



**STRENGTHENING OUR UNION
FOR THE 21ST CENTURY**

**NZEI Te Riu Roa
Proposals for Change**

May 2009

NZEI · TE RIU ROA
NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

NZEI Te Riu Roa

Proposals for Change

There is a movement for change in our union. It's about people participating and becoming more involved at all levels. It's about making sure we plan and resource our activities and that we're accountable for them.

Why change?

Members have told us...

- that our clarity of purpose was missing – that there was no sense of what we were really focused on and wanted to achieve
- that active involvement in the union was patchy, and more members should be involved
- that some of our structures work well, but some are old-fashioned and irrelevant.
- that NZEI needs to be able to access the diverse capabilities and skills of all its members and paid staff. There needs to be a stronger partnership between members and paid staff, and people who are active in NZEI.

Overall, our purpose is to build our power and become the most influential education union in New Zealand.

What changes are being proposed?

- **How we come together:** changing from an Annual Meeting for the whole of the union, to one every two years for the whole of the union, with Regional Meetings in the intervening years
- **How we govern ourselves:** changing the size and composition of the National Executive
- **How we operate at local level:** changing the role of District Councils and establishing Area Councils
- **Greater accountability:** linking funding more directly to activity plans
- **Clarifying leadership roles at national level:** replacing national advisory groups with smaller leadership groups.

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How will we make these changes?

Each of the changes proposed here need to be developed further with members. At Annual Meeting this year we will run workshops to confirm details about:

- how biennial Regional Meetings will be developed including timing, length and who should attend
- the alternatives for making or amending the rules of NZEI to establish the new bodies
- how Area Councils will be developed including appropriate size, geographic boundaries etc and the process to be undertaken to do this
- the process for reallocating the pool of funds not required by branch or Area Council plans.

How did we get to this point?

Annual Meeting 2007 agreed to conduct a three-year organisational review of NZEI structures “to position NZEI as a future-focused member-organised union and professional association.”

- Annual Meeting 2008 discussed a wide-ranging report based on consultation with members by consultant Owen Harvey.
- Between November 2008 and May 2009, there were further discussions with District Councils, branches, Aronui Tōmua, Komiti Pasifika and members.
- At its May 2009 meeting, the National Executive considered all the views and has agreed five proposals for change.

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What did you tell us?

Workshops at Annual Meeting 2008 recommended that the review establish shared values for:

- defining what we meant by being a Treaty-based organisation establishing principles to define the structures we needed and
- developing principles for accountability.

The discussions with members between November 2008 and May 2009 helped develop these ideas. We agreed that we would need:

- new approaches and systems
- new behaviours
- some things not getting done
- resources and new capacity.

Members told us:

- branch meetings need to be interesting for members - we need to separate out the administration from the activity to get people involved in the work of the union
- branches, Aronui Tōmua, Komiti Pasifika, Rohe and District Councils should be accountable for the funding they get, just like National Executive and National Office
- the important decisions need to be made by members at each level of the organisation i.e. NZEI should truly be a “membership driven” organisation
- all the “power” shouldn’t be at the national level - members don’t want to be told what to do all the time, we want to be involved in the decision-making and the activism
- bigger branches and District Councils seem to “take over” at Annual Meeting and have “more say” because of their numbers and “louder voices”
- the proposals must enable local and regional decision-making to support growth of member activism.

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During the first term this year (through the proposal around structures and functions that we consulted on) we said:

- let's have a plan for the work of the branches, Aronui Tōmua and Komiti Pasifika and link it to the national goals and priorities that are established by the National Executive and "signed off" by Annual Meeting
- let's be really accountable and link funding to implementing of the plan, not forgetting that it will take some funding to just keep the basic administration of branches going
- let's find a way to broaden activism at local and regional level, give more members an opportunity to be active and establish the union as a really good place to develop leaders
- let's find a way to share the power, take the emphasis off NZEI nationally and support the notion of a local member-driven organisation with activists at all levels
- let's find a way to give equal "air time" to all members at all levels of the organisation
- let's look at the size of some of the structures, maybe big branches and District Councils would like the opportunity to look at their size and make decisions about whether this is the best way for them to develop stronger member activism or not
- let's determine the best "mix" and who should decide the best way to go.

