



AIDE MEMOIRE

Meeting with executive members of NZ Unions

Date:	17 May 2024	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	2324-3489

Information for Minister(s)

Hon Brooke van Velden
Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone		1st contact
Beth Goodwin	Manager, Employment Relations Team	04 901 1611	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Justine Khayat	Policy Advisor, Employment Relations Team			

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

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Minister's office to complete:

Approved

Declined

Noted

Needs change

Seen

Overtaken by Events

See Minister's Notes

Withdrawn

Comments



AIDE MEMOIRE

Meeting with executive members of NZ Unions

Date:	17 May 2024	Priority:	Medium
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Purpose

You have agreed to meet with Rachael Mortimer, President of the *Teachers' Professional Association of New Zealand*, and Chris Dekker, the secretary of *NZ Unions*, on Wednesday 22 May from 3:30pm to 4pm.

Beth Goodwin
Manager, Employment Relations Policy
Labour, Science and Enterprise, MBIE

17 / 05 / 2024

Background

1. On Wednesday 22 May from 3:30pm to 4pm, you will be meeting with two members of *NZ Unions*:
 - Rachael Mortimer, the President of the *Teachers' Professional Association of New Zealand* and
 - Chris Dekker, the secretary of *NZ Unions*.
2. Deborah Cunliffe, the President of *Nurses Professional Association of New Zealand* who initiated the meeting, is no longer able to attend the meeting and sends her apologies.
3. This is an introductory meeting and an opportunity to learn more about the *NZ Unions'* model as well as discuss upcoming changes to employment legislation.

Overview of NZ Unions' structure

4. The *Red Union Support Hub* (Red Unions) is an Australian umbrella organisation overseeing 13 industry associations for employees (e.g., nurses, teachers, doctors). It has more than 20,000 members in Australia.
5. Red Unions started servicing New Zealand employees when the *Nurses Professional Association of New Zealand* registered as a union in February 2023.
6. *NZ Unions* is a sister organisation of Red Unions and now comprises three unions:
 - The *Teachers' Professional Association of New Zealand* (TPANZ)
 - The *Nurses Professional Association of New Zealand* (NPANZ)
 - The *New Zealand Medical Professionals' Society* (NZMPS) – this one does not appear to be registered.
7. *NZ Unions'* website states that they provide their members support on a variety of workplace issues, collective bargaining, and advocacy on workplace conditions, but otherwise information about their services online is sparse. Their website doesn't detail the size of their membership.
8. *NZ Unions* say they offer an alternative to other unions affiliated to the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU), which they are independent from. They distinguish themselves by being led by workers and not union officials.

Potential topics for discussion

9. In their initial email sent in December 2023, *NZ Unions* wished to discuss the impact of Fair Pay Agreements, 90 day-trials and contractors' status on their members (e.g., nurses and teachers). We assume that Fair Pay Agreements and 90-day trials will not be discussed since the intention of the meeting is to discuss future changes to employment legislation.
10. You may also wish to seek *NZ Unions'* perspective on existing work and your priorities in the Workplace Relations and Safety Portfolio, such as simplifying personal grievances and the reform of the Holidays Act 2003.
11. Talking points are provided in relation to the below topics in Annex One.

NZ Unions may want to discuss mutually beneficial approaches to negotiating collective agreements

12. *NZ Unions* have indicated an interest in discussing mutually beneficial approaches to negotiating collective agreements in this meeting.
13. We think this is referring to an interest-based approach to bargaining, focussed on joint problem solving and finding common ground. It encourages brainstorming and creative thinking for both parties in addressing common interests. You may want to mention that MBIE's website www.employment.govt.nz sets out information on interest-based bargaining, including its benefits, and MBIE's mediators can help with interest-based bargaining.

Next steps

14. Officials can be made available to attend this meeting at your request.

Annexes

Annex One: Biography of attendees

Annex Two: Talking points

Annex One: Biography of attendees



Rachael Mortimer

Rachael is currently the President of the Teachers' Professional Association of New Zealand, head of humanities and a Dean at a school in Canterbury. She has been working in education for over 15 years.

Rachael advocates for educators' work conditions in her free time.



Chris Dekker

Chris Dekker is the Australian-based secretary of *NZ Unions* as well as the Director of Industrial Relations at Red Unions in Australia.

