students entering these essential fields.

Despite this progress, Australia's gender pay gap remains a stubborn reality. Reviews currently underway by the FWC into 22 professional awards, including those covering higher education, school general staff and children's services, hold the potential to correct some of this historical undervaluation of women's work.

Reproductive health leave

Another key campaign has been the push for 10 days of universal paid reproductive health leave, covering issues such as menstruation, menopause, IVF and miscarriage.

Queensland's public sector set an important precedent by introducing this leave in 2024.

A federal bill for 12 days remains stalled, but unions continue to advocate strongly for its inclusion in the National Employment Standards.

Economic analysis has made the case clear – the cost of this leave would be offset many times over by gains in productivity. Yet stigma and fear of discrimination prevent many workers from accessing reproductive health support, underscoring the need for confidential and sensitive workplace policies.

June 2025

Let's talk about Pay secrecy

What's new

The changes to the Fair Work Act mean that employees are now free to talk about their wages AND hours or any factors connected to their wages.

Employers can no longer make employees agree to wage secrecy in new employment contracts OR target employees (adverse action) for sharing information about their pay.

- As of 7 December 2022, new employment contracts and Enterprise Agreements must not include pay secrecy clauses.
- As of 7 June 2023, employers who include such clauses will be liable for penalties \$\$\$\$\$.

Pay secrecy in your workplace

If your current contract was signed prior to 7 December 2022 and contains a pay secrecy clause you are still bound by that, but only until the contract is varied or ends.

Support the change by:

1. Checking your contract.
2. Starting the conversation with your colleagues.
3. Calling your organiser with any concerns.

The legislation provides an opportunity for Australian workers to discuss their pay with their co-workers openly and to build a workplace culture that is transparent and exposes inequalities.

More info: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-wages/pay-secrecy>

For more resources

June 2025

Let's talk about Flexible work

What's new

- An amendment to the Fair Work Act strengthens the right of employees to request a change to their working arrangements for reasons set out in the Act. These include that the employee has responsibility for a child or is a carer.
- The request by the employee must be in writing and must specify the reason for the change.
- An employer who refuses a request must have discussed the request with the employee, genuinely tried to reach agreement, have considered the consequences of a refusal for the employee and must have reasonable business grounds for the refusal.
- The Fair Work Commission has the power to assess the case and review employer decisions.

Flexible work in your workplace

Support the change and start the conversation about flexible work with your colleagues. Call your Organiser and ask for further support and advice.

The legislation provides an opportunity for Australian workplaces to become the places they should be – safe, inclusive, and responsive to the flexible working needs of employees.

<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employment-conditions/flexible-in-the-workplace/flexible-working-arrangements>

For more resources

May 2025

Let's talk about Family and Domestic Violence Leave

What's new

An entitlement under the National Employment Standards (contained in the Fair Work Act) of up to 10 days of paid family and domestic violence (FDV) leave each year at the full rate of pay for all full time, part time and casual employees.

Key rights and requirements

- A broader definition of FDV Leave.
- 10 days each year, non-cumulative but renews every 12 months.
- Privacy requirements regarding evidence and the recording of leave on payslips.
- Family and Domestic Violence Leave applies to everyone – even if it is not contained in your Enterprise Agreement.

FDV Leave in your workplace

Support the change and start the conversation to raise awareness with your colleagues.

Call your Organiser and ask about support. The legislation provides an opportunity for Australian workplaces to be supportive of employees experiencing Family and Domestic Violence.

If you or someone you know needs help, call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 or visit 1800RESPECT.org.au

For more resources

IEU Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch

Authorised by Carol Matthews, Secretary, Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch
The Brisbane Building 485 – 501 Wattle St Ultimo NSW 2007 | P 8202 8900 | ieu@ieu.asn.au | www.ieu.asn.au

June 2025

Let's talk about Positive duty

What's new

- Changes to the Sex Discrimination Act in 2022 to establish a positive duty to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace.
- Workplaces need to make sure all staff feel safe and respected – before something goes wrong!
- Employers are required to take action to prevent unacceptable behaviours at work like sexual harassment, sex discrimination, sex based harassment, hostile work environment, victimisation.
- Positive duty is something all workplaces must do – regardless of size.

Positive duty in your workplace

Support the change and start the conversation. Call your IEU Organiser and ask for further support and advice.

The legislation obligates Australian workplaces to create work environments that are safe, inclusive, respectful and free from sex-based harassment and discrimination.

For more information on positive duty visit: humanrights.gov.au

For more resources

IEU Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch

Authorised by Carol Matthews, Secretary, Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch
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Workers compensation reforms

The Committee also raised concerns about proposed reforms to the NSW workers compensation scheme.

The changes, particularly around psychological injury claims, would impose new thresholds that could prevent many workers from accessing compensation.

Women are disproportionately affected because they make the majority of psychological injury claims, often related to workplace harassment, discrimination or violence. The reforms would risk worsening inequality in workplace safety and support.

Building equity in education

Looking ahead, the Women and Equity Committee reaffirms its commitment to dismantling the structural barriers that perpetuate inequity for women in education.

By sustaining advocacy, developing resources and engaging members in this work, the Committee continues to strengthen equity, safety and opportunity across our sector. Together, we are making a difference.

Katie Camarena, Lyn Caton and Angela McDonald
Women and Equity Committee Co-Convenors

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee continues to play a vital role in ensuring First Nations voices, priorities, and aspirations are embedded in the union's work.

The Committee provides advice to the Executive and officers, develops policy positions, and drives initiatives that work towards reconciliation, equity, and justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members and their communities.

This report outlines the committee's activities, advocacy and priorities in the past 12 months, reflecting on the progress made and the challenges still ahead.

Committee membership and structure

The Committee is comprised of dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators and union members who bring deep cultural knowledge and professional expertise to the IEU.

Current members include:

- Aunty Mary Atkinson
- Aunty Karen Andriske
- Michelle Thompson
- Kylie Booth-Martinez
- Craig Duncan
- Leona Oliver
- Kye Longford
- Samantha Brancatisano
- Lyn Caton (Convenor)

The Committee meets face-to-face four times each year, usually ahead of IEU Council meetings, with additional online meetings scheduled as needed.

This structure allows the Committee to remain responsive to emerging issues while maintaining consistent dialogue with the Executive.

Members are strongly committed to building inclusivity and representation. This year, work commenced on establishing an email network to keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander IEU members informed, engaged, and supported.