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Te Reo Areare

Te Reo Areare work-shopped these change proposals at its recent May meeting. Miro Māori have participated in the consultation processes at each stage and the feedback has been incorporated into the change proposals.

There is a general level of comfort around the changes being proposed, although some concern about the pace of change and the impact on workload for some people.

This process has given the union the opportunity to think about the Treaty and rule 1.8.4, to consider how this is reflected in the structures and the way we work. There is a strong desire to “mahi tahi”, that is join periodically together at some levels of the structure to share and discuss the work.

More specific feedback has been:

- to retain three members of Te Reo Areare on the National Executive
- to reinforce current rohe meetings and establish them under the proposed Area Councils structure
- there is comfort with the proposal to linking funding to activities and to the general idea of greater accountability up and down the structures of the union
- there is some concern around Māori representation in the proposed national sector leadership groups and an expectation that this will be worked through
- Aronui Tōmua are the building blocks of the union and accountability back to them is important

National Executive

The National Executive considered all the views gathered at its May 2009 meeting and agreed the five proposals for change. The National Executive also said we need to keep building better communication systems and develop new ways for members to interact if this is to happen. We also need to change or fine-tune structures and the processes around these structures

CHANGE 1:

How we come together: Biennial National and Regional Meetings

The proposal is to increase involvement and focus by changing the way we meet from an annual meeting to a Biennial National Meeting and three Regional Meetings in intervening years.

Why change?

A National Meeting every second year means a more strategic, long term focus on the “whole of union” purpose and policies. It would reflect more on governance of the union than immediate activities (the biennial regional meetings would focus more on planning of events and activities).

- This would help us become more goal-driven and focused on national outcomes. It would enable big-picture policy to be developed over more realistic timeframes with members. Regional Meetings in alternate years would complement the National Meeting by reinforcing the message that our “big picture” only turns into successful strategies and activities when decision-making is closer to local level.

Regional Meetings would:

- align local to regional, area council to area council, and regional to national activity
- increase the number of people actively involved in sharing and owning the work
- mirror the current Miro Māori process which is working well
- provide a better process of preparation and succession planning to engage members at National Meeting
- support and up skill local area activists and link them to other activities.

How will we make the change?

To make this work we will need to make sure the size of the meetings and nature of the agenda means members attending can genuinely participate and get “air time” on the floor in both processes.

Rule changes at the 2009 Annual Meeting would establish biennial National Meetings as of 2010. Workshops at Annual Meeting 2009 will consider issues such as representation by Area Council and region, one vote per representative, how to make rule changes in the “off” years, a cap on the numbers attending and the role and purpose of these Meetings.

We will need to establish the detail around the Regional Meeting processes as well, including:

- making rule changes at Annual Meeting 2009 to establish Biennial Regional Meetings from 2011
- agreeing the role and functions of Regional Meetings (for example, to receive national financial reports, elect sector group representatives, develop policy positions to send forward to the National Meeting, develop local and regional action, receive Special Reports/papers, discuss implementation of strategic plans, report on goals and priorities, and undertake education & development programmes
- agreeing representation from Aronui Tōmua/Komiti Pasifika/branches (formula-based entitlement), Area Council office holders, pro-rata formula to identify the number of representatives for Northern, Central and Southern Regional Meetings, and National Executive representatives.

What might the Biennial Regional Meeting look like?

The Regional Meeting would be planned by a regional planning committee supported by regional staff, and take place in a term break. It would be no longer than three days and would need to be funded from within the existing budget of Annual Meetings or supported by local and regional funding.

The meeting would be interactive and allow for more member participation; it would place a strong focus on regional and local issues and include celebrations of success, plenary sessions, speakers etc.

CHANGE 2:

How we govern ourselves: the size and composition of the National Executive

The proposal is to reduce the size of the Executive from the current 24 members to 14, and to include:

- four sector representatives
- four representatives from the general membership
- three Presidents - Vice, Current, Immediate Past
- three Te Reo Areare representatives.

Why change?

- A smaller group can govern more effectively
- We want to improve national decision making with regional and local engagement in activity
- We want to ensure the principle of succession through strong leadership programmes throughout the structures
- We want to encourage the best people into these roles.

How will we make the change?

- Restructure the National Executive to work as a governance body, including determining which committees are needed to support specific areas e.g. finance (during late 2009 and early 2010)
- Establish the new composition and two year term through rule changes enacted at the 2010 National Meeting
- Establish clear role descriptions and person specifications
- Establish robust processes for election to ensure NZEI members can elect the best people possible for the job.

