



**Statement in support of the amalgamation**  
between the Queensland Public Sector Union  
of Employees and the Australian Municipal,  
Administrative, Clerical and Services Union,  
Central and Southern Queensland Clerical and  
Administrative Branch, Union of Employees



The proposed amalgamation between the Queensland Public Sector Union of Employees (“the QPSU”) and the Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union, Central and Southern Queensland Clerical and Administrative Branch, Union of Employees (“the AMACSU” - to be referred to as “ASU”) will result in an existing combined membership base of 40 000 members, with a strengthened capacity for growth in the combined public and private sectors. This will result in the capacity to build benefits and positive outcomes for workers.

The proposed amalgamation has been the subject of many hours of discussion between rank and file members of the current Union Executives. Both Executives have determined that to best inform members on the proposed amalgamation that an analysis of the “good” and the “bad” of the proposed amalgamation should be outlined. This follows:

### **Structures of the union**

The capacity for members to become lost in large unions is a real issue. A combination of these two unions would immediately create a very large union of 40 000 members.

Establishing what will be the democratic structures in a new, very large, amalgamated union is an essential part in ensuring members always have a say. How these structures will work has been the subject of many hours of discussion with various members of the two Unions.

With the amalgamation there could be a real risk that the effectiveness of the democratic structures of both Unions would diminish. Currently there are mechanisms to ensure that both metropolitan and regional members are represented through the various structures of both the QPSU and ASU.

The QPSU and ASU are committed to ensuring the continuation of a strong elected democratic and representative structure for the new amalgamated Union. The Executive structure will be enhanced by the inclusion of representatives from both Unions. The Executive structure will enable the absorption of ASU and QPSU elected officers and then a phased process to achieve a workable number of elected rank and file members on the Executive.



## Executive structure

<p><b>2010</b></p> <p><b>Queensland Public Sector Union of Employees</b></p> <p>General Secretary</p> <p>Assistant General Secretary</p> <p>President</p> <p>Senior Vice-President</p> <p>Junior Vice-President (3)</p> <p>Honorary Treasurer</p> <p>Assistant Honorary Treasurer</p> <p>Other Executive (9)</p>	<p><b>2011</b></p> <p><b>Unite Queensland, Industrial Union of Employees</b></p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Assistant Secretary (no.1)</p> <p>President</p> <p>Senior Vice-President</p> <p>Junior Vice-President (3)</p> <p>Treasurer</p> <p>Assistant Treasurer</p> <p>Other Executive (9)</p>
<p><b>Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union, Central and Southern Queensland Clerical and Administrative Branch, Union of Employees</b></p> <p>President</p> <p>Vice-President</p> <p>Executive (6)</p>	<p>Senior Vice-President</p> <p>Junior Vice-President</p> <p>Other Executive (6)</p>
<p><b>Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union, Central and Southern Queensland Clerical and Administrative Branch, Union of Employees</b></p> <p>Branch Secretary</p> <p>Assistant Branch Secretary</p>	<p>Assistant Secretary (no.2)</p> <p>Deputy Secretary</p>
<p><b>2011</b></p> <p><b>Unite Queensland, Industrial Union of Employees</b></p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Assistant Secretary (no.1 and no.2)</p> <p>Deputy Secretary</p> <p>President</p> <p>Senior Vice-President (2)</p> <p>Junior Vice-President (4)</p> <p>Treasurer</p> <p>Assistant Treasurer</p> <p>Other Executive (15)</p>	<p><b>2012</b></p> <p><b>Unite Queensland, Industrial Union of Employees</b></p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Assistant Secretary (no.1 and no.2)</p> <p>Deputy Secretary</p> <p>President</p> <p>Senior Vice-President (2)</p> <p>Junior Vice-President (4)</p> <p>Treasurer</p> <p>Assistant Treasurer</p> <p>Other Executive (11)</p>
<p><b>2012</b></p> <p><b>Unite Queensland, Industrial Union of Employees</b></p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Assistant Secretary (no.1 and no.2)</p> <p>Deputy Secretary</p> <p>President</p> <p>Senior Vice-President (2)</p> <p>Junior Vice-President (4)</p> <p>Treasurer</p> <p>Assistant Treasurer</p> <p>Other Executive (11)</p>	<p><b>2015</b></p> <p><b>Unite Queensland, Industrial Union of Employees</b></p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Assistant Secretary (2)</p> <p>President</p> <p>Senior Vice-President</p> <p>Junior Vice-President (3)</p> <p>Treasurer</p> <p>Assistant Treasurer</p> <p>Other Executive (10)</p>