Councillors and organisers are also encouraged to actively promote committee membership and the benefits of joining the IEU.

Terms of Reference

In 2025, the Committee reviewed and updated its Terms of Reference. These reaffirm the Committee's role in:

- advocating for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators within the education sector
- advising the IEU Executive on policy, strategy, and initiatives affecting First Nations members
- promoting cultural awareness and reconciliation in schools and workplaces
- supporting recruitment, retention, and professional development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators
- engaging with communities, government, and education authorities to ensure strong representation.

The updated Terms of Reference will guide the committee's work over the next two years and strengthen its capacity to influence union policy.

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

One of the Committee's central priorities has been guiding the development of the IEU's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

This RAP is designed as a formal, structured mechanism to:

- ensure equal and equitable educational opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- create a culturally safe, inclusive, and diverse workplace
- build genuine partnerships between the union and First Nations communities.

A draft RAP has now been prepared and is undergoing review. The Committee anticipates presenting this to the Executive in early 2026.



Members of the IEU's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee, from left, Kye Longford, Auntie Mary Atkinson, Leona Oliver, Michelle Thompson (on screen), Kylie Booth-Martinez and Craig Duncan.

The RAP will embed commitments across the IEU, supported by cultural competency training for staff and organisers.

The union recognises that reconciliation cannot be achieved without meaningful cultural understanding.

Over the past two years, the Committee has facilitated significant professional development in this area:

- 41 staff have completed a comprehensive 10-hour cultural competency course
- about 50 per cent of IEU organisers have engaged with the training, each developing individual commitments to ongoing support for First Nations peoples
- IEU planning days have included cultural awareness sessions to ensure that cultural perspectives are central to union strategy.

These initiatives strengthen cultural safety within the union while modelling the professional standards we seek across schools and education systems.

Advocacy and representation

The Committee has been active in advancing provisions for paid cultural and ceremonial leave in enterprise agreements.

Drawing on successful clauses from the Parramatta Counsellors EA, the Committee has recommended the inclusion of:

- up to three days paid cultural and ceremonial leave annually for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
- leave to be non-cumulative, in addition to other entitlements
- reasonable evidence requirements balanced with respect for cultural protocols.

These provisions have been agreed as part of the Catholic systemic negotiations.

A key priority is ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are represented in education and union forums.

Following the resignation of long-standing committee member Vinnie Cooper in mid-2024, the Committee advocated for new First Nations appointments to positions on the NESA Aboriginal Education Forum and relevant Unions NSW committees.

Committee member Craig Duncan now represents the IEU on the NESA Aboriginal Education Forum, ensuring that Aboriginal perspectives are central to curriculum, accreditation, and policy matters.

Biannual conference 2025

Two members of the IEU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee proudly attended the ACTU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Biannual Conference: *Anti-Racism, Truth & Treaty*, held in Melbourne in October.

The conference brought together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander union members from across the movement to strengthen voices, build skills and take collective action.

Participation provided valuable development opportunities in anti-racism, truth-telling, justice, treaty and union leadership, ensuring our members contribute to shaping the movement's future.

Spirit on Country conference

The IEU proudly supported and attended the 2024 Spirit on Country: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander State Education Conference, held in Tamworth.

This powerful gathering of educators, community leaders, and union representatives highlighted the importance of truth-telling, cultural pride and shared responsibility in building inclusive schools.

Standing with the Gomeroi people

The Committee and the wider union movement have strongly opposed the Narrabri Gas Project in the Pilliga Forest.

Despite a 2025 Native Title Tribunal decision allowing Santos to proceed, the IEU stands firmly with Gomeroi Traditional Owners.

In May 2025, the IEU joined 11 other unions in co-signing an open letter to federal ministers, condemning the decision and calling for immediate intervention.

This advocacy reflects the union's deep commitment to justice, environmental sustainability and the protection of sacred lands.

Truth-telling and reconciliation

This year's National Reconciliation Week, themed "Bridging Now to Next", was an important opportunity for truth-telling and reflection.

The IEU supported events including the University of Technology Sydney's panel on "Reconciliation: Truth-telling," which called for embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories into education frameworks.

Speakers emphasised that schools and teachers are uniquely placed to change the national narrative.

Resources through Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali platform continue to support educators in embedding First Nations perspectives in classrooms.

Looking ahead

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee has made significant strides in embedding reconciliation, truth-telling and equity into the IEU's work.

From professional learning and enterprise bargaining to solidarity campaigns and national forums, the Committee ensures that First Nations voices are heard at every level of the union.

In 2025-2026, priorities will include:

- finalising and launching the Reconciliation Action Plan
- continuing to embed cultural and ceremonial leave clauses in enterprise agreements
- expanding cultural competency training across all IEU staff
- growing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership and representation in union structures
- supporting ongoing campaigns for land rights, truth-telling and justice.

The Committee reaffirms that reconciliation must be built on consultation, equity, and equality – core union values.

The IEU will continue to stand with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in education, workplaces, and communities.

Lyn Caton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee Convenor



2024 Environment Grant winners, above, Central Coast Montessori Primary School in Bateau Bay filters rainwater for its gardens; below, students at St Therese Catholic Primary School create a home for native bees.



Environment Committee

In 2025, the Environment Committee has been convened by Organisers Richard Ryan and Josef Dabbs, assisted by Organiser David Whitcombe, Assistant Secretary Lyn Caton and IEU members Sharon Jennings, Dylan Zhang, David Crawford and Craig Duncan.

The Committee acknowledges the dedication and commitment of Lee Cunningham who stepped down as Co-Convenor in February 2025. The Committee meets every three months to discuss projects and activities. We also thank the Executive for their ongoing support.

IEU Teachers Mutual Bank Environment Grant winners 2024

Every year the IEU invites members at schools, colleges and early childhood centres to apply for grants to develop sustainability initiatives.

The 2024 Environment Grants, sponsored by Teachers Mutual Bank and the union, include a variety of innovative and exciting projects.

Early childhood education and care Evans Head Preschool Association

Compost Champions - The aim of the project is to develop a culture of composting in our services. We will intentionally teach children about the environment, sustainability, and the importance

of reducing waste. Through composting, children can learn about the natural processes of decomposition, the role of microorganisms in breaking down organic matter, and the importance of soil health.

