



Denis Blackford
NT Branch Secretary

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Moving interstate?

If you are a financial member of the ANF, QNU or NSWNA you can transfer your membership by phoning your union branch. Don't take risks with your ANF membership transfer to the appropriate branch for total union cover. It is important for members to consider that nurses who do not transfer their membership are probably not covered by professional indemnity insurance.

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Welcome to the December/January newsletter. The Branch has been very busy with EBA negotiations and related processes, organising and running an ANF Roadshow, and, participating in the National Biennial Delegates Conference - as well as supporting many members across the NT with a variety of workplace issues.

The recruitment of an industrial officer has been a significant boost to our capacity to more comprehensively address workplace

place issues. Jane Carrigan has brought great skills, knowledge and a unique and engaging style and will contribute greatly to our team.

We would welcome contact from nurses in the various regions to share views and experiences with the view to publishing them in this newsletter. Please be tempted to put together a few paragraphs about where you are and what makes you happy or cranky. Deadline for the February issue is 10 January 2004.

Darwin Private Hospital EBA

The ANF NT negotiating team, Cheryl Winter, Angie Williams, Cec Farley, Angela Wallace and Denis Blackford, have had two meetings with the DPH management (at the time of writing). The meetings have allowed the issues around the log of claims to be

addressed. The DPH management responded, at the second meeting, with their view of what they are prepared to consider offering in a draft agreement. DPH have indicated that the outcomes in the NTPS EBA process will significantly inform

their position on a draft agreement. The ANF NT Branch will be meeting DPH membership during the week commencing 17 November to determine their response to DPH management's initial position.

NT Public Sector EBA

At the time of writing, the negotiations are reaching conclusion. Since the last newsletter the ANF EBA negotiating team has had further meetings with the Government to push for improvements in the offer. Since these meetings the ANF has teleconferenced with job delegates and held members meetings across the NT to feedback and develop an understanding of what the membership feels about the changes to the draft agreement. The essential features of the changes include:

- > Quantum 11%, (5%; 3%; 3%).
- > Salary review after two years.
- > Postgraduate Qualifications Allowance provision expanded to include all PGQ attained through a minimum of 12 months part time study, reduced from \$1500pa to \$820pa.

> Changes in overtime provisions for new part time employees employed after 1 February 2004.

> Clarification to reviews clause to involve Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) if agreement cannot be reached on particular reviews.

Once a draft agreement in principle has been reached the Department will circulate the document to all workplaces. It will be available to nurses for two weeks. A ballot process of all nurses will then take place, and if it is accepted by a majority of those who vote, the agreement will be then be signed by the Government and ANF.

We have been assured that once the agreement has been accepted, back pay will be backdated to 30 August 2003.

6th Biennial National Delegates Conference

6th Biennial National Delegates Conference

The ANF NT Branch attended the ANF 6th Biennial National Delegates Conference held in Hobart on 16-17 October. The NT Branch was represented by Angie Williams (DPH), Frank Pearson (RDH), Libby Clegg (GDH) and Wendy Corkill (ASH).

The conference allowed the NT delegation to connect with their peers from other Branches and gain an insight into the ANF at a Federal level. The conference had a number of quality speakers including Sharan Burrow, ACTU President, Marcus Einfeld, QC, Julian Burnside, QC, and comedian Bryan Dawe as Sir Murray Rivers.

The conference is an opportunity for the 'back bone' of ANF, the job delegates, to contribute to the policy development and direction of the organisation through the resolutions passed at conference.

The final resolution passed at the conference recommended that Federal Executive endorse the 2005 National Biennial Delegates Conference to be held in Darwin.

New Industrial Officer

As many of you may know, Jane Carrigan has been acting in the position of Industrial Officer for a number of months now. The position was recently formally advertised and Jane has now been selected as our permanent Industrial Officer. Jane's legal background with a strong focus on employment issues will be of real benefit. Jane's role is to advise the Branch on industrial issues as well as working with individual members to address the day-to-day issues affecting nurses. We welcome her and look forward to a significantly boosted proactive future with her on the team.

