

## **SECRETARIAT REPORT TO FEDERAL COUNCIL - MAY 2015**

### **Introduction**

In its first 18 months in office the Abbott Government implemented two things for the education sector that did not require much thought – to maintain the inadequate funding levels for schools which the previous government introduced and extend Universal Access funding for the early childhood education sector for a further 12 months

Numerous inquiries have been launched but there have been no funded commitments to the Education sector after more than half a term in government.

### **So what has the Federal Coalition Government been up to?**

- Senate Select Committee on School Funding – equity and excellence in Australian schools
- Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group – looking at initial teacher education
- Review of the Australian Curriculum
- Senate Inquiry on Effectiveness of NAPLAN
- Senate Inquiry on the Immediate Future of Childcare Sector in Australia
- Senate Inquiry into the Operation, Regulation and Funding of Private Vocational Education and Training Providers in Australia
- Senate Inquiry into the Immediate Future of Childcare in Australia
- House of Representatives Inquiry on Quality Early Childhood Education in Australia
- The Productivity Inquiry into Early Learning and Childcare
- Regulatory Impact Statement on National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Childcare
- Woolcott Inquiry into National Quality Framework
- Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on SWD – to be completed in 2016
- Review of AITSL
- Review of MySchool
- Feasibility Study of On-line NAPLAN provision
- Commission of Audit, and
- Reform of Federation – the White Paper State/Federal government responsibilities.

In addition to these are the Heydon's Royal Commission into Trade Unions, the Commission of Audit, the Fair Work Commission's 4 year Review of Modern Awards and the Fair Work Commission's Review of Division 4A of superannuation default fund terms.

### **What has the Federal Coalition Government achieved for education in past 18 months?**

**THIS PAGE IS  
BLANK**

The past 18 months has resulted in nothing but an atmosphere of uncertainty for our schools and our members. This sense of uncertainty has been exacerbated by the failure of the Federal Government's 2014 budget.

In the absence of clear educational strategies and policies, the Federal Government has failed Catholic and Independent schools, Government schools, students with disabilities and early childhood education.

The following provides a detailed summary of issues and challenges which the IEU has been actively addressing.

## **Reform of the Federation: White Paper**

The previous Federal Government (Rudd/Gillard) were notable for their development of national education reforms, generally under the auspices of COAG (the Council of Australian Governments). The National Education Reform Agenda, the National Plan for School Improvement, ACARA (the Australian Curriculum and Assessment Authority) and NAPLAN, AITSL and of course, the Gonski Review of School Funding were indicative of a national approach to almost every facet of school education in Australia.

When the Federal Coalition Government took office, one of the first issues it faced was how to deal with the issue of heightened expectations of what would be delivered through increased funding and a national approach to education. Faced with reneging on state/federal and various education sector agreements, the new government took the decision to honour already committed forward estimate funding for four years, buying it time to review arrangements in the interim period.

What form this review would take has been unclear until now.

In June 2014, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet announced the COAG-agreed terms of reference for a review of the Reform of the Federation encompassing several key policy areas. The White Paper - *Roles and Responsibilities in Education - Early Childhood and Schools* issues paper, released in December 2014, indicated just how far the Federal Government intends to distance itself from school education.

## **School Funding**

The White Paper spells out clearly how the Commonwealth has become a bigger player in education and how this has caused an overlapping of roles and responsibilities. Most concerns appear to be around the issue of rising costs and funding.

The paper states that all governments have increased funding to schools by over \$11 billion (37%) in real terms over the past ten years.

It says a challenge for governments will be identifying fiscally-sustainable revenue bases for both the Commonwealth and the States and Territories as school funding is projected to increase with student numbers and as a result of the existing schools funding arrangements.

As the previous Federal Government increased funding to education, it had also linked this to meet some of its own outcomes in areas such as curriculum data collection, national testing and teacher quality. This has lead to an ever increasing blurring of the lines of responsibility.

The Federal Government's position is clear in the White Paper. The "discussion points" relating to schooling highlight the areas of overlapping responsibility and point to principle of subsidiarity (responsibility should sit with the lowest level of government practicable) as the correct constitutional response.