Christ Church Gladesville Preschool

Indigenous Multi-Sensory Garden - The garden will enhance children's learning and understanding of resource management and sustainability. It will enable the children to appreciate and understand more about Country and local cultures. The preschool will use as much recycled and repurposed material as possible and utilise teachers, children and parents/community volunteers to help.

Primary schools

St Joseph's Primary School, Taree

Green Roof Pergola - We intend to build a biodiverse green roof pergola that will not only beautify our garden, but also attract birds, bees and other animals. The addition of this pergola to our garden will support the reduction of our school's carbon footprint emissions. This garden plays a key role in supporting our community kitchen, providing food supplies to create meals for the homeless within our community.

The Assumption Catholic Primary School, Bathurst
 Buwanha Walan – Build a garden next to our yarning circle filled with natives and bush tucker plants. This will help students to learn how First Nations peoples cared for the land.

Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School, Nicholls ACT
 Indigenous Garden – This project will involve a revamp of our current Indigenous garden. We will plant some new native plants, including some edible plants if possible. We also hope to add some seating around our firepit to create a yarning circle that can be used by students in our primary school and ELC. The project will be a great way for classroom teachers to educate students around local plants and uses by Aboriginal people.

St Therese Parish Primary School, West Wollongong
 Native Bees in Schools – Stingless native bees enable children to safely learn the social behaviours of the bee, the impact of human activity on the environment and the interdependence of living things. With this grant, the school will purchase bees, hives and annual flowers for the bees to pollinate. This will be a coeducation program and form an integral part of our overall sustainable environmental program in our school.

Central Coast Montessori School
 Water Saver – Our goal is to operate at a carbon neutral level, supplanting our grid connections with small-scale energy generation infrastructure such as small-scale wind turbines, batteries and solar.
 Additional water storage tanks will be used to supply water for the grounds and filtration will be used for cleaning the water. The grant will go towards water tanks to collect rainwater to maintain the gardens. The school also plans to develop a sustainable garden of seasonal vegetables and fruits to serve the local community and children. Children will help grow and maintain the garden as well as learn the fundamentals of agriculture.

Secondary schools
McCarthy Catholic College, Tamworth
 Germination and Growing of Native Plants – Behind the school, there is a badly damaged riparian zone. The project looks at regenerating this zone by growing and planting native plants and building animal habitats. An important part of

the project is to germinate and grow seeds from native plants. The grant will go towards obtaining soil for the potting mix and slow-release fertiliser.

Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta
 Enhancing Marine Education through Underwater Exploration – Our project aims to enhance marine studies education by providing an underwater digital camera with GPS tagging and snorkelling equipment for senior students. Through hands-on exploration of local marine environments, students will capture and analyse data, integrating technology with their learning. This initiative will foster environmental awareness, develop technical skills, allow students to contribute to citizen science and promote stewardship of marine ecosystems.

K-12
The Armidale Waldorf School
 Mud, Fibres, Grasses: The nest builders – The project aims to regenerate a section of remnant bush that is in the centre of the school's car park. We have observed small birds are attracted to the few remaining original shrubs and grasses in the location. Through protection of the boundaries, establishing clear paths or tracks and replanting, we aim to create a habitat zone of food and nesting sites for small woodland birds. The loss of understorey, a common problem in the New England region due to the process of land clearing for agriculture, has created a shortage of suitable habitat.

2025 environment grants
 Applications for the 2025 grants opened on 21 July and closed on 10 October. The Committee met in early October to review the applications. Successful applicants will be announced at the IEU AGM on 25 October and listed on the IEU website and social media platforms.

Environment events
 There were no environment events held in 2025. The Committee will meet in Term 4 to discuss plans for 2026 events.

ACTU Climate Action Group
 Richard Ryan and Lyn Caton are members of the ACTU Climate Action Group and meet with that group quarterly online.

Richard Ryan Organiser

Information technology and data management

Cybersecurity

The union takes cybersecurity very seriously and is fully committed to safeguarding its systems, data and member information.

To strengthen its defences against evolving threats, the union recently implemented Microsoft Defender across our entire organisation.

This robust security solution helps the union proactively monitor for potential risks and provides real-time protection against malware, phishing and other cyber threats.

In addition to using high-end security tools, the union also runs regular simulated phishing attacks to continuously educate team members on the latest phishing tactics. These exercises help identify potential vulnerabilities, raise awareness about cybersecurity best practices and ensure that employees remain vigilant in the face of ever-changing cyber threats.

The union's commitment to maintaining the highest standards of cybersecurity is also reflected in its Secure Score, which on average exceeds that of organisations of the same size.

This metric not only highlights the strength of the union's cybersecurity posture but also demonstrates ongoing efforts to continually improve and stay ahead of potential risks.

Hearing loop

The union is pleased to announce the installation of a new hearing loop system in the boardroom, enhancing accessibility for individuals with hearing aids or cochlear implants. This system supports both face-to-face meetings and integrates seamlessly with the video conferencing unit, ensuring that all participants can engage fully in discussions.

Phone system

As part of ongoing efforts to improve efficiency and member experience, the union has begun conducting a comprehensive audit of phone systems.

The goal of this audit is to streamline call queues, reduce wait times and ensure that all incoming calls are directed to the right staff member as quickly and effectively as possible.

The union has begun trialing a range of web-based phone technologies, including platforms like Liberate and Webex, for staff to use while offsite.

These solutions offer enhanced functionality, intelligent call routing and better integration with TIPT.

The aim is to determine which platform best supports operational needs. Early feedback from the trials has been positive.

Video conferencing

To enhance communication and collaboration across the organisation, the union is installing new HP Poly video conferencing units across all branch locations.

These upgraded systems are designed to seamlessly support both Microsoft Teams and Zoom, ensuring compatibility with internal and external meeting requirements.

The dual-platform integration will provide greater flexibility for staff and partners, improve meeting efficiency and support the union's commitment to modern, reliable communication infrastructure.

SharePoint dashboard

The IEU staff dashboard is currently being expanded to include a broader range of new projects, enhancing its role as a centralised hub.

The expansion will improve overall efficiency by integrating key functions of the membership database. The current phase of the expansion allows for the management of both enquiries, member matters, and dead files.

Website

The professional engagement, training and events section of the IEU website is currently under development.

The union is now focused on moving the project forward and tackling the next set of features and improvements outlined in our roadmap.

