

## Summary

This paper proposes a strategy for collective agreement bargaining in 2015, based on consultation with members, branch and regional officers and national executive members. The paper aims to test the direction the PPTA executive believes members wish it to take in preparing a claim strategy for 2015.

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## 1. Background

1.1 The STCA expires on 30 June 2015 and, due to later expiry dates for our secondary principals and area school agreements, it is likely to be the only collective agreement we will be negotiating in 2015. This may be just as well as the STCA is our lead agreement and members appear to be uniting around the need for a claim for pay increases to realign salaries after the last five years of very low pay scale settlements.

1.2 Regardless of which flavour of government we have next year, any serious catch up salary is unlikely to be achieved unless members feel so strongly, they are prepared to take industrial action to achieve a substantial settlement. Preparation for this will need to include members, branches, regions and the national body in planning and setting aside funds from now on.

1.3 This paper proposes a strategy for teacher bargaining in 2015, based on consultation with members, branch and regional officers and national executive members. The paper aims to test the direction we believe members wish us to take in preparing a claim strategy for 2015.

## 2. The 2015 environment – political, economic and industrial

2.1 At the time of writing, some months prior to the election, it is somewhat difficult to predict the bargaining environment with any certainty. However, there are some aspects we can be sure of.

2.2 We have been told for some time that we are out of recession and are likely

to be further into the economic recovery period by the middle of next year. This will provide a better economic environment for negotiating salary increases. Bill English has spoken recently of wages increasing above inflation out to 2018 – with the average wage predicted to rise 20% while inflation tracks at 12%. However, under National-led governments, public sector workers are often amongst the last to benefit from growth.

2.3 Industrially, if a National-led government is back in power, the undermining of industrial protections and rights that unions and employees currently have cannot be underestimated. While the government's Employment Relations Amendment Bill will not be passed prior to the election, they have promised to pass it within their first 100 days, i.e. long before we will be negotiating any of our current collective agreements. The Bill will introduce a number of anti-employee provisions, for example removing the right to meal or rest breaks, or denying access by teachers or their union to information relevant for disciplinary or competence procedures and redundancy.

2.4 Even more serious, are major changes which will seriously undermine collective bargaining by:

- removing the duty to conclude bargaining, i.e. allowing the Ministry to simply walk away from negotiations;
- imposing a 60 day stand-down period before bargaining could be reinitiated;
- allowing the Ministry to arbitrarily deduct up to 10% of teachers' salaries for "partial strikes"; and
- removing protection for new teachers who would not be automatically covered by the collective agreement in their first 30 days of work.

If there is a Labour-led coalition in government in 2015 it will not necessarily

be easy sailing for PPTA members to achieve significant pay increases either. While Andrew Little has spoken publicly in recent times about workers needing to see 4% pay increases in coming years, the need to show fiscal restraint will weigh heavily. Labour has promised to run surpluses in government but has also committed significant funding in education to ensure 100% trained and qualified early childhood education teachers and to reducing class sizes.

While a Labour-led government may not necessarily be better for PPTA in terms of winning a significant pay increase in bargaining in 2015, it would certainly provide a more favourable industrial and education climate generally. With commitments to extend the rights of workers to collectively bargain, and develop industry wide standards to form the basis of collective agreements, this is a markedly preferable option for our bargaining environment.

### 3. Members' expectations

3.1 Over the past year, we have heard both from executive members and regional officers that members are expressing a clear preference for salary over conditions in the next round of collective bargaining. This has been further tested this year in discussions by executive members and union staff with members and branch and regional officers.

3.2 At the July regional chairs' forum, a workshop was run with all regional chairs where a claim proposal, first suggested by the executive industrial committee in December last year, was presented and discussed. This proposal clearly resonated strongly with regional chairs and it has since been endorsed further by the July meeting of the executive industrial committee and the full executive at its August meeting.