Leading questions, such as those below, provide more than a clue as to the Federal Government's predisposition to devolving as much responsibility as possible to the States and Territories.

- What benefits or costs would arise from assigning full responsibility for school education to the States and Territories?
- Is there a national interest for Commonwealth involvement in school education? In which roles?
- Does the Commonwealth have a role in sustaining these or could states and territories take these on?

It appears that the Federal Government has found a politically expedient way to both wind back COAG's national education initiatives and to reduce the Commonwealth's education funding under the guise of constitutional revision.

The real questions for the long term are: Will the states accept responsibility for increased education funding for state and non-government schools and can federal politicians of all parties resist promising Commonwealth funded education initiatives?

The obvious answer to both is "No".

A series of roundtable meetings discussing the issues paper have taken place in each capital city, plus the regional cities of Wagga Wagga and Townsville.

The IEU have been attending these meetings and will continue to push the message that the Federal Government needs to continue funding the non-government sector.

The issues paper will be followed up by a Green Paper to be published in the second half of 2015, and a White Paper in 2016. The Green Paper will provide an opportunity for written submissions.

### Quality Education for Students with Disabilities – I Care. Do You?

The 2014 IEU Federal Council endorsed a member campaign for the necessary additional Federal Government funds for the education of students with disabilities.



In the two weeks prior to the release of the 2014 Federal Budget, IEU members lobbied Senators by sending thousands of postcards; urgently calling upon Senators to direct additional Federal Government Budget funding to students with disabilities.

The IEU campaign continued with IEU members emailing MPs directly through the IEU campaign website [www.educationforall.com.au/swd](http://www.educationforall.com.au/swd), urging MPs to support increased funding for these students. Follow up visits were made to targeted MPs.

### What is Wrong with the Federal Government Funding for Students with Disabilities?

The Federal Government would have us believe that, for every school with a funded student with a disability, the full SWD interim loading would be received. For 2014, the SWD loading for primary and secondary students is notionally \$17 244 and \$22 679 respectively.

However, for many schools, this SWD interim loading is to be phased in over the 6 year transitional period. Thus many Catholic and Independent schools do not even receive these amounts, inadequate as they are to meet the actual needs of the student.

The fact is that in 2014 the SWD loadings for those schools below the SRS, would be less than \$2 200 regardless of actual student needs. Schools who are above SRS would not receive any SWD loading for their students.

Not only had the Federal Government failed to deliver on the expected increase in funding for students with disability in the 2014 Budget, they had also failed to extend the interim *More Support for Students with Disability* program.

These funding inadequacies are a major barrier to the provision of essential resources, individual support and access to professional expertise. These are essential components in the provision of quality education to students with disabilities.

The current level of funding for students with disabilities means that schools will continue to try subsidising the learning needs of students with disabilities from other sources of income. Teachers and support staff will try to “make do” with already overstretched resources and many students with disabilities will continue to be denied the quality education which is their right.

The IEUA continues to urge the development of a framework of teaching and learning resource standards for high quality teaching and learning conditions for students with disabilities with regard to:

- Early intervention support and programs
- The appropriate levels of specialist teaching and support staff
- Class sizes which allow optimum teaching and learning for integrated classes
- Time release for curriculum and program modification and planning, and liaising with parents and external agencies
- Adequate access to health and allied health professionals & services and
- Access to appropriate and relevant professional development for staff.

However, all of these require resources or, in unfashionable parlance, money.

### **Four Year Modern Award Review**

Currently, the Fair Work Commission is undertaking a comprehensive review of all awards. The **IEU Industrial Committee** is co-ordinating the application to the Modern Award Review as well as developing positions which counter positions put forward by employer groups.

Since their inception in 2010, the awards have already been subject to one review. However, this ‘four year’ review has a considerably wider scope. Any interested party (not necessarily limited to employers and unions) may make an application to vary an award as part of the review process.