To ensure progress is steady and that all aspects of the project are covered, the union has a dedicated team responsible for working through

the backlog of tickets, addressing any issues and delivering on remaining tasks.

Joanna Kotsakis Administration Manager

Lance Whiteley IT Manager

Canberra

The ACT office serves members in the Monaro, Riverina and South East sub branches.

Following the retirement of Organiser Anthony Telford in mid-2025, Tahlia Bruce joined the ACT team alongside Jackie Groom and Angela McDonald.

Our organising team has supported members at more than 100 worksites, providing advice, advocacy and representation across workplace concerns – including enterprise bargaining, classification, reportable conduct, workload issues, performance management and flexible work arrangements.

We continued to engage in bargaining across the independent, Christian and Catholic school sectors and have welcomed members' active involvement, particularly in the independent sector.

In March, a successful training day was held for reps from the South East and Monaro sub branches. It was very well attended with reps utilising delegates' rights provisions to attend union training.

If you did not attend this year, we strongly encourage you to come along in 2026.

Apart from bargaining, the ACT organisers and reps continue to represent members at key industry and union bodies, including:

- ACT Teacher Quality Institute – including Registration, Standards, Professional Learning and Initial Teacher Education committees
- NSW/ACT and Federal IEU Women and Equity committees
- Unions ACT Executive
- Anti-Bullying Rapid Review Taskforce
- National Teacher Workforce Action Plan (NTWAP) roundtable.

To all IEU reps, Executive, Council delegates, sub branch committees and members, your contributions bolster the union's presence and ensure advocacy is rooted in member experience.

Monaro/ACT Sub Branch

In 2025, Monaro members continued to push strongly for fairer workloads, clearer workload expectations and more planning time.

Teachers and support staff raised concerns about the lack of casual teachers, administrative overload and missed release time.

Continual themes at meetings include the excessive workload demands related to NCCD and significant ongoing concerns regarding psychosocial hazards in the workplace.

A special mention to members at Brindabella Christian College for their collective action, advocacy and support of each other. Members faced significant disruption when wages and superannuation went unpaid in February.

The IEU escalated the matter to the Fair Work Commission, leading to the appointment of administrators and recovery of outstanding entitlements. Christian Community Ministries was later confirmed as the new operator. The union welcomed the transfer as a step toward restoring stability and respect for staff.

We thank Andrew Dane and Jacob Betts for representing ACT teachers on the IEU Executive.

We welcome incoming Vice President ACT David Caton to the IEU Executive from November 2025.

The Monaro/ACT Sub Branch empowers members to pursue progressive change and ensure fair practices for all.

Riverina Sub Branch

The Riverina region continues to demonstrate the strength of grassroots unionism in action, with active and engaged members supporting one another across a wide geographic spread of schools.

From visits to Albury, Griffith, Wagga Wagga and surrounds, it is clear that members across the Riverina are passionate about their work, deeply embedded in their communities and committed to fairness in the workplace.

Member advocacy this year has focused on a few key themes: workloads, job security and equitable classification.

Whether it is support staff seeking recognition for higher duties or long-serving members working well beyond 'guaranteed hours', the message is consistent - workplace structures must reflect the real work being done.

The IEU has supported members in several schools to raise these issues directly with employers.

The issue of teacher shortages remains persistent, particularly in smaller regional towns. These shortages continue to drive unsustainable workloads - missed RFF, increased extras and limited access to planning.

These are not just operational challenges but matters of sustainability and wellbeing. Members have raised concerns about the impact this has on early career educators and long-term retention.

The Riverina Sub Branch is well placed to continue advancing members' industrial and professional interests - anchored in community, strengthened by solidarity and determined to see fairness embedded in every school workplace.

South East Sub Branch

The South East Sub Branch has settled into a new venue for meetings at The Statesman Hotel in Canberra. Members travel from across coastal and regional NSW to attend.

The sub branch includes schools from Pambula to Batemans Bay, Yass and Lake Cargelligo.

These meetings have provided a platform for members to voice their concerns on subjects such as learning and teaching environments, pay issues, NCCD and increasing workloads. Members often discuss the staffing challenges, particularly for smaller schools in regional areas.

A significant concern for the sub branch lies in work health and safety concerns, particularly issues related to occupational violence and student safety.

Workload management has been a continuous concern, with South East delegates flagging issues to include in future negotiations.

Tahlia Bruce Organiser

Jackie Groom Organiser

Harriet Kerr-Dodd Office Administrator

Angela McDonald Organiser

Newcastle

The Newcastle office supports members and chapters in the Central Coast and Hunter Valley sub branches.

The office serves more than 3000 members in schools from Taree to Woy Woy and west to Merriwa. The office is staffed by Office Administrator Veronica Lang and organisers Jim Hall, Carlo Rendina and Raelene Maxworthy.

Serving members

The work of sub branch executive members and union activists is essential to the Newcastle office, providing a high level of service to members.

The union congratulates these executive and committee members, and thanks them for the time and effort they give in serving IEU members.

In 2025, the Newcastle office continued to advise, assist and provide support to individual members in the areas of disputes, permanency, flexible work requests, reportable conduct matters, pay and performance issues, to name but a few.

Providing a service to IEU members is a significant and important job of the union and this office.

Organisers have assisted chapters to resolve many school-based issues and facilitated campaigns for members in Catholic, Christian and independent schools.

Catholic systemic schools

Former local principal Jacqueline Wilkinson is the new director of schools for the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Part of Diocesan Shared Services, the office has restructured and rebranded to now be called Catholic Schools. The union assisted 12 members with either redundancy or redeployment during this process.

Organisers continue to meet monthly with Catholic Schools to raise diocesan, chapter and individual issues.

With the support of Industrial Coordinator Neal Bent, the union negotiated improvements with

long service leave at half pay and extra release for beginning teachers in the annexure but is still negotiating the Work Practices Agreements.

School transitions

In 2026, Trinity Catholic College in Adamstown will be Year 7 to 12 after more than 40 years as a Year 7 to 10 school. This has raised workload, PD and WHS issues.

Next year, St Francis Xavier's College in Hamilton will have Year 7 to 9 and Year 11 and 12 students. San Clemente High School in Mayfield will enrol its first ever senior students.

All Saints' College in Maitland was transitioning to a single campus, but due to increasing enrolments will now continue to operate across two campuses.