Annex two: Talking points

Introduction – learning more about NZ Unions

- I hear that you officially registered 2 unions last year, for teachers and nurses professionals. How have your organisations grown since then?
- How do you differentiate yourselves from other unions in New Zealand?

Contractor status

- This Government wishes to ensure businesses and workers who explicitly agree to a contracting arrangement have certainty about the nature of that relationship.
- I have asked my officials for advice on policy options to increase certainty in contracting relationships, while minimising harm to workers.
- I am interested to hear the views of a wide range of stakeholders, so I appreciate you meeting with me today.
- What issues have you heard from your members in relation to contractor / employee status?
- It would be great to hear more about what you would like changes to the Employment Relations Act to achieve.

Simplifying personal grievances

- The Government is committed to considering simplifying personal grievances and in particular, removing the eligibility for remedies if the employee is at fault, and setting an income threshold above which a personal grievance could not be pursued.
- Do your organisations have views on how we could simplify personal grievances?

Holidays Act

- I am aware of the issues with the Holidays Act and that these have been a longstanding concern for employers and payroll providers, particularly the lack of clarity and prescription which make it difficult to apply in practice.
- Have your members been facing similar issues?

(If raised) Mutually beneficial approaches during collective bargaining

- I know that MBIE's website sets out information on interest-based bargaining, including its benefits, and MBIE's mediators can help with interest-based bargaining.
- Do you see any role for government in shifting collective bargaining to a more interest-based approach?

From: Zach Boyle
Sent: Wednesday, 15 May 2024 1:54 pm
To: Jenesa Jeram
Subject: FW: Meeting with Hon Brooke van Velden

FYI re the attendees for next Wednesday - [Rival unions for teachers, nurses and doctors launched by anti-vaccine figures | New Zealand Doctor \(nzdoctor.co.nz\)](#)

From: Deborah Cunliffe <deborah.cunliffe@nursesunion.co.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2024 1:49 PM
To: Zach Boyle <Zachary.Boyle@parliament.govt.nz>; Chris Dekker <chris.dekker@unions.co.nz>
Subject: Re: Meeting with Hon Brooke van Velden

Hi Zach

Thanks for getting in touch.

At this stage, my colleagues Mr Chris Dekker (Secretary NPANZ/NZ Unions) and Mrs Rachael Mortimer (President TPANZ) will be in attendance. I am sadly unable to join them on this occasion.

They would very much like to share the NZ Unions model plus discuss potential changes to employment relations legislation and mutually beneficial approaches to negotiating collective agreements.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require further information.

Kind regards
Deborah Cunliffe
President NPANZ

On Wed, 15 May 2024 at 10:09, Zach Boyle <Zachary.Boyle@parliament.govt.nz> wrote:

Hi Deborah,

Hope you're well.

I'm reaching out regarding your meeting with Hon Brooke van Velden next Wednesday 22 May at 3:30 – 4pm. I'm wondering if you're able to give me a sense of what you plan to discuss with the Minister? I'm just mindful that the original invite came in some time ago!

Very happy to discuss if you want to give me a call at the number in my email signature below.

Thanks



Zach Boyle

Private Secretary (Workplace Relations and Safety) | Office of Hon Brooke van Velden

Minister of Internal Affairs

Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety

MP for Tāmaki

s 9(2)(a)

Email: zachary.boyle@parliament.govt.nz Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz

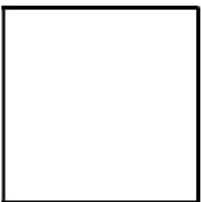
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

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Deborah Cunliffe
President - NPANZ

E: deborah.cunliffe@nursesunion.co.nz

P: + 64 4 887 6880



From: Jenesa Jeram
Sent: Friday, 17 May 2024 3:57 pm
To: Florence Faumuina
Subject: FW: Soft copy of AM for NZ Unions meeting
Attachments: 2324-3489 Meeting with executive members of NZ Unions.pdf

Hey Florence,

This meeting is happening on Wednesday. I'll come over and chat to you about it.