## 4. The salary claim – how much is enough?

4.1 It is clear that recent salary movement has not kept up anywhere near inflation over the last five years. This is not surprising considering the recession, a strongly anti-union government, and the imperative to keep existing conditions in our collective agreements intact throughout its term, in the face of persistent claw back claims from the employer.

4.2 However, we are now out of recession, and members are rightly expecting that their salaries should now be comparable to those that teachers in other countries receive and that are commensurate with their worth.

4.3 Since the last 4% increase in July 2009, increases to the STCA have fallen well below inflation. The chart below tracks increases to inflation (as per CPI) up to December 2012 seen alongside our STCA increases, and also provides the current projected increases for the 2014 year and the years between 2015 and 2018 (maximum period of settlement of the 2015 STCA).

4.4 It is apparent that a CPI catch up claim could be very high for the first year. However, executive and regional chair members have strongly endorsed a salary claim that will contain:

- a) a percentage increase on all scales to catch up with inflation (CPI) for the first year; and
- b) a percentage increase on all scales as per projected inflation for second (and possible subsequent years).

## 5. What this means for conditions claims

5.1 If we are serious about a major salary increase claim in this round, members will need to agree that there cannot also be a raft of conditions claims, as we have pursued in previous rounds. First, such claims will be unaffordable if we want all the available money to go into salary. Secondly, conditions claims are often complex and result in very long drawn out discussion in negotiations, which can side-track the major issue or issues.

Year	CPI <i>March year change</i>	STCA salary increase	
2009	3.0%	4.0%	<i>from 1 July 2009</i>
2010	2.0%	Nil	<i>protracted bargaining, CA unsettled</i>
2011	4.5%	1-3%	<i>from 13 April 2011 (with translation to new scale – trained rates only) Nil for untrained teachers</i>
2012	1.6%	Nil	
2013	0.9%	1.14%	<i>from 23 Jan 2013</i>
2014	1.5%	1.0%	<i>from 28 Jan 2014</i>
2015	1.8% * 2.0% **	0.49%	<i>from 28 Jan 2015 – (till 30 June)</i>
2016	2.5% * 2.4% **		
2017	2.3% * 2.4% **		
2018	2.0% *		

\* March year projections in 8 May 2014 Treasury Budget projections. Update due 19 August 2014.

\*\* March year projections by NZIER June 2014.

5.2 Accordingly, Executive thinking to date is that there should be very few conditions claims to distract the employer team from addressing the significant increase in actual cost of living that teachers have experienced over recent years.

5.3 Executive has identified one major condition claim which is an iconic claim for our membership in terms of equity and could also be met at little or no cost to the employer. That is the claim for equitable pro-rated non-contact time for part-timers, together (quid pro quo) with the removal of the 11% loading. This is the same claim we lodged in the last bargaining round and we believe it could be successful if lodged again.

5.4 Executive believes that a maximum of three other appropriate claims could also be lodged, provided that they are at little or no cost, and not so complex that they could divert attention from the major salary claim.

5.5 The suggested approach to these is that branches hold meetings in the fourth term to discuss such claims, and that they be asked to forward their top three minor claims to National Office. The three most common would then be included in the claim, provided that they met the following criteria:

- Widely-held/deeply-felt;
- Low cost;
- Simple, i.e. increase in family leave, mileage allowance etc; and
- Strategic.

5.6 As always, there may also be a number of purely technical claims, i.e. simple claims that clarify existing provisions for both parties at no extra cost or loss.

## 6. The 2015 STCA claims process

6.1 It is proposed that, should this paper be endorsed by conference, a claim be drawn up quantifying the salary and part-time non-contact claim and seeking input from branches as to the other three conditions claims.

6.2 Branches will be asked to meet in the fourth term to endorse such a claim and to agree on their top 'other' conditions claims, which will be forwarded to National Office.

6.3 The full claim will then be sent back to branches in the first term next year asking branches for final endorsement and the claim can then be lodged with the employers when bargaining is initiated on 1 May 2015.