The existing structure of the QPSU Council (comprising of sub-Divisions representing work areas and regions) will be maintained in the new union through to the 2012 election of Council delegates. ASU will be accommodated within those existing structures through the inclusion of their Council delegates in additional sub-Divisions along with their active participation on existing sub-Divisions. Importantly, the Rules of Unite Queensland, Industrial Union of Employees will enshrine the rights of members to make decisions about issues affecting them in their own workplace or sub-Division.

The following new Council sub-Divisions will be adopted:

- a combined Queensland Health sub-Division (working in what will be known as EB8);
- a separate Queensland Health sub-Division for members working as health practitioners (HP) and medical officers;
- a combined private health and aged care sub-Division;
- a combined higher education sub-Division;
- utilities including Brisbane City Council (BCC), energy (both public and private), water and local government;
- airlines;
- not-for profit sector; and
- general private sector (including call centres).

The Council shall have the powers and functions for ensuring the efficient and effective industrial representation and service for members of the Union.

The amalgamation is, however, a positive step in reviewing the democratic structures of the Union to determine what is the most effective and inclusive mechanism for ensuring that the members of the amalgamated Union are



represented. This will ensure that both the metropolitan and regional membership are accommodated.

This will ensure that the current sub-Divisions of the QPSU, which are on the basis of one Council delegate for each 100 members working in the sub-Division, will be assessed. Whatever options may be developed for reforming Council the new structure will continue to require a decision on the sub-Divisions for the 2012 elections to be made sometime late in 2011 by your elected representatives on the new Council.

In addition, the QPSU and ASU has a number of Council committees which undertake a range of functions and report back to the meetings of their respective Executive and Council. These committees will continue and will be bolstered by the inclusion of additional members to reflect the



amalgamation of the two Unions. This will ensure a broad contribution is made to the work these committees undertake.

### Campaigning

The key to building power for workers with effective union organisation requires a large resource base, and having these resources readily available for delegates and members.

When workers can campaign effectively as a Union, worker's lives improve. Effective representation, advice, training and support for workers through a well-resourced Union office are also critical to this. A Union of 40 000 members will have real capacity to deliver for members and to grow the Union.

## Proposed Council sub-divisions

Current QPSU sub-division		Possible sub-divisions post amalgamation	
Agricultural Colleges	1	Agricultural Colleges	1
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples	4	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples	4
		Airlines	7
Building Services Authority	1	Building Services Authority	1
Commission for Children and Young People	1	Commission for Children and Young People	1
Department of Communities	39	Department of Communities	39
Department of Community Safety (excluding Corrections)	5	Department of Community Safety (excluding Corrections)	5
Department of Education and Training (DET) (excluding schools and Training Queensland)	9	DET (excluding schools and Training Queensland)	9
Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI)	12	DEEDI	12
Department of Environment & Resource Management (DERM)	17	DERM	17
Department of Infrastructure and Planning	3	Department of Infrastructure and Planning	3
Educational Statutory Authorities	1	Educational Statutory Authorities	1
Forestry Plantations Queensland	1		
Health Statutory Authorities	2	Health Statutory Authorities	2
Higher Education	3	Higher Education	10
Justice and Attorney-General	15	Justice and Attorney-General	15
Private Sector Therapists	2	Private Health	8
Private Pathology	2		
		Private Sector	18
Queensland Art Gallery	1	Queensland Art Gallery	1
Queensland Audit Office	1	Queensland Audit Office	1
Queensland Health	69	QHealth EB 8	63
		QHealth Non EB 8	36
Queensland Police	11	Queensland Police	11
Queensland Museum	1	Queensland Museum	1
Legal Aid	2	Legal Aid	2
Legislative Assembly	1	Legislative Assembly	1
		Not for profit sector	3
Other Corporations	2	Other Corporations	2
Other statutory authorities	1	Other statutory authorities	1
Premiers	3	Premiers	3
Public Works	15	Public Works	15
Queensland Corrective Services	18	Queensland Corrective Services	18
Residential Tenancy Authority	1	Residential Tenancy Authority	1
Schools	24	Schools	24
Staff	1	Staff	1
State Library	2	State Library	2
Sunwater	1	Sunwater	1
TAFE Institutes	18	TAFE Institutes	18
Training Queensland excluding TAFE institutes	2	Training Queensland excluding TAFE institutes	2
Transport and Main Roads	19	Transport and Main Roads	19
Treasury	4	Treasury	4
		Utilities (including BCC and Energy)	8
WorkCover	3	WorkCover	3