However, such variations are subject to the applicant bearing the full evidentiary onus for change. This is important as the awards were not made using this process but rather a bastardised first award principles exercise representing an amalgam of established (pre-2009) federal rates of pay and conditions and the outcome of negotiations between industry parties.

### **Modern Awards: Foundational underpinnings**

It is worth noting at this point that the extent to which the review affects members in a particular Branch is directly related to the number of IEU members in a Branch who are award-dependent. The existence of wide spread bargaining in the Independent and Catholic sector will limit some consequences of the review.

However, all IEU Branches are cognizant of the impact that reducing underpinning award conditions would have on employer bargaining positions in collective negotiations.

### **Nature of applications**

The more significant of the employer applications seek to reduce pay and conditions for general (non-teaching) staff in schools. These can be grouped as application seeking to:

- Abolish or reduce penalty rates or abolish or extend the span of hours to achieve the same effect
- Remove or weaken the entitlement for lunch breaks
- Introduce junior rates.

Once again, employers have sought to attack the lowest paid and most disadvantaged in their schools.

## Taking Up the Fight for Better Conditions for Women

Further work of the **IEU Industrial Committee** has been to assist the ACTU, in its application to vary all Federal Awards to include new entitlements for:

- Employees during pregnancy and on return to work from parental leave
- Employees experiencing family and domestic violence



IEU SA Members endorse ACTU claim for better conditions

### The Facts

It is a reality that women, as the majority of caregivers, are too often denied access to meaningful part time work and advancements to their careers. Sadly, it is also a reality that every week in Australia, one woman is killed by her current or former partner, often after a history of domestic violence. Yet it is possible for Australian workplaces to overcome these realities and provide better lives for women through meaningful part time work and leave arrangements.

### Balancing Family and Work is a Workplace Issue

In the IEU submission to the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) *Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review 2014*, IEU members reported that they were denied access to part time and job share arrangements, in some cases being forced to resign from their position. Other members were unlikely to regain their formal earning capacity as they were denied access to leadership positions.

### Domestic Violence is a Workplace Issue

Domestic violence impacts on workplaces through increased absenteeism due to injury, sickness, stress, court attendance and other factors. It can limit an employee's ability to perform effectively, resulting in performance management, terminations and resignations.

### A summary of the major improvements sought

- Changes to strengthen the rights of pregnant employees to a safe workplace
- 2 days paid leave for prospective parents to attend appointments associated with pre-natal, pre-adoption or permanent care orders
- A right to return from parental leave to the position previously held
- An enforceable right to return to work part-time
- 10 days paid domestic violence leave

### What position have employers taken on the application?

All the major employer bodies oppose the unions' claim. They have sought to prevent it from even being heard by challenging the Commission's right to do so. In the event that these arguments fail, they will most probably unilaterally oppose any improvements.

### Why is this important to everyone?

The Federal Awards set the "basic safety nets" for employment conditions.

While the majority of IEU members' working conditions are covered through Enterprise Agreements, any enhancements to the Modern Award "safety net" must ultimately be reflected into Enterprise Agreements. (Enterprise Agreements must be able to meet the *Better Off Overall Test* against the relevant Modern Award.)

Therefore, a success in the Modern Awards' case is a success for all IEU members.

The core of any industrial case is the weight of first hand evidence from IEU members.



## IEU Guide to Flexible Work Arrangements

In support of the ACTU campaign the **IEU Women's and Equity Committee** developed the *IEU Guide to Flexible Work Arrangements* to assist members and employers in implementing flexible working arrangements in their workplace by explaining eligibility and the process of application. Armed with this information, members and employers can take the important step towards eliminating ignorance, misunderstandings and ill informed prejudices. A copy of the guide can be located at [www.ieu.org.au](http://www.ieu.org.au)

## Build Quality Early Childhood Education; Not Destroy it

The IEU has been active in making submissions to the numerous inquiries and reviews for the Early Childhood Education sector.

In addition to the Productivity Commission Inquiry, the Senate Education and Employment Committee initiated two further reviews; *Delivery of Quality and Affordable Early Childhood Education and Care Services* and the *Immediate Future of the Childcare Sector in Australia*.