Tiwi Health Board - In Administration

Nurses working for the Tiwi Health Board (THB) have found themselves in the position of having a Volunteer Administrator (VA) as their employer. There is considerable anxiety while staff wait to see what happening with their outstanding entitlements which may be lost due to THB's insolvency. Further, is the anxiety attached to uncertainty of future employment. At time of printing, the DH&CS, whose expression of interest in the future management of the service has been accepted by the VA, are working to finalise these issues. The ANF NT Branch is working closely with the various parties to ensure the best possible outcome for members. It is hoped this will be sooner rather than later!

HECS Reimbursement

The Department of Health and Community Services (DH&CS) has had a longstanding program in place whereby staff studying in an area relevant to their nursing may make an application to be reimbursed their HECS fee.

Nurses who made their application at the beginning of this year were rudely surprised to find, at the end of the first term, they were not reimbursed in the usual expedient manner. Numerous enquires elicited no information as to where their reimbursement was, nor why it had been held up. The ANF entered into correspondence with the department and also found they were unable to elicit the reason for the hold up. As a result of being unable to get a straight answer and the fact that nurses were still not receiving their reimbursement, the ANF took the matter to the AIRC. This did seem to hasten things up a bit, though still not as quickly as the undertakings given. However, members were eventually reimbursed and now we wait and see what happens with term 2 reimbursements.

While nothing has been formally stated, the ANF believes possible changes to this program are 'in the air'. We have put DH&CS officials and RDH management on notice that we strongly oppose any proposed changes.

Hetti Perkins EBA

A Draft document is being considered by members at Hetti Perkins. Negotiations have proceeded with the support of ANF Federal Industrial Officer, Nick Blake.

Top End Mental Health Service (TEMHS)

Since the last newsletter, high workloads have continued for TEMHS nursing staff.

Vicki Telfer, senior community mental health nurse has been appointed project officer and will work with staff and the steering committee to address the broader service issues influencing the problems in providing adequately resourced work environments for nurses.

Australia Honours NT Nurses with OAM



Left to right: Ronnie Taylor OAM, Alison Mustapha OAM, Maureen Brittin OAM (Carol Mansfield absent)

Australia Honours NT Nurses with OAM

Ronnie Taylor, OAM, Maureen Brittin, OAM, Alison Mustapha, OAM, and Carol Mansfield, OAM, don't see themselves as heroes. The three nurses we interviewed say they did what came naturally in helping the victims of the Bali bombings of October 2002. They were all awarded the Order of Australia medals on 29 October 2003 along with 11 other NT recipients.

The four nurses all work at RDH and all four played major roles as the victims arrived and in the later stages of evacuating the patients to interstate hospitals. Just the sheer number of victims coming through the doors was overwhelming and something these nurses had never seen before in their nursing careers. In speaking to Ronnie, Alison and Maureen (Carol has now retired) there were a lot of common thoughts in the honour bestowed upon them. It has been a very emotional time but they feel delighted, excited and humbled that they are representing a lot of nurses who demonstrated great camaraderie, professionalism and team spirit throughout the time they cared for the victims.

The ANF NT Branch wishes to congratulate Ronnie, Alison, Maureen and Carol for this wonderful honour bestowed upon them. We are extremely proud of you all.

ANF NT Branch Executive Elections

Two casual vacancies on the ANF NT Branch Executive are to be resolved by an election process through the Australian Electoral Commission due to the number of members who expressed interest in these vacancies. The candidates for the election are: Vicki Telfer, Wendy Corkill, Karen Brown and Neil Spencer. The ballot has been open since 21 November and will close on 12 December 2003. Results will be printed in the next issue.

ANF NT Branch Audit 2002-2003

The 2002/03 ANF NT Branch Audit Report is now available for members to access. Please contact office for details.

RDH - Emergency Department

The ongoing RDH Emergency Department (ED) dispute is winding up. Numerous changes have gone a long way in resolving the issues that went to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in August.