*Not included life members and retired members*

The resources, financial and human, that will come to this proposed amalgamation will ensure positive outcomes and an even more effective use of members' money. A larger Union, continuing on with the financial discipline both Unions have demonstrated in the past, would mean a bigger campaign fund.

## Membership

There is complementary unionism, where QPSU and ASU have previously covered members in different occupational groups who work for the same employer. Currently, this results in a doubling of resources at each consultative forum, and a duplication of work undertaken.

There is competitive unionism where both the QPSU and ASU can represent the same workers. This results in duplicating resources to recruit the same group of workers.

There is a duplication of resources across the two Unions both in areas where we have competition around union membership; but also where we have complementary coverage. Duplication does not result in the most effective use of financial and human resources.

The QPSU has a large public sector membership; whilst the ASU is seen as the occupational union for administrative and other clerical workers, local government, the airlines industry, higher education, call centres and a general membership in the private sector.

The QPSU is seen as traditionally representing workers in the public sector and ASU in the private sector, with some public sector membership. Both Unions have



developed around that tradition even though that has resulted in competitive coverage in some areas.

The QPSU has members across the public sector, universities and private health. The ASU has members from the NSW border, north to just north of Rockhampton. The ASU also has members working across government owned corporations and Universities, where the QPSU also has coverage.

However there are many more similarities than differences between the two Unions.

Both Unions have a majority of members in the state public sector – around 50% of the ASU are public sector workers, a majority of these members are employed in Queensland Health administration. Over 90% of the QPSU's membership is currently in the state public sector.

With an increased resource dedicated to campaigning across the new combined Union, a reduction in competitive unionism and a freeing up of resources where there was complementary unionism the new Union has the potential to grow significantly in the first 5 years of the amalgamation, and it is projected that the new Union could reach 45 000 members in 5 years.



## Human resources and regional representation

There may be concern about the accommodation of staff from both the amalgamated Unions, along with the relationships that have developed around the regional offices.

The existing regional offices of both the QPSU and ASU will remain and be combined as part of the new Union. This will ensure continuity of service for all members. The staffing structure of the new Union will be reviewed to ensure that each zone is appropriately resourced within the first year of the transition.

All existing staff will be absorbed into the new amalgamated Union, and their employment conditions protected.

## Affiliations

The amalgamated Union would be affiliated to the federal ASU.

There will be no change for the ASU with these affiliation arrangements. There will be a change for the QPSU. However the QPSU already contributes affiliation fees to the SPSF-CPSU (the State Public Services Federation of the Community and Public Sector Union), although industrial support or representation has been minimal.

Being affiliated to the ASU would result in a substantial increase in representation around issues relating to workers in the higher education, private health and private pathology areas; along with more active involvement in matters such as the development of national health and safety and workcover laws; and anti-discrimination and equity areas.

Both the QPSU and ASU are affiliated to the Queensland Council of Unions. The amalgamated union will continue that affiliation.