The union is also assisting members at Holy Spirit Infants School in Abermain and Holy Spirit Primary School in Kurri Kurri, which have been restructured into one primary school with a single principal across two campuses.

Independent schools

All AIS MEA schools were successful with last year's Term 4 petition and helped win a positive outcome.

Under the direction of Industrial Officer Carolyn Moore, the Newcastle office negotiated an EA with the Seventh-day Adventist Northern Conference covering 10 schools from the Central Coast to the Queensland border.

The office also negotiated an ATWEA EA covering eight ALESCO schools from Lake Macquarie to Tuncurry.

Reps training

The union ran Hunter Valley reps training on 14 March followed by Central Coast reps training on 1 April.

Training included strategies for running a successful chapter, growing membership and supporting members at their school.



The IEU joined other unions at this year's May Day rally at Foreshore Park.

It also covered the current industrial landscape, where entitlements are derived from, and understanding your rights and responsibilities as a rep.

Feedback from reps was very positive: they valued the information and welcomed the opportunity to network with other reps.

Thanks to all reps who attended, Secretary Carol Matthews and Pat Devery for delivering a quality training agenda.

Hunter Workers

The 2025 Hunter Workers delegates were Carlo Rendina (Executive), Raelene Maxworthy, Jim Hall, Sarah Gardiner, Kate Tolfree and Mark Wilson.

IEU delegates helped organise and participate in this year's May Day dinner and rally at Foreshore Park.

Members also supported the "Don't Risk Dutton" and NSW workers compensation campaigns, and Hunter Workers Women's Committee International Women's Day March through Hamilton.

Jim Hall Organiser
Veronica Lang Office Administrator
Raelene Maxworthy Organiser
Carlo Rendina Organiser

Lismore

The Lismore office is responsible for members in schools in the North Coast Sub Branch (Tweed Heads to Yamba) and Mid North Coast Sub Branch (Grafton to Laurieton).

Industrial Officer Carolyn Moore, office administrator Cassie Barnes and organisers Sean van der Heide and Richard Ryan have continued their work on behalf of members in the North Coast and the Mid North Coast sub branches in 2025.

Long-time Lismore organiser Steve Bergan retired from his role and was replaced by Sean van der Heide in January.

Elections and meetings

In February, both the North Coast and Mid North Coast sub branches held their annual general meetings at Lismore and Nambucca Heads respectively.

North Coast Sub Branch President Kath Egan (St Francis Xavier Primary School, Ballina) was re-elected for 2025.

Simon Smith (Mount St Patrick Primary School, Murwillumbah) was elected as Vice President and Jennifer Allen (St Carthage's Primary School, Lismore) was re-elected as Secretary for the North Coast sub branch committee this year.

The Mid North Coast annual general meeting, held at Nambucca Heads RSL, saw President Markus Muschal (St John Paul College, Coffs Harbour) re-elected unopposed.

Also re-elected were Will Pollock (St Paul's College, Kempsey) as Vice President and Ngahine Munokoa (St John Paul College, Coffs Harbour) as Secretary for the Mid North Coast Sub Branch Committee.

Secretary Carol Matthews, Deputy Secretary David Towson and Assistant Secretaries Lyn Caton and Amanda Hioe have also attended sub branch meetings in 2025.

The sub branches welcomes and appreciates these visits by our Sydney-based officials.

Both sub branches continued moving meetings around in order to give members greater access to attend.

Throughout 2025, Carolyn, Sean and Richard have regularly met with the Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools HR team to negotiate the next Work Practices Agreement and the Lismore diocese annexure in the EA.

Support staff

Support staff engagement was boosted in 2025 through new social gatherings, beginning with a successful World Support Staff Day event in Port Macquarie. Thanks to the efforts of convenors Tracy Bancroft and Vickye McKechnie, these activities are building stronger unity and visibility for support staff across the region.

Staff cuts and restructuring

Late in Term 3, Catholic systemic members across the Lismore diocese were confronted with news of staffing cuts and restructuring. Members responded rapidly, expressing their opposition and solidarity through chapter meetings and motions. Members have demanded transparency and genuine consultation with a clear sense that challenges remain ahead.

IEU reps training days

The North Coast reps training day was held at the Lismore Workers Club on 6 June. The Mid North Coast reps training day was held on 13 June at The Westport Club in Port Macquarie.

Across both days, 36 reps attended from Catholic systemic, independent, Christian and Steiner schools.

We thank Professional Engagement Coordinator Pat Devery for running this valuable training and Cassie Barnes for her organisation of reps training events.

Finally, the union wishes to thank the North Coast and Mid North Coast sub branch executives



Early childhood teachers and educators, parents, children and supporters rallied in Lismore on 15 October as part of the IEU's Start Strong, Pay Fair campaign.

and committees for their continued activism and support of all IEU members within their respective sub branches.

To all past and present IEU school chapter reps, we acknowledge and thank you for your support and contributions on behalf of members in your schools, along with your activism towards broader union issues this year.

With your ongoing commitment and support we are positive that the union will continue to meet

and resolve matters that arise in your schools in the north and mid north coast regions.

Cassie Barnes Office Administrator
Carolyn Moore Industrial Officer
Richard Ryan Organiser
Sean van der Heide Organiser



The IEU's new office in Wollongong was opened in April by Secretary Carol Matthews.

Wollongong

The opening of an IEU office in Wollongong represents a strong commitment to supporting union members in the Illawarra and South Coast regions.

The office was officially opened on 10 April by Secretary Carol Matthews and is located at 1 Lowden Square, Wollongong, on Dharawal Country.

A dedicated, local office in Wollongong enhances the union's accessibility, visibility and relevance to its members in the region.

The NSW Teachers Federation, the Australian Services Union and the South Coast Labour Council are also situated at 1 Lowden Square.

The building also houses the Wollongong Health Centre operated by Teachers Health, with dental and optical appointments available to fund members.

Direct access

One of the greatest benefits of a Wollongong-based office is direct access for members.

Teachers and support staff often work in demanding environments where time and availability are limited.

Members can drop in for advice, attend scheduled meetings or participate in training and development sessions and sub branch meetings without the added burden of extended travel.

Symbol of solidarity

Industrial Officer Emma Ford, and organisers Emily Cranney and Tina Smith make up the Wollongong team.

Their presence in Wollongong means they can attend meetings or school visits more promptly when they are based in or near the community they serve.

