



# **SECRETARY'S REPORT 2022**

**SUE RILEY**  
**Secretary**

**Communication  
Workers Union  
Telecommunication  
And Services Branch  
Victoria**

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# SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS 2022

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## BRANCH SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022

### 2021/2022

The 2021/22 year has seen a significant impact with COVID19 which has manifestly and consistently spread and lingered on in Victoria and globally. I'm certain that most of you have been touched in some way by COVID by now. Unfortunately the flu season has also returned and added to the current health crisis. I know it's been difficult for many to have a break from work, but it is very important that you do.

### BRANCH PERSONNEL

There have been no changes this year to our office personnel. Theresa Bradley has demonstrated her knowledge and commitment to the administrative role, especially given the changes ahead with the NSW T&S amalgamation. Fortunately our retired administrative officer Sharon Benson has provided support and relief for Theresa when required. We are so grateful for that.

We received two resignations from the Branch Committee of Management throughout the financial year. Our Vice President, Amy Stubberfield, and also a very long serving member Fiona Crouch. John Ellery was appointed Vice President and Marg Willis was appointed as a member to the BCOM. We currently hold a vacancy for the Operators Division.

### RECRUITMENT

Given the on-going circumstances of COVID, we didn't hire another recruiter because of the difficulty in accessing work sites, and the fact that many are still working from home. It is unknown when/how or if the return to worksites will ever be the same as it was pre-Covid. From 1/4/20 – 31/3/2021 the net loss of membership was 81. The exits were resignations, redundancies and terminations of unfinancial members.

Recruitment			
Year	New	Resignations	Gap
2017/18	99	214	-115
2018/19	177	199	-22
2019/20	161	315	-154
2020/21	105	153	-48
2021/22	102	183	-81

Employer	Members
Australia Post	65
Telstra	576
ESTA	328
General	289
<b>Total</b>	<b>1258</b>

The above graph demonstrates the diversity of our membership. The branch has been consistent in seeking new growth opportunities since the massive culling in Telstra began pre-privatisation. We have followed our members into new companies and sought to recruit members in other telecoms-based firms. This has been resource intensive and never easy as the industry as a whole is known for its aggressive de-unionisation agenda.

The telco industry has been presented with extraordinary barriers in organising since privatisation. The work model of sub-contracting has been ongoing for the last 20 years and is a huge obstacle in this industry.

The efforts from the P&T and T&S Victoria branches in attacking this employment model referred to as Sham Contracting were certainly worthwhile, however the outcomes were not as we hoped. Refer Class actions ISG/BSA – represented by Shine Lawyers and funding litigators. ISG were placed into voluntary administration, then liquidation in Oct 2021. There will be a public examination involving the questionable transactions of the ISG business and the Directors. A settlement was reached with BSA just prior to a High Court decision in ZG v Jamsek. The Jamsek decision overturned about thirty years of established law in the area of sham arrangements. Notwithstanding this decision, we are yet to see how this plays out in future sub-contracting. We assume it will continue with new players. We won't give up on our efforts in recruiting and always look to other ways of organising.

Given the change in Government, we have opportunity to engage more meaningfully and to assist in influencing the telco industry policies.

The future growth for the telecommunications and services branch will most likely be in the expansion of more opportunity at ESTA where the state Government have announced funding for resourcing another 3-400 employees, and other areas such as the communications and digital industry. This industry is transient in nature, however there are opportunities to recruit. In a rapidly developing digital media world new jobs are constantly evolving. We could look to software/app developers, technical support, software engineers, network design and planning, cyber security, linesman and fibre splicers for new builds – as new technologies will emerge. We will also need to keep pace with new technology and match this in our resourcing.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Financial Year 21/22 has reflected a surplus of \$21.1k. You will note a significant difference between this years’ profit and 20/21 of \$154k. There are a few contributing factors for this which I will outline as such:

- Audit adjustments in FY21 resulted in a \$73.9k increase to revenue, whereas the audit adjustments for accruals for FY22 resulted in a \$47.7k decrease in revenue. Otherwise on a cash basis, (what was recorded as received) both years are comparable. See below:

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Contribution revenue prior to audit adjustment :</b>	616,632.00	603,063.00
Reversed Contributions in advance from PY to take up in correct year:	38,466.00	0
Revenue movement for contributions owing as at end of year *	56,718.00	16,961.00
Movement for members in credit, credit owing **	317.00	0
Reclassifying contributions in advance to liabilities	20,899.00	-30,827.00
total audit adjustments *** ****	73,968.00	47,788.00
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<b>Year-end contributions after adjustment:</b>	<b>690,600.00</b>	<b>555,275.00</b>

