



## Guide to Regional Council meetings

### **Regions and Regional Councils: purpose and member involvement**

Regions are an official and essential part of the AEU NT structure. They are an intermediate body between sub-branches and Branch Executive but, more importantly, they are how we build power.

All members in a region are entitled to attend Regional Council (RC) meetings. RC meetings should occur at least once a term and are held in person where possible with an online option offered.

RC meetings are an opportunity for members of the region to receive updates from AEU officers on current campaigns and issues and to bring up any matters of interest from your workplace. Where possible, each sub-branch in the region should send at least 1-2 members to each meeting.

Regional Councils may refer matters to the Branch Executive or the Full-Time Officers (Branch President and branch Secretary) for further consideration. This occurs via formal resolutions (motions) that are carried during the meeting.

### **The regions**

Regional councils exist in each of the six AEU NT regions: **Darwin, Palmerston and Rural, Alice Springs, Barkly, Katherine and Arnhem**. Alignment with Department of Education (DoE) regions is not exact due to DoE regions having shifted.

AEU NT regional boundaries require a formal rule change to be approved by Branch Conference before they can be shifted to match the DoE boundaries.

Contact us if you are unsure to which AEU NT region you belong.

### **Governance of regions**

Shall be via a Regional Executive consisting of a Regional President, Regional Vice-President and Regional Secretary elected at an AGM held in March each year. Up to four additional members may also be included on the Regional Executive as general members.

The Regional Executive is responsible for setting the dates and agendas of RC meetings. The Branch office can assist with these arrangements as well as Regional executive elections as needed.

The Regional President (or Vice President in their absence) is responsible for chairing RC meetings. The Secretary's role is to ensure minutes are taken for each meeting.

Each region also has one or more Regional Councillors elected to the AEU NT Branch Executive. The number of Councillors representing a region is determined by member numbers. A region gets one Councillor for every 200 members or part thereof in accordance with branch rules. For example, if a region has under 200 members they get one Regional Councillor. As soon as that number exceeds 200, that region is entitled to an additional

Councillor. They would not receive a third Councillor until the region's membership was more than 400 members. Regional Councillors sitting on Branch Executive are tasked with bringing the concerns of members in their region to the attention of the wider Branch Executive. They may also be members of the Regional Executive on Regional Council.

### **Notice of meetings and agenda**

The Regional Executive or the Regional Council itself shall determine a schedule of meetings and advise the branch office. The branch office is responsible for circulating notice of meetings via email to all financial members of the region at least seven days in advance. The branch office will also issue a calendar meeting invite to all Regional Executive, relevant Branch Executive Regional Councillors and sub-branch reps. If previous meeting minutes are on file and have been approved by the Branch Secretary, they will be attached to the calendar invite.

An agenda will be circulated along with the meeting notice containing a standard agenda. Members of a region may contact the office with specific agenda items or liaise directly with the Regional Executive and/or Branch Executive Regional Councillors.

### **Meeting format**

The format of each meeting will be specified in the notice. Meetings are mostly run face-to-face with an online option. In wholly remote regions, all meetings will be online. Where a face-to-face option is preferred, sub-branches are encouraged to rotate the responsibility of hosting meetings.

### **Quorum**

An RC meeting, no matter its size, requires at least 10 members to be quorate. If quorum is not reached, anything requiring a vote, such as elections of any kind, approval of motions or confirmation of previous minutes must be carried over to the next meeting. Meetings that are not quorate should be shorter than usual or deferred.

### **Record of meetings**

- Minutes should be kept at each meeting by the Regional Secretary or a designated member.
- Attendance of members present, and apologies should be recorded, with members' names and sub-branch included.
- The first item of business at each meeting (following an Acknowledgement of Country) should be to confirm minutes from the previous meeting. They need to be **MOVED** and **SECONDED**. Names of movers and seconders should be noted.
- Minutes may be circulated widely to members in a region via sub-branch reps so it is important that they do not contain confidential, false, malicious or misleading information. As far as possible, the minute-taker should only record factual matters (such as attendance and the topics under discussion) and formal decisions.
- Where a specific issue from a sub-branch is discussed in more detail, if minuted, it is best to do so in general terms. For example, "*discussion occurred about problems*"

*with teachers not receiving their non-contact time in an urban school” rather than something specific like “the principal Michelle told Bob that he had to go to the parent meeting in his release time.”*

- Generally, it is best to avoid naming or identifying individual members or their sub-branch when noting reports, especially if the issue is contentious. References can be kept vague with notes like *“members at a large secondary school reported experiencing some issues around teacher work hours.”*
- Any motions put forward need to be **MOVED** and **SECONDED** with names noted. They can then be discussed, debated and voted upon. It is not necessary to minute the debate/discussion in detail. All that needs to be recorded is that the debate/discussion took place and whether the motion was **CARRIED** or **DEFEATED**. **The President/Chair of the meeting should ensure motions have a clear intent and clear direction in terms of who they are asking to do what.**
- Not all agenda items need to be put forward as formal motions and voted upon, however, if the region wishes to escalate issues to the Branch Executive/Full-Time Officers then items should be managed in this way.
- Any RC meetings held with an online option or fully online will be recorded. The purpose of this recording is to provide a back-up reference should there be any dispute over decisions made. These recordings (and any AI generated notes) are not for sharing outside of the branch office and elected Regional Executive and/or Branch Executive Regional Councillors nor can they be considered a substitute for proper meeting minutes.

### **Circulation of Minutes**

After each RC meeting, the Regional Secretary (or designated person) should ensure the minutes are provided by email to the branch office for approval by the Branch Secretary within seven days.

The Branch Secretary will check minutes within 14 days of receipt and will approve (or offer advice/feedback) them for circulation to the Regional Executive, Branch Executive Regional Councillors, all sub-branch reps in the region and any other member of the region on request. These minutes will be filed in the office and included in the next meeting’s calendar invite for easy reference.