## 7. Planning for an industrial campaign

7.1 Neither a left nor a right led government will be disposed to meet a substantial pay claim, no matter how silver-tongued and persuasive our advocates and bargaining teams are. However, should we be bargaining under a National-led government, it is almost certain that the new provisions of the current Employment Relations Amendment Bill will be in place. This means we need to be preparing now.

7.2 Planning for any major industrial campaign needs to begin long before the campaign itself, at least in terms of preparing members, branches, regions and the national body for any potential financial costs involved. It is now many years since members have taken industrial action which has cost them actual pay, and members, especially those with one income and young families, will find losing pay very difficult. The union already has a good resource on how members can prepare financially for long periods of action which may result in the loss of salary. This can be reissued so that members are advised how and when to take these precautions.

7.3 There is also a need to prepare the ground work for a campaign so that the general public as well as members understand the reasoning behind it before negotiations begin.

## 8. Implications for area school bargaining

8.1 The area school collective agreements, both for teachers (ASTCA) and for principals (ASPCA) expire on 3 November 2015 and 1 June 2016 respectively. However, the primary teachers' collective (PTCA) does not expire until 21 December 2015, so bargaining for area school teachers cannot begin until 2016.

8.2 Similarly, the area school principals' agreement (ASPCA) will have to wait until both major agreements for principals have also expired (primary in November 2015 and secondary in March 2016).

8.3 Waiting until the major agreements are, if not settled, at least in progress and with agreed claims, is a continued frustration for our area school members. However, both area school agreements are too small (i.e. do not have enough members to provide the necessary 'industrial muscle') to be lead agreements. In the past, although composite and area school members have had to wait for later negotiations and settlements (and with no back pay for the last two settlements under the National-led government), they have arguably obtained overall better settlements by aiming for the 'best of both' improvements made in the larger CA settlements.

8.4 There is, however, no reason why our area school members should not have the same ability to engage in and inform the major secondary agreement claim. We therefore intend to ask area school branches to meet and participate in suggesting the three additional conditions claims in the fourth term. This may or may

not inform the final area school claim, depending on the success of the primary and secondary teacher claims, but it will serve as useful preparation.

## 9. Conclusions

9.1 This paper is testing whether there is enough wide-spread support for the strategy and the framework of the claim proposed. Such a claim and strategy will rely on strong member support and we need to know whether that is there before we go ahead. Put simply, we need to be sure that, if we lead this charge, there will be troops coming over the hills behind us.

9.2 Alternative strategies, should members not endorse this strategy, could be to have a lower salary claim with more conditions, which may be easier to present to the public, but is unlikely to be simple or less costly or easier to win, or to open the claim fully to members (which is likely to lead to a costly and complex claim in any event).

## 10. The recommendations

1. That the report be received.
- ~~2. That the industrial strategy and framework for claims for the STCA outlined in this paper be endorsed.~~
- ~~3. That branch, regional and national funds be set aside for a 2015 industrial campaign and members also be advised to prepare financially for a long campaign next year.~~
- ~~4. That branch meetings (possibly at branch PUMs) be called for members to consider and discuss a major salary claim and its implications, and the equitable part time non-contact claim, and to agree on their three additional conditions claims.~~

# 2014 Annual Conference

## Minutes

Minutes of the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association (Inc) held at the Brentwood Hotel, Kilbirnie, Wellington, commencing at 9.45 a.m. on Tuesday 30 September 2014, continuing at 9.00 a.m. on Wednesday 1 October and 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 2 October 2014.

### PPTA Industrial Strategy 2015

1. THAT the industrial strategy and framework for claims for the STCA, **attached as Appendix D**, be endorsed. (not attached to this paper- minutes - confidential to members)
2. THAT branch, regional and national funds be set aside for a 2015 industrial campaign and members also be advised to prepare financially for a long campaign next year.
3. THAT branch meetings (possibly at branch PUMs) be called for members to consider and discuss a major salary claim and its implications, and the equitable part-time non-contact claim, and to agree on their three additional conditions claims.

**Carried**