As for political affiliation, the federal ASU is currently affiliated to the ALP. The CPSU is also currently affiliated to the ALP. However the amalgamated Union will not be affiliated to the ALP.



## Financial responsibilities

In order to align the two budgets of ASU and the QPSU, the amalgamated Union will move its budget processes in line with the financial year. This is a change as currently the QPSU runs budgets on a calendar year basis.

There will be costs associated with transferring the budgets of the two Unions from a mix of a financial year (ASU) and a calendar year (QPSU).

However this has been an opportunity for the two Unions to undertake a “due diligence” review by the existing QPSU auditors, BDO Kendalls.

As part of this process there has also been a review to ensure the financial processes and assets are correctly registered in order to preserve the union's financial position.

## Subscriptions

There are currently different subscription structures across the QPSU and ASU. Both sets of subscriptions have served the purposes of the two Unions, and members and potential members are familiar with those structures. Both Unions have met all their financial responsibilities with those existing subscriptions. The proposed amalgamated Union will need to adopt a new common subscription structure.

This has given an opportunity to consider the issue of subscriptions for members who are under 21 years of age – not something that the QPSU has directly accommodated for in their structure previously.

Also, the QPSU has also not had specific subscriptions for members who work less than full-time equivalent (FTE) hours.

Accommodation has been made for young members, members not working full-time, and those who work full-time and earn varying levels of income.

Union subscriptions shall be agreed for the initial subscription rate as at amalgamation and the increases to the new structure that will apply from 1 January 2011 (of 2%); 1 July 2011 (of 4%) and 1 July 2012 (of 4%).

The new subscription structure will take into account the varied membership of the amalgamated Union,

The 2010 standard membership subscriptions (excluding discounts) along with the subscriptions up until 30 June 2013 are set out below.



### Subscriptions 1/1/11 – 30/6/13

<i>Wage rate (full-time equivalent [FTE] employees) per fortnight as of 1/8/10</i>	<i>Subscription amount (\$) per annum</i>			
	2010	1/1/11 - 30/6/11	1/7/11	1/7/12
3020.80 and above	503	513	533	554
2632.80 - 2861.60	488	498	518	539
1514.20 – 2498.10	473	483	503	524
<i>Wage rates (less than FTE or under 21 years of age)</i>				
Working 50% but less than 100% of FTE hours	386	393.50	409.20	425.50
Under 21 years OR Working up to 50% of FTE hours	236.50	241.50	251.50	262
Continuing members	40	40	40	40

As part of the transfer to a financial year, members paying full yearly subscriptions by 30 September, or by regular credit card or direct debit payments, will receive a discount of \$22 for fulltime employees or for members who are less than a full-time equivalent (FTE) or under 21 years of age, a discount of \$11.

### **Name of the amalgamated union**

Members of both the QPSU and ASU are very proud of their Union - of their history and traditions and past campaigns. Union members associate their membership with the name of their Union.

As a combined Union this is a chance to combine this history of winning and re-brand ourselves for the future.

Combining the acronyms of each Union would be impractical and adopting one existing Union name or another would not recognise the opportunity that this new Union and change in campaigning for Queensland workers could bring.

A new name for a new combined Union will assist in a cultural shift towards a combined, strong force in the workplace and community.

Ensuring we have the right branding, honouring our past and looking to the future is critical. It will cost money to rebrand our Union however this will be money well spent if it means we can move forward together and take this opportunity to 'launch' ourselves in the community and ensure we are relevant for the next generation of workers as well.

### **Support for the amalgamation**

The Councils of the QPSU and ASU have weighed up the advantages and disadvantages of amalgamation. We have considered the impact and the benefits. The assessment is that overall the proposed amalgamation will be good for members, and will develop the amalgamated Union and heighten its' strength and campaigning capacity. It will enable effective representation in industrial issues and it will provide enhanced services, without losing our democratic commitment to letting members make decisions about their working lives at the workplace level. These are all positives.

The Councils support the amalgamation and encourage members to vote "yes" in the ballot for the proposed amalgamation.