This not only supports the timely resolution of issues but also sends a strong message to employers that the union is active and responsive at a local level.

Opening a Wollongong office is more than just a physical location - it is a symbol of solidarity, service and presence in a city often referred to as "Union Town".

ECEC

On 13 August, Organiser Tina Smith held a Big Fat Smile meeting with early childhood teacher members to discuss the "Unite for Change" campaign and how they can assist at a centre level.

IEU ambassador and Keiraville Community Preschool director Margaret Gleeson provided an insight into the negotiations between all stakeholders.

Sub branch

Our first sub branch meeting will be held in the Wollongong office in February 2026.

Emily Cranney Organiser
Emma Ford Industrial Officer
Tina Smith Organiser

National/international

Workplace reform and community advocacy

Over the past year, IEU members have continued to secure significant victories in their workplaces, while also reinforcing union values that gained strong support across the community and at the ballot box.

The return of a federal Labor government presents a valuable opportunity to consolidate recent achievements and advance our long-term vision for meaningful reforms in education and workplace legislation.

Although some critical issues remain unresolved – such as the failure to address anti-discrimination exemptions and the outcome of the Voice referendum – IEU members played a central role in driving the union movement's success in achieving the most significant workplace law reforms in a generation.

IEU members have been among the key beneficiaries of union-led campaigns that shaped the government's agenda, resulting in landmark changes including:

- restrictions on fixed-term contracts
- strengthened rights to flexible work arrangements
- multi-employer bargaining provisions
- progress towards gender equity
- the right to disconnect from work outside hours
- enhanced protections for union delegates
- wage justice for early childhood educators.

These accomplishments reflect the power of collective action and the unwavering commitment of IEU members to building a fairer, more equitable future for all.

Advocacy, reviews and submissions

The education sector has seen a significant number of reviews and inquiries during 2025.

The IEU has actively contributed to these processes through detailed submissions and ongoing professional engagement.

You can access full copies of all IEU submissions at: ieu.org.au/policy-submission

Key submissions include:

- ECEC national information sharing model
- ACARA monitoring and evaluation processes for Foundation to Year 10 Australian curriculum
- Federal Education Department's Anti-Bullying Rapid Review
- Productivity Commission inquiry – building a more skilled and adaptable workforce
- National Child Safety Review
- Jobs and Skills Australia: Gender Economic Equality study
- Review of the Secure Jobs, Better Pay legislation
- Inquiry into the *Better and Fairer Schools Bill 2024*
- Wage justice for the ECEC workforce
- Review of the HELP scheme for remote area teachers.

Ongoing representation

The IEU continues to maintain active membership and participation in a broad range of government reference groups, steering committees, and professional forums, including:

- National Teacher Workforce Action Plan – Commonwealth ministerial group
- Commonwealth school reform agreement – ministerial committee
- Shaping Our Future – ACECQA stakeholder reference group
- Thrive by Five – national ECEC forum
- Department of Education stakeholder consultation – including engagement with the Deputy Secretary for Schools
- Enabling teacher professional agency research project – partner advisory group
- Schools as safe workplaces research project – partner advisory group
- Jobs and Skills Australia ECEC capacity study – steering group
- HumanAbility Industry Advisory Committee for ECE

- ACTU steering committee – JSA gender economic equality study
- The Australian government Department of Education ECEC reference group
- ECEC technical committees.

Driving the next phase of union wins

Lasting, meaningful change requires ongoing member action and bold reform from government.

Our schools, kindergartens and preschools still face serious challenges.

It is only through collective union strength – in our workplaces, communities and the political arena – that we will drive the next wave of progress.

Our key priorities:

- **Fair funding for all schools**
Education funding must be based on student need. That means a funding model based on student need, not postcode or sector, with full 100 per cent SRS funding for public schools and long-term funding certainty for non-government schools.
- **Reproductive health leave for all**
All workers need access to paid reproductive health leave as a basic workplace right.
- **Real action on teacher workload**
Teacher workload must be reduced through targeted government measures, including curbing excessive and duplicative compliance and applying workload impact assessments to all education policies and initiatives.
- **Close the discrimination loopholes**
Faith-based exemptions must be aligned with contemporary community standards to ensure fairness and equity. Exemptions must not be a backdoor to discrimination.
- **Protect the right to take action**
We must restore a fair process for members to take action and prevent employers from withholding work or pay in response to minor work bans.

Unions standing together to advocate for the profession

In a show of solidarity, the IEU joined forces this year with the Australian Education Union (AEU) and the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) – representing educators across the government and university sectors – to connect with members and champion the shared values at the heart of the teaching profession.

Joint statements and an online webinar for members in all three unions highlighted critical issues facing education prior to this year's federal election.

Together, these joint actions amplified a crucial message: the integrity and autonomy of education must be protected.

As political pressures mount from within Australia and overseas, educators face increasing scrutiny, interference and policy decisions that threaten to undermine their professional expertise and independence.

By uniting across sectors, the IEU, AEU and NTEU not only reinforce the strength of collective action but also remind the public and policymakers that quality education depends on respecting and empowering those who deliver it.

This collaboration is a call to action – for educators, communities and allies – to stand firm in defence of a profession that shapes the future.

Professional engagement priorities

Clarifying compliance: Advocating to remove duplication and excess

In 2025, the IEU continued to prioritise the elimination of unsustainable workloads in compliance, programming and curriculum record-keeping across different jurisdictions.

Members consistently raised concerns about overly burdensome expectations, and the IEU is committed to addressing these issues head-on.

Our engagement with federal authorities will continue, particularly around the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) compliance, with a focus on developing and sharing practical exemplars to support teachers.

National Teacher Workforce Action Plan (NTWAP)

The IEU remains actively involved in the implementation of key proposals under the NTWAP. We are working collaboratively with the federal government and education authorities to develop measures that effectively address the growing workload challenges teachers face and ensure all federal initiatives are subject to the national Teacher Workload Impact Assessment tool.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education: Navigating innovation responsibly

As AI becomes increasingly integrated into educational settings, the IEU is taking a proactive stance.

We are engaging with employers and authorities to ensure AI tools are used ethically and safely, with a strong emphasis on reducing workload pressures.

Our goal is to work with federal authorities and national peak bodies to establish clear protocols that safeguard both teachers and students.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and support for early career teachers

Supporting new teachers is a cornerstone of the IEU's advocacy.