There is also a further review into the National Partnerships for Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education conducted by Woolcott Research and Engagement on behalf of the Federal Government and the Regulatory Impact Statement Review into the National Quality Framework.

In all submissions, the IEU has repeatedly emphasised both the vital role of qualified early childhood education teachers and the need for adequate government funding for early childhood education and care

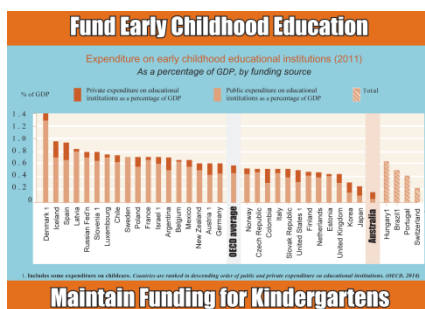
## Productivity Commission Fails Early Childhood Education

In February 2015, the final report on Childcare and Early Learning by the Productivity Commission was finally released to the public by the Federal Government after a 5 month wait.

The Report represented the largest review into Early Childhood Education since the 1990's yet provided recommendations which simply marked time for early childhood teachers, service providers, parents and children. This was a great disappointment to IEU members.

The Federal Government had constrained the Productivity Commission in its terms of reference, emphasising that recommendations must be within the existing funding parameters; hence the recommendations were limited and short sighted.

The sector has been operating under a cloud of uncertainty since the last Federal Budget with its limited funding. Australia's early childhood education and care lags behind the OECD partners due to low financial investment in the sector. The OECD recommends countries spend a minimum of 1% of GDP on early learning. The OECD average is 0.7% and Australia spends 0.45%



The IEUA QNT Branch postcard campaign to Minister Morrison calling for certainty of funding for kindergarten education

And while the Report recommends the continuation of the funding for universal access to 15 hours of pre school education provided by a qualified early childhood education teacher, issues such as the benchmark amount of funding to be provided per child, if and how subsidies are means tested, changes to family tax benefits and alterations to the state/federal funding mix would ultimately impact on the early childhood sector.

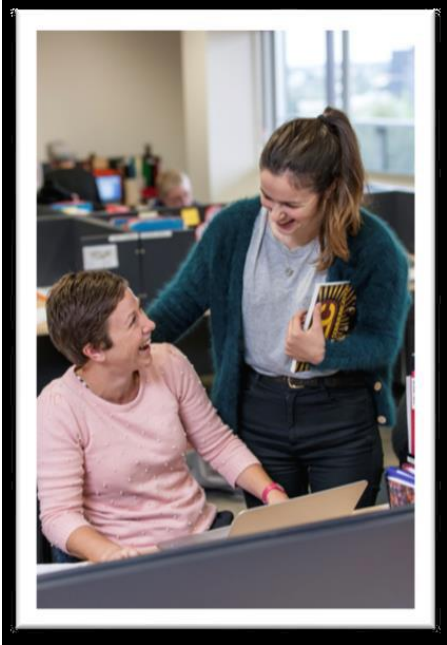
The Federal Government is yet to act upon the recommendations contained within the Report, other than to consider variations to the child care rebate system. Thus this continued funding into 2016 to preschool/kindergartens remains uncertain.

IEU members believe that if Australia is serious about providing quality early childhood education, then more is needed than what the Productivity Commission report offers. A resolution is before Federal Council for consideration.

## Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group Report – Initial Teacher Training Review

On 19 February 2014, Minister Pyne announced the establishment and membership of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG). The Advisory Group was tasked with providing practical, evidence-based advice on how teacher education programmes could be improved to better prepare new teachers with the practical skills needed for the classroom.

The Advisory Group released an Issues Paper in June 2014 which formed part of the public consultation process.



The **IEU Education Committee** contributed to the consultation process both through a face-to-face meeting with members of the Advisory Group and a separate written submission.

The Federal Coalition Government response to the TEMAG Report was provided in March 2015.

Ultimately, the Federal Government has given the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) greater responsibility for improving the overall quality and consistency of teacher training across Australia.