\*already reversed prior to audit

\*\*immaterial no adjustment made

\*\*\*2021 increased revenue

\*\*\*\*2022 decreased revenue

- FY21 saw a larger amount of members owing dues as at year end in comparison to previous years which considerably increased the revenue for FY21.
- There was a large decrease in members owing at year end for FY22 when comparing to FY21 due to the proactive writing off of members during the year, resulting in a \$16k decrease in revenue for FY22 to reverse and correct excess revenue taken up in prior year. See graph below for unfinancial member trend.
- More members have paid yearly on time this year and received the 10% discount for doing so, along with a decrease of 81 members.
- The revenue decrease due to lost members will also be affected by which dues category they belong to - if more are lost in the higher paying fee category as opposed to lower fee categories this will have a greater effect on revenue.
- There was a significant difference in income from the Investment Fund: FY22 saw a gain of \$9.0k compared to a gain of \$78.4k in FY21. The movement reflected a large gain in FY21 due to the loss of \$43.3k in FY22.
- Lastly, we did not receive cash flow boosts from the Government this FY as we did in FY 21 of \$35K

The liability of \$190k (employee redundancy) is expected to be paid next financial year which should reflect an improved financial position.

Notwithstanding the net current deficiency of \$17.9k (compared with \$29.1k last year), the branch financial report adopts the fundamental principle of accounting where it assumes that during and beyond the next fiscal period it will complete its current plans and continue to meet our financial obligations. The Investment Fund as at 31/3/22 has \$634,934 which is classified as non-current assets.

Membership			
Year	Total	Financial	Unfinancial
2017/18	1584	1449	135
2018/19	1555	1449	135
2019/20	1393	1269	124
2020/21	1339	1149	190
2021/22	1258	1136	122

## **AMALGAMATION**

Following the successful member ballot for the Victorian and NSW Telecommunications and Services branches to amalgamate, and both Branch Committee of Management endorsement, the appropriate rule changes were endorsed by the Divisional Conference, Divisional Executive and the National Council. The amalgamation rules are currently awaiting certification from the Fair Work Commission and Registered Organisations Commission.

## **NATIONAL COUNCIL**

In addition to the rule changes, the National Council authorised the release of \$190,996 from the Investment Fund to be paid to the Divisional Office as per the outstanding debt, upon completion of the amalgamation. It has taken two Federal Court cases and this subsequent amalgamation for the National Council to authorise release from our Investment Fund. I will note here again that the original 2006 resolution that restricts access to our branch Investment funds (except for accommodation and recruitment) has never been explained by anyone as to why it was imposed on our branch - and no other branch - 16 years ago. Furthermore, upon request for this resolution to be relinquished as there is no valid or good reason for it to remain as the branch is in a good financial position, there was nil response. The basis of this ongoing decision is unreasonable, oppressive, and without justification. No other branch has such restriction on their funds.

## **ESTA**

### **Operations**

The 2021-22 period has seen a noteworthy change at ESTA with the Ashton review and the resultant transformation in the leadership. There has been a clean out from the top starting with the exit of the CEO and now all of the Executives. The recommendations from the Ashton review outline some significant changes ahead including greater governance and guidance by the State Government. A summary of some of the 20 recommendations are:

- The Authority be disbanded (ESTA Board and Advisory Committee) and become part of Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS)
- ESTA be re-branded to "Triple Zero (000) Victoria
- Cultural reform
- Maintain the current model, retaining Call-take/Dispatch (CTD) for all the emergency services, but include enhancements
- Commission a review of ESTA's training standards
- State Gov't to allocate specific funding to increase the workforce
- Provide more flexibility for staff whilst meeting surge demand
- Commission a review of mental health support arrangements and increase wellbeing support program
- Develop and implement outcome based performance standards
- Enhance ESTA's current intelligence capability to meet needs of Emergency Services

- Develop and implement a strategic roadmap for future delivery of technology services

There is demonstrated improvement with working relationships with the unions.