In 2025, the IEU continued to champion best-practice induction programs and advocate for increased support for early career teachers and their mentors. This includes pushing for dedicated time and resources to ensure mentoring is meaningful and effective.

Early years strategy and ACECQA: Easing the compliance burden

The IEU is calling for urgent reforms in early childhood education and care (ECEC).

We are lobbying for relief from excessive compliance tasks, advocating for parity with school-based teachers, and pushing for the removal of unnecessary documentation requirements in the assessment and ratings process and transition to school statements.

Amid growing national attention on child safety, the IEU is actively advocating for robust regulatory frameworks that safeguard both children and ECEC staff.



Above: IEUA Federal Secretary Brad Hayes (centre) was joined by members Catherine Nolan (ACT), Jacinta Lai (ACT), Lauren Hall (Victoria) and Grayson Tindale (Queensland) at the National Teacher Workforce Roundtable in Canberra on 19 September. Below: Participants discussed the complex challenges facing teachers and school leaders.



The union is also pushing for reduced administrative burdens and ensuring timely, relevant professional development for all members engaged in this vital work.

Further work has been done this year to amplify the benefits of educational program documentation information sheets that were developed in collaboration with ACECQA.

This included videos featuring Vice President Early Childhood Services Michelle Thompson explaining how to get the most out of using the documentation sheets.

Women and equity priorities

Championing reproductive health and wellbeing

The IEU is an active participant in the ACTU's reproductive, menstruation and menopause leave and working entitlements group.

This ongoing collaboration supports the promotion and implementation of the ACTU's model clause, advocating for comprehensive workplace entitlements that reflect the real needs of workers navigating reproductive health challenges.

Our commitment ensures that these vital issues remain front and centre in workplace policy discussions.

Driving recruitment through member engagement

Recognising that strong unions are built on active membership, the federal IEU Women and Equity Committee is developing targeted strategies and resources, including materials that help members to understand and exercise their workplace rights.

These initiatives aim to foster deeper connections with current members while laying the groundwork for sustained recruitment efforts.

By listening to, involving and empowering members, the IEU is building a more inclusive and resilient union movement.

Reinvigorating branch Women and Equity committees

Revitalising our branch-level Women and Equity committees is a key priority.

Committee members in each branch are working to encourage greater participation and create clear pathways to leadership within the union.

These efforts are about more than representation – they're about building a movement where every voice is heard and every member has the opportunity to lead.

Global solidarity in action: international partnerships

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA

The IEU is proud to stand in solidarity with workers around the world through its ongoing membership of Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, supporting global efforts to strengthen workers' rights.

As a UnionLink partner, the IEU also provides direct support to Timor Leste farmer's unions, helping build fair and sustainable working conditions.

Education International (EI) and global union collaboration

As a committed member of EI, the IEU is part of a powerful global network representing more than 30 million education workers across 380 unions.

EI's recent initiatives include exploring the impact of artificial intelligence in education, advocating for human rights and trade union freedoms,

and advancing the United Nations report on the teaching profession.

We also maintain a strong partnership with our sister union, NASUWT – the teachers’ union, in the United Kingdom. Together, we share strategies and resources to tackle common challenges facing educators in both Australia and the UK.

Council of Pacific Education (COPE)

Through COPE, the IEU supports affiliates across the Pacific on professional, industrial, legal and human rights matters.

This support was crucial during the recent industrial action by the Vanuatu Teachers Union, where 600 members stood strong with the backing of COPE’s solidarity and financial aid.

In February 2025, a strategic review of COPE’s operations was held in Melbourne ahead of the COPE Executive meeting.

Assistant Federal Secretary Veronica Yewdall was invited to attend as part of her role in supporting the women’s network coordinator.

The Executive developed a forward-looking plan that is aligned with EI’s priorities while preserving COPE’s unique cultural identity.

This plan is built around four key pillars:

- elevating the status of the teaching profession
- promoting quality public education
- championing human and trade union rights, including gender and social equity
- advancing climate justice.

The strategy will be presented at the upcoming COPE triennial conference, marking a new chapter in regional collaboration and advocacy.

Conclusion

In 2025, the IEU has remained steadfast in its commitment to driving meaningful change across the non-government education sector.

These efforts are anchored in well-established focus areas for the profession: tackling unsustainable workloads, empowering teachers and educators with greater professional autonomy, and leveraging the wave of industrial reforms introduced by the federal government.

These reforms have opened the door to tangible improvements in the lives of teachers and support staff.

From enhanced job security and fairer pay to better working conditions, the IEU has committed time and resources to ensure these changes are not just policy on paper – but progress felt in classrooms and staffrooms across the country.

By aligning strategic advocacy with legislative momentum, the IEU is forging ahead to secure a more sustainable, respectful and rewarding professional environment for all education workers in the non-government sector.

Veronica Yewdall Assistant Federal Secretary

IEU partners

The IEU acknowledges its service providers and partners for their support throughout 2025.

Teachers Health

In 2025, Teachers Health laid the groundwork for sustainable growth while continuing to support its members with award-winning service and value-for-money cover.

Growth and sustainability

Despite intense industry competition and broader social and economic challenges, Teachers Health continued to deliver strong value and support to its members during the year.

The fund welcomed more than 6500 new members (3.5% growth, well above the industry average), bringing the total number of lives covered to over 440,000.

Retention rates were again outstanding at 96%, compared with the industry average of 86%.

Mindful of cost-of-living pressures, Teachers Health kept the average annual premium increase in 2025 to 2.9% across all products – significantly lower than the industry average of 3.7%.

These results reflect Teachers Health's commitment to putting members at the heart of everything they do.

Member satisfaction

Always striving to give members the best, Teachers Health was proud to be recognised at the Roy Morgan Customer Satisfaction Awards in May.

Teachers Health took top honours, scooping the award for 2024 private health insurer of the year and private health insurer of the year (not-for-profit or restricted).

A stronger, more resilient future

At the end of the financial year, Teachers Health finalised its merger with Queensland Teachers Union Health (TUH). Taking effect from 1 July, the merger unites two not-for-profit, union-based

health funds and the only two funds in Australia dedicated to teachers, educators, nurses, midwives and carers.

Together, they form Australia's largest union-based health fund with more than 120 years' experience and covering close to 500,000 lives.

With an enhanced national footprint and strong brand positioning, Teachers Health is set to deliver even greater value to members whilst nurturing and expanding its strong connections with stakeholder unions.

