



Committee of Management Report Back to Members

**Annual General Meeting
2020**

On behalf of the Committee Of Management we acknowledge that we organise from the stolen and unceded lands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We commit to decolonisation and organise against punitive and racist social security policies, like the Community Development Program, the Basics Card and the Cashless Welfare Card.

This always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Committee of Management Report

What does the Committee of Management do?

The Committee of Management (CoM) is the national union body charged with the governance, financial, and legal functions. The CoM is democratically voted in by the AUWU membership every year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), and a requirement of CoM is that its members are unemployed, underemployed, or unwaged workers' (to ensure that the AUWU is representative of its membership) and are regular volunteers of the union.

The CoM usually consists of senior office holders of the AUWU that have transitioned into leadership or mentor roles. A key aspect of their CoM role is to provide guidance to the operations coordinators in the Operations Committee.

The current Committee of Management is



Oli Levenson
President



Owen Bennett
Vice President



Minami Rose
Treasurer



Nijole Nuajokas
Secretary



Alex North
National Operations
Coordinator
(non-voting member)



Vacant
Ordinary Committee
Member (x2)

The Steering Committee is a sub-group of the CoM, that meets to discuss pressing executive matters and reports to the CoM.

Additionally, the CoM builds relationships with other stakeholders, provides advice to operations on the strategic vision of the union, and represents the executive face of the union.

Summary of 2020

On behalf of the AUWU Committee of Management, I would like to thank all the volunteers who made the extraordinary growth outlined in the Operations Report possible. It is a testament to the skill and resourcefulness of AUWU volunteers that we achieved so much despite all the challenges presented to the union by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am pleased to report that the Committee of Management union came out of 2020 with stronger governance and financial structures. I would like to thank all members of the AUWU Committee of Management who volunteered their time to make this progress possible.

Governance

The Committee of Management (CoM) was successful in strengthening AUWU governance procedures in 2020. Below is a list of some of the most significant steps forward:

- **Digital assets consolidation**

At the beginning of the year, the AUWU had a partnership with our friends at UnCircled in order to gain free access to G Suite for AUWU email accounts. This was rolled out and gave AUWU officials their own @auwu email addresses and centralised storage capabilities.

In a joint meeting with the Operations Committee, the CoM resolved that the AUWU must have sole ownership of all our digital data not only for privacy reasons, but also to ensure the integrity of the organisation. Since that resolution we have made significant progress and are in the process of bringing together all AUWU digital assets under AUWU control. This will be a project the current Committee will be passing on to the new committee.

- **Charity status application achieved**

As part of the above project to consolidate our digital assets, the Committee resolved to apply for charity status with the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC) in order to gain free access to a range of services, including G suite. Thanks to the work of the CoM, this application was recently accepted. The fact that the AUWU is now a registered charity will not change any internal aspects of the union or operations. It will, however, save us tens of thousands of dollars in costs.

- **Ensure consistency across governing documents**

In 2019, in a joint meeting with the Operations Committee, the CoM unanimously passed a new structural document which outlined a new definition of membership. These changes were later confirmed by a Structural Reform Committee (SRC), formed in mid 2020 to help write a new constitution and develop our national structure. Importantly, the SRC was open to all AUWU volunteers. I would like to thank all those who gave their time to assist in these crucial internal aspects of the union.

As members are no doubt aware, it was resolved that to be a member of the AUWU association (i.e to vote or nominate at the AGM) applicants must be 'non-full time workers and have volunteered for the union for six months over the previous two year period. (Please note, this does not affect voting rights at the branch level which are open to all members.) At a general meeting held on 19 September 2020, the constitutional changes to our membership definition were passed unanimously. These administrative changes were made so our organisational structure could better reflect the practical processes in place, and protect current and future member's voting rights. The new constitution was placed on the website and was submitted to Consumer Affairs Victoria.

- **Easier Access to Become Member of the Association**

In line with the constitutional reforms, the CoM resolved to make it easier for members to apply to become members of the association (i.e. to enable them to vote and nominate at AGMs and participate in the legal activities of the union). A form was placed on the AUWU website encouraging members to apply.

