

RUN

ACTU

<https://www.actu.org.au/get-involved/retired_unionists_network>

**REPORT TO ACTU OFFICERS**

**Background:** Although a small **Retired Unionists’ Network** (RUN) had been operating for some time (with the assistance of Jo Keen), the opportunity was taken in June / July 2020 to re-form / reinvigorate RUN. This effort was led by Ben Moxham and Michael Flinn and led to the formation of a national RUN Committee (to drive the ongoing development of RUN) comprising:

* Peter Duffy (Vintage Reds, Qld)
* Janine Kitson (NSW Retired Unionists)
* Jane Timbrell (Vintage Reds, ACT)
* Colin Orsmby (AMWU RMD, Victoria)
* Anne Learmonth (NTEU, Victoria)
* Rodger Smith (ASU RMG, Victoria)

This group meets monthly to set the agenda for the monthly meetings of all RUN members and so far, ten monthly RUN meetings have been run over 2020 and 2021. In all of our activities, we have had the enthusiastic assistance of Paul Doughty and Jo Keen (for which we are very grateful). An early decision was that RUN should report regularly to ACTU Officers on its activities – hence this report.

**What is RUN:** RUN aims to expand and strengthen retired unionist groups attached to either individual unions or to TLCs and it campaigns on industrial, social and environmental issues. We also support affiliate and movement-wide campaigns, as appropriate. We also publish a regular Newsletter and our RUN website (part of the ACTU website) is currently under construction.

We have made some progress towards the mapping of retired unionist groups nationally. Our monthly meetings have built to around 40 participants, with retired members from all over Australia (and even NZ) joining us.

**What has RUN actually done so far:**

* Participated in the **Aged Care** and **Superannuation** sessions of the **ACTU Virtual Organising Conference** (November 2020) and in the **Retired Members** stream of the recent **ACTU Congress** (July 2021);
* Actively campaigned against the *Federal Court and Family Court of Australia Bill 2020*, the *Fair Work Amendment Bill 2020*, *the Your Future, Your Super Bill 2021* and the continued detention of the **Murugappan family** (by writing to MPs);

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* Launched a major campaign focused on the **Aged Care Royal Commission** and its 148 recommendations, especially the four recommendations relating to Aged Care staff;
* Educated RUN members by researching a range of industrial and social issues including **Budget 2021 Analysis**, **Cashless Welfare Card**, **Diego Franco v. DELIVEROO**, **NDIS Reforms**, **Penalty Rate Study** and the recent **NZ New IR Laws**;
* Heard presentations from community-based organisations such as **LIFE** (Living Incomes For Everyone) and the **Willow Grove Heritage** campaign;
* Issued messages of support for striking workers at **McCormicks Foods Clayton** (VIC), **Coles Smeaton Grange** (NSW), **General Mills Rooty Hill** (NSW), **BAE Systems** (WA), **TOLL Holdings drivers** (NSW) and **Graincorp Footscray** (VIC);

**What does RUN plan to do in the immediate future?**

* Intensify campaigns around the **Aged Care Royal Commission**, the **Cashless Welfare Card** and the **Murugappan family** and we plan to become more involved in **Climate Change** issues;
* Continue to support **ACTU and affiliate campaigns**, as appropriate;
* Continue to educate RUN members by reporting on **current industrial and social issues**;
* Continue to issue messages of support for striking workers and (wherever possible) visiting picket lines;

**Does RUN have any major concerns?** While there is widespread support among affiliates for the concept of organising retired unionists, some TLCs (especially Provincial TLCs) are doing little to organise retired unionists in their own area. This has resulted in RUN having a “capital city” focus rather than a focus on ALL retired unionists, wherever they may be. It would be helpful to RUN if all TLCs recognised the potential resource available to them.



Rodger Smith

National Chair

ACTU Retired Unionists’ Network 1 September 2021