Teachers Health values its long-standing partnership with the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch, which continues to deliver meaningful benefits and opportunities for members.

With its shared focus on supporting the education community, Teachers Health looks forward to building on this strong foundation for many years to come.

The IEU was pleased to have Teachers Health present at reps training events in 2025.

Reps also appreciated the presence of Teachers Health at the training days, which assisted them greatly in the organisation of school visits.

NGS Super

NGS Super is the industry super fund for non-government education and community-focused organisations.

It was established in 1988 by three organisations: IEUA NSW/ACT Branch, Association of Independent Schools of NSW and The Catholic Schools Hierarchy (NSW).

The IEU and NGS once again entered into a sponsorship agreement for 2025-2026.

The agreement provides opportunities for the fund to inform the union membership on the services, products and benefits of the fund and educate members on topics such as superannuation, insurance and retirement planning.

The IEU nominee on the NGS Board is Secretary Carol Matthews.



From left: TMB Board deputy chairperson Verity Firth, Secretary Carol Matthews, TMB Board chairperson Andrew Kearnan and Deputy Secretary David Towson.

Late this year, NGS will be upgrading its administration system as part of a broader transformation to enhance the services and experience the fund provides to its members.

It will enable NGS to deliver more streamlined and personalised services and make it easier for members to manage contributions and member accounts.

The fund is committed to providing award-winning services. NGS representatives, including a customer relationships manager and strategic partnerships manager attended workplace visits and all reps training days in 2025.

The NGS chief executive addressed delegates at the August 2025 Council meeting.

The NGS education manager and strategic partnership manager were also present at the meeting, making themselves available to speak to delegates. IEU/NGS-branded tote bags with NGS information were provided to delegates.

Planning for Retirement seminars for IEU members were held during the school holidays in 2025 in Ultimo, Parramatta, Newcastle, Wollongong, Canberra, Port Macquarie, Central Coast, Albury and Wagga Wagga. The seminars covered the following topics: considering nearing retirement, the amount of super needed for a comfortable retirement, accessing super and the government support that can be accessed.

The fund also offered free superannuation seminars and webinars during the year to help members make the most of super, whether they were at the beginning or end of their careers.

The fund has received multiple awards recognising commitment to service quality, investment performance and member satisfaction. It was awarded Best in Service Quality 2025 at the Super Review Fund of the Year Awards, highlighting its proactive approach to member service.

Teachers Mutual Bank

Teachers Mutual Bank (TMB), originating over 60 years ago, is the only dedicated bank servicing the

education sector and their families to secure their financial futures.

The bank invests profits back into members, the education industry, the planet and the people on it. The bank's commitment to responsible practices and investments sets it apart from other banks.

For more than 10 years now, TMB has been named one of the world's most ethical companies.

It does not directly invest in or source money from the fossil fuel industry and was the first bank to sign up to the investor-led Climate League position calling for cuts to Australia's emissions of at least 45% by 2030 in line with the Paris Agreement.

TMB and the IEU have again entered into a partnership agreement for 2025-2026.

The agreement gives TMB the opportunity to provide specific offers, campaigns and financial education to IEU members on an ad-hoc basis via presentations, webinars, podcasts or campaigns as the need arises.

The TMB/IEU Environment Grants continue each year with the generous sponsorship of TMB.

TMB will be present at the IEU AGM on 25 October for the announcement of this year's winners.

TMB also attended all reps training days in 2025 and sub branch meetings as appropriate.

TMB is currently exploring a recognition program for IEU Reps and a pilot event of a Teachers Wellbeing Expo with other IEU partners.

Union Shopper

Union Shopper utilises the collective bargaining power of unions across Australia to provide great savings and services to members and their families.

Union Shopper is a 100% union-owned organisation run solely to benefit members, providing good deals and benefits on a large range of products and services.

Union Shopper has over 100 unions across Australia already offering their combined members database access to the largest number of offers and savings.

It realised the need to keep its valuable member services exclusive to members of associated unions in Australia; hence, the creation of a 'Members Only' area its website.

Members are encouraged to register online and be rewarded with offers and savings for years to come.

By making one relatively large purchase or a few smaller purchases through Union Shopper, members can easily make savings worth more than their annual union fees.

Union Shopper is best known for its electrical shopping service, but motor vehicles, travel, accommodation, entertainment, gift cards, insurance and health products are some of the other categories it covers with members enjoying unlimited use of these discounts and services.

Recently, it added its latest initiative, Member's Mobile and its SIM-only mobile plan offer, which reflects Union Shopper's continued commitment to easing cost of living pressures for members while ensuring quality service and reliability.

Members can purchase more than 100 gift cards from Australia suppliers, including major supermarkets and fuel suppliers, that can be purchased at a discounted price.

Union Shopper appreciates the continued support and partnership with the IEU and looks forward to working with the union and its members next year and beyond.

Welfare Rights Centre

The IEU has a longstanding affiliation to the trade union program at the Welfare Rights Centre (WRC). The Centre continues to assist IEU members and their families, particularly in relation to social security matters.

The WRC also helps unemployed workers generally and people who cannot work because of disability.

The WRC offers training sessions to equip workers with knowledge and skills needed to support people navigating the complex Disability

Support Pension and appeals process. It is a great opportunity for IEU organisers to enhance their knowledge and provide support to members who are no longer able to work due to disability, injury or illness.

The WRC works on policy, legal and casework issues affecting workers in casual employment, and on the relationship between workers compensation and the social security system.

The WRC acknowledges the IEU for its support and commitment to social justice.

Workers Health Centre

For nearly 50 years, the Workers Health Centre (WHC) has provided support for workers and their families by providing quality workplace rehabilitation. The WHC is Australia's most experienced injury management and occupational rehabilitation service.

The IEU is an affiliate union of the WHC. The WHC is a union owned, SIRA accredited, not-for-profit, rehabilitation centre. The board of directors is comprised of union officials from affiliated unions and Unions NSW.

The WHC was established in 1976 by a group of unions that recognised a need for worker-focused rehabilitation and return to work services for injured workers.

Along with rehabilitation, the WHC provides Employee Assistance Programs (EAP). All IEU staff have access to this service. Confidential counselling is provided on any work-related or personal matter.

IEU members are encouraged to use the WHC if injured at work. For a referral to the WHC, members should contact their organiser.

Helen O'Regan Executive Assistant

