Building a more responsive and effective union

Stronger together

Over recent months, my focus as SSTUWA General Secretary has been on ensuring our union is more responsive, transparent and firmly grounded in the needs of our members. The changes we are implementing are deliberate and directly informed by what members have told us matters most.

One of the clearest messages I have heard is the need for stronger, more accessible support. In response, we have increased our industrial staffing in the Member Assist Team to ensure members can access timely and expert assistance when they need it.

This is fundamental to who we are as a union. We are also employing an additional dedicated advocate to provide an additional level of professional support for members facing complex matters.

Recognising the importance of the TAFE sector, we have appointed an additional TAFE organiser. This strengthens our engagement and ensures sector-specific issues are better represented and addressed.

We have also renamed our Legal Services division to Industrial Services to better reflect its purpose.

This change responds directly to member feedback that previous arrangements were not always well understood and supports our move to reduce outsourcing by managing more member matters in-house under the leadership of our Industrial Services Coordinator and Advocate, Liz Carbone.

At a national level, I was pleased to attend the 2026 AEU Federal Conference as a guest.

This provided an important opportunity to connect with colleagues across the country, share perspectives and ensure our union remains engaged and informed within the broader movement.

Good governance is critical to a strong organisation. Our Executive is currently undertaking governance training to strengthen capability, accountability and best-practice decision-making.

I have been encouraged by the approach of the new Executive. We have already held several meetings, and members have been diligent, thoughtful and genuinely committed to driving positive change.

I am very aware of the financial pressures facing members. That is why we are reviewing union fees with a focus on fairness and sustainability.

Alongside this, we are updating our policies and procedures to ensure they are contemporary, clear and support consistent decision-making across the organisation.

We are also examining how we invest members' money, with a focus on strengthening transparency, accountability and alignment with our values. Members deserve confidence that their contributions are being managed responsibly.

Supporting members to build their knowledge and confidence in the workplace is another priority.

We have expanded industry training opportunities and increased the delivery of "Know Your Rights" sessions, particularly in regional areas, to ensure equitable access to support and information.

Strengthening industrial knowledge across the membership is central to building a confident and empowered union.

A key part of strengthening our union is ensuring members have a direct and meaningful voice in shaping our industrial priorities.

Members are encouraged and supported to submit motions for the upcoming Log of Claims, so their workplace issues and priorities are formally considered.

We are also inviting members to participate in the Log of Claims Committee, providing a valuable opportunity to contribute directly to the development of claims and help shape the direction of negotiations.

Engagement remains at the heart of everything we do. Senior officers and I have attended District Council meetings across the state to listen directly to members and ensure their voices inform our direction.

These initiatives reflect a clear and purposeful direction, one focused on practical improvements, strong governance and genuine engagement.

I remain committed to this work so that our union continues to be strong, relevant and firmly focused on delivering for members.

In solidarity.



By Sally Dennis
General Secretary

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
ABN 54 478 094 635 © 2026