CHANGE 3:

How we operate at local level: transform District Councils into Area Councils

Area Councils will provide leadership for the activities and campaigns in their area, sign-off proposals for activities from Branches, Aronui Tōmua and Komiti Pasifika and establish and fund area 'networks' that support the planned activities.

Why change?

- To shift the focus of the broader work of the union from national to local and area-based activity
- To better support networks - current networks overlap branches' geographical area
- To create more active regional structures within an agreed framework
- To ensure District Councils/Area Councils focus on activity around the national goals and priorities
- To alleviate bottlenecks - because some District Councils are reported to have become barriers to the activity of branches and Aronui Tomua through controlling funding
- To clarify and define the parameters and purposes of funding provided to regional structures.

How will we make the change?

Three of these - the Miro Maori rohe - are already in place

Current District Councils will examine the effectiveness of their operations during 2010. This will involve looking at boundaries, the effectiveness of activities and the engagement of members.

We will workshop potential changes to the rules at the Annual Meeting 2009 on issues such as establishing Area Councils and disestablishing District Councils, the number of branches needed to form an Area Council, the powers of the Area Council and Rohe to sign off proposed activities and representation at regional and national meetings. These rule changes would be enacted at Annual Meeting 2010.

CHANGE 4:

Greater accountability: linking activity to funding

Branches, Aronui Tōmua, Komiti Pasifika and networks would develop their own activity plans, which would be signed off by Area Councils in order to activate their annual funding. Funding levels to branches, Aronui Tōmua and Komiti Pasifika will remain the same (determined by the current per capita formula). Funds not used by the end of the year may be retained as part of the next year's funding or returned for re-allocation. Branches and Area Councils with significant surplus funds will, under existing Rules (e.g. 6.7.4, 6.7.8 and 3.5.8.1), be asked to return these funds to the organisation.

Why change?

- To match funds with activities within a financial year and ensure they are effectively used at local level
- To promote and support active engagement of members and closely connect member activity at local level with the goals and priorities of our union
- To return member funds that have not been used to the consolidated fund so member activism elsewhere can be supported.

How will we make the change?

- Change the rules in 2009 to incorporate a requirement for the production of a plan to activate funding in 2010
- Create a simple activity plan for Branches, Aronui Tomua and Komiti Pasifika to complete.

What might the process look like?

- National goals and priorities would be confirmed at National Meeting
- The National Executive would sign off each Area Council's plan
- Network plans would be completed and then signed off by Area Councils
- An activity plan by branches, Aronui Tōmua, Komiti Pasifika would have to be completed, linking to national priorities and goals, and signed off by the Area Council
- The activity plan, and a review of activity (for example, by a branch president's AGM Report to branch/AC) would be attached to its audited accounts and sent to National Office (as currently happens).

CHANGE 5:

Clarifying leadership roles at national level: establishing National Sector Leadership Groups

The proposal is to change from the current National Executive Advisory Groups to new smaller National Sector Leadership Groups by 2011.

Why change?

- To establish a clear role and purpose for national sector groups – to lead sector activity in line with the national goals and priorities, linking and reporting to Area Councils and networks
- To create smaller, more streamlined groups with strong linkages between sector interests and networks
- To create a vehicle for developing leadership in and across the sectors we represent.

How will we make the change?

- Establish policy to support the change by developing terms of reference with a clear purpose/role/goals for each group and enabling the election of representatives from Biennial Regional Meetings
- Establish job descriptions, person specifications and identify training needs
- Create new and better communication processes that support this change.

Note: The proposed Principals National Sector Leadership group is larger than the other sector groups because it involves representatives from all the Principals groups. Principals are influential in the sector through these various groups so it is important to work with them closely.

Summary of changes and timeline

If these proposals are accepted, then the change will be implemented as follows:

Date		Change
2009		Annual Meeting asked to adopt change proposals, pass initial rule changes and workshop details
		An activity plan for funding in 2010 implemented
2010		Area Councils established
		National Executive governance role established
		First National Meeting makes any further necessary rule changes and elects National Executive of 14 members
2011		First round of Regional Meetings
		National Sector Leadership groups established
2012		Second National Meeting