Other Recommendations from the TEMAG report include:

- No single entry criteria, such as an ATAR cut off, for those wishing to become teachers.
- The use of a national literacy and numeracy test to demonstrate that all pre-service teachers are within the top 30 per cent of the population in personal literacy and numeracy.
- All primary pre-service teachers to be equipped with at least one subject specialisation prioritising science, mathematics or a

language.

- AITSL to develop national guidelines for beginning teacher induction.
- School systems and employers to provide effective induction for all beginning teachers, including those employed on a short term or casual basis.

The intention of the Federal Government is to address the majority of the recommendations in the TEMAG Report within the next two years.

The IEU has identified a number of matters which require further consideration by TEMAG. Underlying the IEU concern is the tendency of the report to undervalue the teaching profession and consequently to underestimate the capacity of practitioners to play a central role in its ongoing development and growth.

The IEU has made the following comments in response to the Report:

- Increased involvement of AITSL in the initial teacher education area should not come at the expense of State and Territory teacher regulatory authorities or the TEQSA. AITSL is not a representative body of the teaching profession.
- The IEU rejects any notion that the current teacher workforce has inferior literacy and numeracy capacity. However, the timing of any national numeracy and literacy test is crucial. The IEU proposes that such a test be given in the first semester of initial teacher training and not at the end of the course. This will provide opportunity for remedial action.
- The IEU supports the recommendation for subject specialisation for primary teacher but offers caution to the universities to cater for a balance of specialities within their courses.

Importantly, the IEU in its response to the recommendations emphasises the need for a collaborative effort involving regulatory authorities, schools, universities, professional associations, teacher and education unions.



## National Curriculum Review

Every time there is a change in Federal Government, there appears to be a change in the philosophy of curriculum.

In January 2014, the Minister for Education Christopher Pyne named Dr Kevin Donnelly and Professor Ken Wiltshire to review the National Curriculum.

With the assistance of the **IEU Education Committee**, the IEU made a submission to the Review supporting a national curriculum which contains flexibility for teachers to exercise their professional judgement when developing teaching programs to meet the needs of their particular students, depending on student interest, location, resources, skills, subject currency and other relevant circumstances.

The IEU stated that there was a real need for additional resources to ensure that there was capacity to teach the entirety of the new curriculum and that these resources need to include the provision of specialist teachers, enhanced opportunities for professional development and learning for teachers and support staff as well as provide for changes to initial teacher education programs.

Further, the IEU highlighted the risk of overcrowding in the curriculum, particularly in primary years as the writing and inclusion of additional subjects are added to those in the initial phases. It was emphasised that such overcrowding would put at risk the capacity of primary schools to ensure that sufficient depth of content and skill development was achieved, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

The IEU has further challenged the concept of reviewing curricula without direct teacher involvement. The only appropriate curriculum “experts” are qualified teachers and, as such, teachers should be significantly involved in any development of curriculum.

The final report, made public in October 2014, made 30 key recommendations for improving the Australian Curriculum.

The Federal Government has made an initial response to the Review’s Report and made statements on five themes:

- Fixing the overcrowded curriculum
- Making it easier for parents to engage with the curriculum
- Improving access for all parents
- Rebalancing the curriculum
- Reviewing the way ACARA works.

## Stakeholder and Statutory Committee work

The IEU has continued its work on the various government and statutory committees/working parties such as AITSL and ACARA. As well, a range of meetings have been initiated by the Federal Officers with key senior officers of employer representative bodies such as Independent Schools Council of Australia, and National Catholic Education Commission. Moreover, a closer working arrangement is now in place with National Parent bodies and ASEPA. Representative meetings have been held with Senator Collins, Senator O’Neil, Graham Perrett MP, Education Minister Christopher Pyne, Minister Sussan Ley and Opposition Education Minister Kate Ellis.

## 2014 Organising Workshop - Taking Action

On November 7 2014, the **IEU Organising Campaigning Committee** conducted an Organisers’ Workshop for organisers from each IEU branch. The workshop focussed on the current bargaining campaigns which were being conducted across the country and highlighted the challenges and strategies of organising experienced by organisers during bargaining.