- **Better Dispute Resolution Processes**

To ensure that the CoM fostered a good working culture, the CoM resolved to appoint an experienced mediator, Greg Raynes, in order to mediate any interpersonal issues that developed throughout the year. Greg selflessly volunteered his time to assist us with a number of mediations between members, which greatly contributed to the excellent working culture of the Committee of Management this year.

- **Mentors**

To build our connections with other organisations, the Committee asked a range of our supporters to become official AUWU mentors. This was an effective way of formalising our relations with a number of our allies, including Victorian Trades Hall and United Workers Union. The mentors program will be rolled out with our new website in early 2021.

Finance

The second major goal of this committee was to streamline our financial processes, ensure transparency and integrity. Below is a list of some of the main improvements to our financial processes

- **Streamlining Transactions**

When this committee started there were many people who had access to the national accounts which made it difficult to ensure good accounting and the integrity of our financial processes. We undertook a program of streamlining our processes and ensuring that the Treasurer and the Operations Committee could work together to ensure funds were transferred in a timely manner. As part of this process, we created a decision making matrix which outlined clearly how requests for financial approval are handled within the union.

- **Accountability Report**

This year, the Treasurer began giving Accountability reports at meetings to ensure transparency of financial processes. This ensured that any irregular financial transactions were quickly brought to the attention of the Committee for review.

- **Out of Budget Expenditure Form**

The long-term goal of the Committee is to ensure that every financial transaction is budgeted in advance through our annual planning process. Unfortunately, the interruptions that occurred in 2020 made this difficult. For the cases where budgeted expenditure was not possible, the Committee released an Out of Budget Expenditure form on our website which allowed any branch member to apply for financial support to meet their branch activities. This was accompanied by a short FAQ.

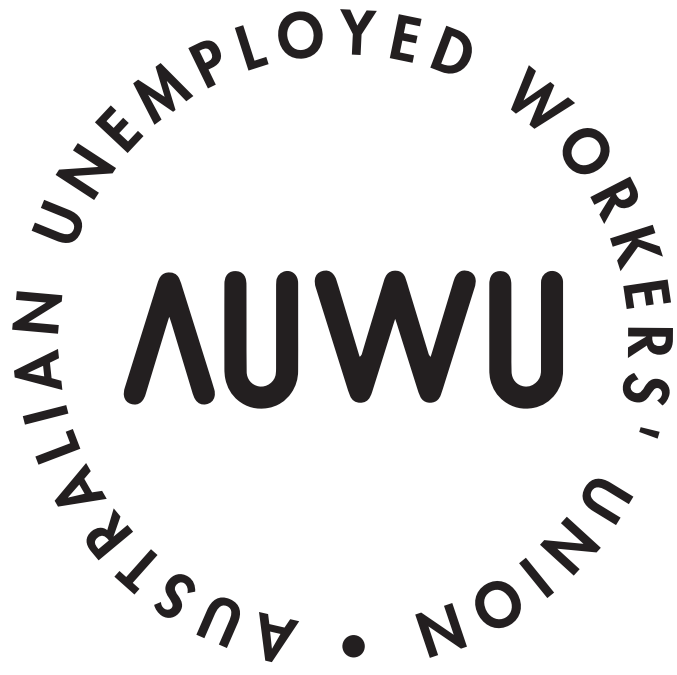
Areas for Improvement

- **Greater cooperation between Committee, Members and Branches**

There have been a number of occasions where communication between the Committee and the AUWU Branches and Members has been inadequate. For example, it was brought to the attention of the Committee that the financial processes were not well understood by the membership. This is an area that the new Committee will need to address through better communication techniques with branches. It must not be forgotten that the AUWU Committee is here primarily to support our members to the work of the union.

- **Better Planning**

For the AUWU to be at its most effective it needs to plan and budget its activities, ideally 12 months in advance. Not only is this the best way to allocate our resources, develop strategy and learn from our mistakes, it also allows the Committee to function as a counterweight to the Operations Committee. At our monthly meetings, the Committee of Management should be reviewing the progress made and measuring that against the Annual Plan. Unfortunately, this year the planning process was interrupted and this was not allowed to occur. It must be a central goal of the next Committee to ensure the appropriate planning and review processes are undertaken.



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