

Annual Report of the President

August 2007

It is with pleasure that I present my eighth Annual report as President. As with previous years it is pleasing to report significant milestones.

Our membership continues to grow. At the time of writing the full membership stands at just over 650. It should not be too hard to break the 700 target before long. A longer term goal of over 1000 is within reach! Yet another school with an in-house union has approached ISTANZ. We are currently helping them with their collective agreement.

It is with satisfaction that Mairi Ferguson, Malcolm Walker and I signed an agreement with NZEI at the May meeting of the Combined Trades Union, National Affiliates Council. This Agreement gives access to a number of services and benefits without prejudicing our independence in anyway. The Agreement gives access to legal advice, printing services, and access to their Resource Centre among other services. The benefits available include a four cent a litre discount fuel card and various other benefits.

It has been a two and half year process of discussion with NZEI, and we acknowledge the work of Colin Tarr and Peter Monteith. We are very grateful to have the support of a large education sector union. However the process has not been without its problems as we are experiencing delays in accessing the benefits.

Last year I reported on a plan to restructure the administration of ISTANZ. A member survey gave positive encouragement to employ an Executive Officer, bringing the number of employed staff, albeit all part time, to three. This team led by the Executive Officer would be responsible for the day to day running of the Association. The National Executive would look after the governance and policy issues.

It is with some satisfaction that I can report that the plan has been implemented. We were very encouraged by the number of quality applicants for the Executive Officer position. In May ISTANZ announced the appointment of Grant Gillon as the new Executive Officer.

I want to record my personal thanks for the way in which Grant Gillon has embraced the ethos of ISTANZ so quickly and effectively. In the few weeks that he has been working for us he has visited many schools, attended meetings on our behalf and dealt with a multiplicity of management issues. Fortnightly staff meetings, chaired by Grant, have ensured good management strategies.

Last year ISTANZ asked the CTU to conduct a union audit. It was felt that if we were to move forward as an effective union it was necessary to have an independent review of

our management. We were very encouraged by the audit report. In short for a small union ISTANZ was commended for achieving well.

Feedback clearly indicates that ISTANZ is perceived as providing a good service for its members. The audit strongly recommends that ISTANZ increase its subscriptions in order to provide a stronger economic base on which to operate. It was also recommended that ISTANZ increase its cash reserves. A further recommendation recommends that the schools delegates' position be given more structure. It also recommends greater private school standardisation of collective agreements. We are working with CTU staff to improve on some of the recommendations.

Today we are celebrating our 40th anniversary. Around this time of the year in 1967 a group of private school secondary teachers gathered in the library of Dilworth School to discuss the formation of the Independent Schools Assistant Secondary Schools Teachers' Association. Between 40-50 people attended the meeting which was led by Jack Paine, Deputy Headmaster St Kentigern College, and Donald Gray, First Assistant at Dilworth School, with Murray Wilton of Dilworth School acting as Secretary.

Until 1974 the Association remained an Auckland organisation, though it had by then embraced the primary schools. In those days the independent school movement was strong, including all the schools that are now integrated.

ISTANZ has come a long way in its forty years and we can look back with considerable pride on our growth and achievements. It is appropriate to acknowledge the work of former Presidents and Executives of those who have gone before.

So what of the future?

- ISTANZ must continue to strive for membership growth. 1000 is not an unreasonable target.
- With the likelihood of a change of Government ISTANZ must prepare for a change in employment law that could see changes in the ability to collectively bargain.
- ISTANZ must continue to provide good service and worthwhile benefits.
- We are actively improving our profile in the education sector and this must continue.
- It is important to improve the membership base in Wellington as a priority and to encourage a member from that region to join our Executive.
- It is with regret that we record that approaches to liaise on a more formal basis with Principals and the Boards of our schools have yet again been rebuffed. We

must continue the approach. It is unfortunate that the independent school sector is not seen as unified.

There is still much to be done. There are challenges ahead. We have a dedicated team to achieve our goals. We can look forward in confidence.

I would like to conclude by extending my thanks for the work achieved by the staff team, Grant, Mairi and Jill. The support of the National Executive, particularly that of long serving National Secretary, Malcolm Walker and members, Tui, Hamish, Eric and Mark, my sincere thanks. Thank you too, to the members who have supported us in our work.

B. B. Owen
President
25 August 2007