## **Support Staff**

The Support office employees Enterprise Agreement was certified in January 2022. Bargaining was difficult with the previous leadership, however, I am very proud to say the members took Industrial Action and we achieved some very good outcomes:

- On-Call allowance increase to \$40/weekday and \$70 weekends and introduction of public holiday rate of \$70. Overtime to be paid after the first half hour of work (previously after first hour)
- Compassionate Leave extended to Aunts/Uncles for 1 day (not 4)
- Blood donation leave in paid time every 12 weeks.
- Parental Leave: Increase in paid partner leave from 1 week to 2 weeks, special leave for where a pregnant mother loses a child after 20 weeks; paid parental leave for Public Holidays
- Assisted Reproductive Leave of 40 hours to attend appointments associated with treatment and 20 hours of paid leave for partners.
- One-off payment 20 years' service recognition
- \$1000 sign-on bonus
- Higher Duties improved to payment for 5 or more consecutive days (previously from 2 weeks) and clarification of what will be paid, .i.e. either additional 10% or the base of the salary band of the higher classified position whichever is higher.
- New clause for Career break up to 12 months.
- New subclause in 'Types of Employment' regarding conversion of casuals to permanency as per the FWAct.

## **The classification structure**

After 9 months of bargaining it became evident that there was not an acceptable or agreeable solution to fixing the current flawed model within the time frame, which was very disappointing. The CWU bargaining team agreed to retain the current structure and ESTA will be providing specific guidelines about remuneration between the banding of the role and the actual salary that is available to the employee. Further explanation to the bands have been added at appendix A. Furthermore, to improve transparency ESTA will remove salary confidentiality requirements. ESTA and the CWU have committed to co-design a new classification structure based on agreed guiding principles and will include consideration of the Victorian Public Sector and Emergency Service Agency standards (refer Schedule A.

## **TELSTRA**

Subject to shareholder and further court approval it is expected the new holding company to be in place by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022 (this is the date eligible shareholders will receive new Telstra Corp shares)\_ and the Business Restructure implementation to be complete o 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023. As such, the transition to new employer companies will happen towards the end of this year.

Telstra's structural separation where the holding company – Telstra Group - houses the following main entities, marks the biggest restructure since 1997.

InfraCo Fixed; Amplitel (InfraCo Towers); Telstra Ltd (Serve Co); Telstra International; Retail

Telstra embarked on a strategic review of its business in 2018 (T22) and has since evolved to T25, where Telstra state they are expected to step beyond structural separation and turn into a telco focused on customer experience and shareholder growth. The outgoing CEO, Andy Penn responsible for T22 is replaced by Vicki Brady the current CFO.

Bargaining commenced last year and 4 new Enterprise Agreements were certified in mid-2022. The Telstra Retail Stores Agreement 2022-24, Telstra InfraCo Fixed Enterprise Agreement 2022-24, Amplitel Enterprise Agreement 2022-24 and Telstra Limited Enterprise Agreement 2022-24.

The branch submitted a whistle-blower complaint on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022 to investigate the running of the museum known as Heritage Telecommunications Limited (HTL) including possible financial impropriety and conflict of interests. The branch is a financial member of the museum.

## **AUSTRALIA POST**

The Postal Technicians have had issues regarding their working environment, with the new parcel sorting facilities housed in a warehouse that does not have heating and cooling. At Tullamarine temperatures have dropped to 1°C overnight. In the summer months, temperatures have recorded 52°C. New sorting technology has been installed at existing sites at Dandenong and Ardeer as well as new installations at converted warehouses, which are not designed for housing staff.

The Postal Techs at Dandenong have had a resolution to the protracted battle with their shift rosters where the 12 hour shifts were shutdown. All employees voted and a compromise was reached and the 12 hour shift on Sunday remains.

There is a grading review for the postal technicians underway.

## **THANK YOU**

Thank you to you, our faithful members, who have joined or maintained membership in the CWU T&S Branch. Your support is appreciated and valued.

I extend a special thank you to Theresa Bradley who has demonstrated her diligence, enthusiasm and commitment to the administration of the membership and bookkeeping role during difficult circumstances. I truly appreciate your support. I am forever grateful to



Sharon Benson for her ongoing support, and for relief work when Theresa is on annual leave. Also to Trish Willoughby who is always ready to assist when required.

Thank you to John Ellery for your efforts with the Telstra bargaining team and organising and dealing with the various Postal tech issues. Thank you to our former and current Branch Committee of Management members for their support and for volunteering their time to assist in the running of the branch.

Thank you to all delegates who often volunteer hours of their personal time to achieve better outcomes for all members. I'm indebted to you for your endless campaigning to achieve positive results and constant endorsement of the CWU.

Yours in Unity,

SUE RILEY  
Secretary  
CWU (T&S) Vic