Organisers shared resources and success stories arising from the bargaining campaigns as well as highlighting concerns and challenges experienced.

A session on the current legislation which underpins collective bargaining and provides for protected industrial action was conducted by Robert Seals, IEU NSWACT Branch Industrial Officer, and gave to organisers a sound knowledge base from which to work.

Organisers discussed the importance of close communication and support for the Chapter Reps and IEU members in schools. Allaying fears and addressing concerns during bargaining campaigns are the major communication tasks for IEU organisers and the workshop provided an opportunity for organisers to refresh and strengthen their communication skills while working with their colleagues from other IEU branches.



Robert Seals: FWA Session



Organiser discussion: handling objections

## Skilling up to Grow Our Union

Growing and strengthening our union is a priority for all organisers and discussion on recruitment techniques and strategies was an important element of this workshop. Organisers readily recognised that lead up period to the bargaining campaign was the prime time to concentrate on recruitment strategies and the workshop provided sessions on developing recruitment skills; particularly on ensuring a successful closure to a recruitment conversation.

## IEU Organising Campaigning Committee

A graffiti wall was established and key points and strategies were identified and placed upon the wall during the day. These strategies and key points were summarised at the end of the day. The 2015 workshop is currently being planned by the **IEU Organising Campaigning Committee**.

## Quality Education Campaign – What we do: Who we are



2014 Quality Education Campaign

During 2014, the IEU united with global education unions to celebrate quality education as a twelve month co-ordinated effort through Education International.

As part of the campaign, the various **IEU Branches' Committee of Management** came together to gather in Sydney for the **IEU National Conference for World Teachers Day**. The two day conference, held over 2 and 3 October 2014, analysed the elements of quality education such as teacher development and recognition, early childhood education and support and funding necessary to ensure quality outcomes for students with disabilities.

The National Conference highlighted the crucial role that teachers, and those who support teachers, play in the delivery of quality education.

The conference heard from a range of national and international academics and practitioners including Ged Kearney, ACTU President; Paul Goulter, National Secretary to NZEI Te Riu Roa in New Zealand; Dr Sean Kearney, Associate Dean, School of Education, University of Notre Dame, Australia; Ian Dalton, Executive Director of the Australian Parents Council APC; and Lawrence Ingvarson, Research Director at the Australian Council for Educational Research.

On the last day of the conference, members rallied at Mrs Macquarie's Chair at the Sydney Botanical Gardens in support of the Educational International Unite for Quality Education Campaign by holding up letters to spell out QUALITY EDUCATION.

### IEU Photography Awards 2014

Continuing on with the Quality Education Campaign, IEU members submitted photographs that show Quality Education in Action as part of the “**Quality Education: What we do, who we are**” campaign.

The awards presented an ideal opportunity to show the wider community the work that high quality teachers and support staff perform every day. An array of prizes were on offer, with the People's Award being nominated at the IEU National Conference in Sydney.

First Place,  
IEU Photography Awards 2014





## Asylum Seekers

The IEU continues to publically condemn the Federal Government and the Opposition for their lack of leadership in addressing the asylum seeker issue appropriately and accordingly with those obligations under the International treaties to which Australia is party.

### New Australian Asylum Laws Will Fast Track Vulnerable People To Danger

In December 2014, the Australian Government's introduced the Migration and Maritime Powers Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 which removes existing protections from asylum seekers in Australia. With the passing of the legislation amendment, Australia is no longer obliged to adhere to the UN Refugee Convention – a treaty Australia was instrumental in constructing and implementing after the Second World War.

International Refugee Law recognised by the UN Refugee convention, is built upon the fundamental principal of non-refoulement; that is it is forbidden to return a person to a country where they may still be persecuted or tortured. However, the amended Australian legislation now states; *it is irrelevant whether Australia has non refoulement obligations in respect of an unlawful non-citizen*".

### With these amendments to legislation, Australia is now able to return an asylum seeker to a country where they have been, or know they may be, tortured or persecuted

In addition, arrivals by boats will not longer have access to the Refugee Review Tribunal. They will have an appeal mechanism which is not a hearing but only a paper review.