It is recognised that some of the bigger issues - which might be broadly described as 'bed management' and 'staffing patient ratios' - have a negative flow-on effect to other areas in the hospital. The ANF does not regard an outcome as successful if a positive result has occurred in one area but it has been at the disadvantage of another area(s). Examining the issues carefully, it was felt that this may be the effect of pinning down those two particular issues in ED. Therefore, we are going to approach this matter on a hospital wide (public sector wide) basis. Accordingly, notwithstanding some immediate changes in ED practices, 'bed management' and 'staff/patient ratios' will be picked up in a 'Workloads Campaign' which will commence in the early months of next year. It is anticipated this will be a significant campaign running over a fairly long time with a view to changing systemic issues within the public sector and beyond across the NT. More on this later!

Visit our website: www.anfnt.org.au

ANF Roadshow

The ANF NT embarked on a second Roadshow for the year on 20 October. Over 11 days we were able to visit worksites in Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Gove, Katherine and Darwin. The event was mainly organised and driven by our Organiser, Angela Wallace. Angela, with the support of workplace delegates, was able to present opportunities for nurses to find out more about the benefits of ANF membership.

The purpose of the Roadshow was to recruit new members and to inform those who were members the importance of transferring their membership to the Branch in the State or Territory where they are currently employed. The NT has a very transient workforce and many ANF members currently travelling around Australia were not aware of the importance of the need to transfer their membership as they moved around.

The Roadshow also brings the opportunity for the ANF NT Branch to inform and update current members of the day to day issues and the progress of the current EBA.

The Roadshow once again proved to be a great success with many nurses choosing to become members. We welcome all the new members to the NT Branch. There are still more potential members who are yet to send in their membership forms.

The ANF NT Branch would like to thank all the Job Delegates who took time to assist Angela on the Roadshow, not only was your help and knowledge invaluable, but members had a chance to meet their Job Delegates. The next Roadshow will be held around March/April next year.

As you can see we recruit them young these days. Rachel Knotts, daughter of ANF member, Paul Knotts, Alice Springs, showing off some of the donated merchandise.



Advertisement: For car loans we're still here for you

If you're dreaming of a new set of wheels, or perhaps a holiday or a new swimming pool, you can make it happen sooner by financing your purchase with a personal loan.

The loans available today are many and varied and personal loan interest rates are very competitive - but there are some pitfalls to avoid. For instance, be careful with the instant financing available from retailers. Often this type of low-interest finance can prove very costly in the long-run when the loan reverts to a higher variable rate after the 'honeymoon' period.

There are a few easy pointers to finding the right loan for you. The first is the rate - consider whether you would prefer an interest rate that is fixed for the life of the loan or a variable rate, which offers you the flexibility to take advantage of interest rate movements. A fixed rate will give you real long-term control over your budget and is a great option now when interest rates look like their next move will be upwards, while a variable rate will give you the opportunity to make the most of the low rates currently available.

The second is pre-approval. This will ensure that you know exactly how much you can afford, and how much you can spend, before you go shopping and. This will make sure you don't get caught up in the moment and talked into spending more than you can afford. With a pre-approved loan you will also be in the best possible position when negotiating your purchase.

You should also consider fast access to funds, and access to extra funds, such as with loan top-ups and free redraws. These are key features of some personal loans that will ensure that you have access to the money you need - when you need it. A free redraw facility on a personal loan gives you the flexibility to make extra payments, reducing the term of the loan and the interest you pay, while giving you access to the additional funds should you need it - such as for tyres, car registration, insurance or servicing. A top-up of your existing personal loan can provide you with extra funds for that holiday you've always wanted, or any other purpose you choose.

Flexibility in repayments is also important. It is best to choose a loan where repayments can be made weekly, fortnightly or monthly through a range of payment options such as payroll deduction, direct debit from your savings account or over-the-counter.

As recognition of so many of the members of the Federation having a relationship with Australian Central Credit Union, we make this special offer. Present a copy of this newsletter to Australian Central and we will waive the normal establishment fee of \$149 on our personal loans*. This applies to both existing and new members.

*Lending terms and conditions apply.

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