

AEA Objectives

The general aims and objectives of your Union are: -

- (a) to uphold the rights, improve, protect and foster the interest of the membership;
- (b) to formulate and implement schemes for the industrial, social and general advancement of its members;
- (c) to advocate on members behalf claims in relation to wages and working conditions;
- (d) to discuss matters affecting the welfare, rights and interests of members;
- (e) to act as a medium in expressing professional opinion on any matters relating to SAAS employment;
- (f) to elect officers to the Executive and to hire employees to further the objectives of the Union.

AEA Executive

The senior body of the Association. The group comprises General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, President, Vice-President(s) and Treasurer.

All positions to the Association's Executive are open for election at the end of a 2-year tenure for incumbent officers.

All financial members are able to seek nomination and election to the Executive of the Association.

State Council

State Council is the governing body of the AEA. Members of State Council can perform a myriad of functions ranging from member representation to looking after the financial interests of the union to determining and directing the policies of the union in all matters affecting membership interest.

State Councillors are elected from the membership to represent the following work regions: -

Zone 1 – North West Region

Zone 2 – Adelaide Hills & surroundings (inc. Angaston/Tanunda)

Zone 3 – Riverland District

Zone 4 – South East District

Zone 5 – Southern Metropolitan

Zone 6 – Central Metropolitan

Zone 7 – Northern Metropolitan

Zone 8 – Admin. & Support Staff

Zone 9 – ATS

Zone 10 – MTS

Zone 11 – IC Paramedics

Zone 12 – CTL's

Zone 13 – Students

Zone 14 – Communications

Shop Stewards

Workplace Union Representatives are the key to a strong, effective and democratic union. The task is sometimes thankless and difficult; often going unrewarded, but is the most important role in any Union Movement.

Shop Stewards help and encourage all members on their worksite to achieve better conditions of employment at work. They tell the Union Office exactly what is happening in their particular area and ensure the Union's resources are used for membership benefit.

Often the Shop Steward is the first contact, and in some instances, the only contact members will have with the Union, and are the organisers of the AEA in their teams.

The amount that a Shop Steward does depends on individual circumstances such as experience, the amount of time available and the nature of the issue.

While senior Union Officials provide some valuable support, advice and information the Shop Steward is the organiser on the job. The AEA encourages their Shop Stewards to take as much responsibility as they feel safe and comfortable with.

Role of the Shop Steward

The roles and responsibilities are as diverse as the nature of work to which they are employed in, however, some of the roles would include: -

- to convey the views of members, not pushing their own opinions;
- to gather all relevant information before going to management;
- assist members to act on their own complaints using local support mechanisms, resources and grievance procedures;
- to maintain confidentiality at all times (information can only be disclosed at the request or approval of the member(s) concerned);
- agree on outcomes being sought before meeting management;
- advise senior Union Officials on matters that may require their involvement or intervention in.

Representing a Member

If the Shop Steward is approached to represent a member(s) on any issue, the first thing to do is to gather as much information from the member as possible. Ask questions, but allow the member to speak freely. Shop Stewards may wish to consult the Award, Enterprise Bargaining Agreement or the Policy and Procedure Manual. You may also wish to liaise with a senior Union Official for direction.

It is essential that any information the member provides be kept in the strictest confidence and the details disclosed only as the member's request.

When acting on the members behalf it is important that you have clear direction from them as to what they wish for you to do, and what outcomes they are hoping for, so there is no misunderstandings.

Do not make any promises other than you will try and resolve the matter.

Never agree to outcomes proposed by management if that differs from the instructions you have been given, without first consulting with the member(s) concerned.

It is important you have all the information before going to management. It can set back your case (and lead to embarrassment) if you are advised of some important facts in front of management, facts that you were not previously aware of.

Approaching Management

When dealing with management remain calm and in control. As a Shop Steward you are there to represent a member(s) and not to act as a mediator or to solve problems for management.

If you are unable to resolve the issue adequately tell the member and give an explanation of the reason. You will receive more respect from the members if you are open and honest with them. It is particularly important to discuss why things have gone the way they have when the outcome is not what the member(s) wanted.

If you are successful in achieving a suitable outcome, reinforce the message that the support of their Union and their membership allows wins to occur.