Any checks and balances that were previously within Australia's refugee system have been now stripped away, thus removing basic protections for those who seek asylum.

### The Forgotten Children in Asylum

As at 5 September 2014, there were 1,428 children in closed immigration detention. The average age of these children was 10 years old. The Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) requires that children only be detained as a matter of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time. Australia's mandatory detention of children is fundamentally inconsistent with Australia's obligation under the CRC because it is used as a first, not a last resort.

In February 2015, The Human Rights Commission Report "The Forgotten Children" was released, detailing serious violations of the rights of children in Australian Detention Centres and the physical and psychological damage they experienced as a result of this detention. The report makes clear that long-term detention of children causes mental illness, trauma and harm which will affect them for their entire lives. The Federal Government's response to this report has been appalling. Rather than address these critical issues and take steps to bring safety to these children, Prime Minister Abbott attacked the motives of the Human Rights Commission.

The IEU has called upon the Federal Government to comply with the Convention of the Rights of the Child, where children who are asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors are entitled to have their welfare and human rights protected and their right to an education upheld

### Unchecked Power to Use Force Against Detained Asylum Seekers

A further example of the Federal Government's use of punitive, coercive powers against asylum seekers, is the *Migration Amendment( Maintaining the Good Order of Immigration Detention Facilities) Bill 2015* which is currently before Parliament. On 3 March 2015, the Senate referred the Migration Amendment to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee for inquiry and report with the reporting date to be 12 May.2015. The draft Bill seeks to provide to detention centres officers unchecked powers to use force in any situation which they think reasonable, which may include, for example, breaking up a peaceful protest.

The IEU has called upon the Federal Government to address the real causes of tension in detention centres – the poor living conditions, the lack of information and the lengthy nature of detention – rather than introduce these punitive broad powers of the Migration Amendment Bill. A resolution is before Federal Council for consideration.

## International Support

### APHEDA

IEU is in its third year of sponsoring the *Women's Literacy Program in Timor L'este*. Almost two-thirds of adult women in Timor L'este have never attended any kind of school, and for those who have, it is often just for a year or two. A high proportion of older East Timorese women (and men) is illiterate, and if they are to participate in the reconstruction and share in the development of Timor L'este, literacy and language training is essential.

In September this year, participants from each Branch will visit Timor L'este and meet with APHEDA representatives involved in the Women's Literacy Program.



APHEDA's Women's Literacy Program

### Vanuatu: Cyclone Pam

A category 5 system with winds up to 250 km/hr hit Vanuatu in March 2015. Around 75,000 people were left in need of emergency shelter and 96% of food crops were destroyed.

More than 14,000 children still remain without access to education as many schools in the outlying islands have been destroyed. Up to 60,000 school age children in total have had their education disrupted.

IEU will meet with the **COPE Executive** on 9 May 2015 in Suva to discuss support necessary for our colleagues in Vanuatu.



Devastation in Vanuatu



School books drying in the sun

A resolution is before Federal Council for consideration.



## Nepal Earthquake

Up to 8 million people have had their lives destroyed after the deadly earthquake which shook Nepal on 25 April. The official death toll is 3,600 people with the number of people who suffered injuries around 7,000 people. Sadly, these figures have been rising hourly as reports on the damage are received.

Nepal is an extremely poor country with weak infrastructure.

The most badly affected area appears to be the Kathmandu Valley where the majority of the Nepalese people live. This means that a great number of schools, educational establishments and universities have been affected by the violence of the quake and its aftershocks.

IEU has grave fears for our colleagues in the Nepalese teacher organisations. Reports from Education International show that district teacher union leaders and union members are among the victims of this disaster, as well as their families and hundreds of students. In addition, many school buildings have been destroyed.

**Education International** is seeking support from the global education union community so that help can be given to Nepalese teacher unions, members and their families. Help would initially be in the form of humanitarian aid initially, and later in rebuilding their facilities and schools.

A resolution is before Federal Council for consideration.



Nepal earthquake