

AEU NT Member Bulletin 10/2020

31 August 2020

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NT election results

The Gunner Government has been returned for another term. The AEU NT looks forward to continuing a constructive relationship with the government, however we note with concern that Territory Labor made a deliberate decision to focus almost exclusively on coronavirus during the election campaign and made almost no policy commitments.

The AEU NT [noted during the campaign the lack of pledges from all parties, and the need for a stronger commitments in remote areas especially](#), where numerous schools desperately require infrastructure upgrades, and very little progress has been made on key issues like Indigenous employment and training and bilingual education.

The AEU NT [released our own list of five priority areas](#) and these will continue to inform our advocacy with the Government. With a budget due to be issued in November, our first priority will be to protect education from any cuts due to the Government's debt and deficit problems.

Our Branch Conference next weekend will see members from across the NT come together to determine our focus areas for the next 12 months.

Coronavirus travel restrictions and remote communities

As the Term 3 school holiday break approaches, the issue of interstate travel again looms as a challenge. The Full-Time Officers are continuing to discuss this matter with senior departmental officers. We have stressed the need to balance appropriate protocols to protect vulnerable people and communities with the wellbeing of employees, noting many members have family interstate and have been unable to travel all year (and in the case of most remote communities, were locked down for many weeks in Semester 1).

Remote members should be aware by now of the directive issued by the Chief Executive on 1 August: "If you intend to travel to a remote community, you can only do so if you have not travelled interstate in the last 14 days. If you have travelled interstate in the last 14 days (regardless of where) your principal/line manager will not approve your travel to a remote community." (All employees are asked to inform their principal or manager if intending to travel interstate, whether to a declared hotspot or not.)

This directive is for DoE employees only and is separate from declarations on hotspots and the like issued by the Chief Health Officer, which apply to all people entering the NT. The Department has issued a specific directive to allay fears of many people in remote communities who remain extremely worried about the threat of coronavirus.

This directive means that for remote members it will not be possible to travel interstate in the coming stand down period and return immediately to your community. The Department is developing contingency plans for those employees who do travel interstate to be based temporarily in an urban location upon your return. If you have plans to travel interstate in the coming school holiday period, we advise you to contact your office for specific advice.

Our general advice to members is that you reconsider interstate travel for the Term 3 period, due to the risk that it could be declared a hotspot while you are there and you could be forced into mandatory quarantine at your own cost and placed on unpaid leave.

AEU NT elections postponed

An election scheduled to be occurring now for several positions on the AEU NT Branch Executive (including the President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer) has been postponed due to coronavirus. The AEC industrial elections division has advised all union elections are on hold until at least the end of September.

The Secretary will advise members when a revised election schedule has been determined by the AEC. If the election does not occur until next year, current office holders will be permitted to continue in their position until after the election.

Federal Women's Conference goes online

The AEU Federal Women's Conference is going online this year. The conference is a gathering of AEU women from around the nation talking about women's issues in education.

The Federal Women's Conference will consist of two, three-hour Zoom sessions on Friday 2 October. There are 10 places available to the first 10 women to register. To register your interest or for further information call AEU NT Women's Officer Alyson on 0457 888 873 or email alyson.kavanagh@aeunt.org.au by Monday 7 September.

Watch our Branch Conference via livestream

We will be livestreaming significant portions of our Branch Conference next weekend. As the Conference is open to all members, any member who wishes to observe proceedings online may do so – please email conference@aeunt.org.au to request access details.

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

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