Here's some articles for background: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/350182750/rival-unions-teachers-nurses-and-doctors-launched-anti-vaccine-figures>; <https://www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/350186655/testimonials-new-unions-arent-quite-what-they-seem>



Jenesa Jeram

Senior Ministerial Advisor | Office of Hon Brooke van Velden
Minister of Internal Affairs
Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety
MP for Tāmaki

Senior Ministerial Advisor (non portfolio) | Office of Hon David Seymour

s 9(2)(a)

Email: Jenesa.jeram@parliament.govt.nz Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

From: Zach Boyle <Zachary.Boyle@parliament.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2024 1:44 PM
To: Jenesa Jeram <Jenesa.Jeram@parliament.govt.nz>
Subject: Soft copy of AM for NZ Unions meeting

FYI a soft copy of the AM for the NZ Unions meeting next Wednesday.

Thanks



Zach Boyle

Private Secretary (Workplace Relations and Safety) | Office of Hon Brooke van Velden
Minister of Internal Affairs
Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety
MP for Tāmaki

s 9(2)(a)

Email: zachary.boyle@parliament.govt.nz Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

From: Chris Dekker <chris.dekker@unions.co.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 23 May 2024 12:00 pm
To: Zach Boyle
Cc: Deborah Cunliffe
Subject: Re: Meeting with Hon Brooke van Velden

Hi Zach,

Just confirming as I forgot to address it in my last email - we're happy to meet at Parliamentary reception today for our meeting at 2pm. Is there any protocol or checking-in process we need to follow?

Thanks,

Chris Dekker
General Manager
NZ Unions
M: 04 887 6300
chris.dekker@unions.co.nz | www.unions.co.nz

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On Wed, 22 May 2024 at 16:37, Chris Dekker <chris.dekker@unions.co.nz> wrote:
Hi Zach,

2pm works absolutely perfectly for us. Thank you for being so accommodating.

Sincerely,

Chris Dekker
General Manager
NZ Unions
M: 04 887 6300
chris.dekker@unions.co.nz | www.unions.co.nz

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On Wed, 22 May 2024 at 16:31, Zach Boyle <Zachary.Boyle@parliament.govt.nz> wrote:

Hey Chris,

No worries - how about 2pm?

Thanks

Zach

From: Chris Dekker <chris.dekker@unions.co.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 3:05 PM
To: Zach Boyle <Zachary.Boyle@parliament.govt.nz>
Cc: Deborah Cunliffe <deborah.cunliffe@nursesunion.co.nz>
Subject: Re: Meeting with Hon Brooke van Velden

Hi Zach,

11:30 is fine for me but my colleague, Rachael Mortimer of TPANZ, wouldn't be able to make it. Are we able to swing anything a little later? They won't be in town until 1PM. But if 11:30 is all you can swing, that is acceptable.

Sincerely,

Chris Dekker
General Manager

NZ Unions

M: 04 887 6300

chris.dekker@unions.co.nz | www.unions.co.nz

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On Wed, 22 May 2024 at 13:16, Zach Boyle <Zachary.Boyle@parliament.govt.nz> wrote:

Hey Chris,

How does 11:30am tomorrow work for you? Happy to meet you at reception here at Parliament and we can pop up to Copperfields perhaps?

Thanks

Zach

From: Chris Dekker <chris.dekker@unions.co.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 12:22 PM
To: Zach Boyle <Zachary.Boyle@parliament.govt.nz>
Cc: Deborah Cunliffe <deborah.cunliffe@nursesunion.co.nz>
Subject: Re: Meeting with Hon Brooke van Velden

Hi Zach,

Thanks for speaking to me yesterday. Just checking in to see if there's any update on what time might suit for meeting tomorrow afternoon?

Yours sincerely,

Chris Dekker
General Manager

NZ Unions

W: 04 887 6300 | s 9(2)(a)

chris.dekker@unions.co.nz | www.unions.co.nz

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On Tue, 21 May 2024 at 17:52, Zach Boyle <Zachary.Boyle@parliament.govt.nz> wrote:

Hey Deborah,

I'm very sorry, but something urgent has come up in the Minister's diary so she is no longer able to meet tomorrow afternoon.

If it's okay with you, both myself and the Minister's advisor are available to meet instead at the same time if that works?

Apologies again for the late cancellation.

Thanks



Zach Boyle

Private Secretary (Workplace Relations and Safety) | Office of Hon Brooke van Velden

Minister of Internal Affairs

Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety

MP for Tāmaki

s 9(2)(a)

Email: zachary.boyle@parliament.govt.nz Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

From: Deborah Cunliffe <deborah.cunliffe@nursesunion.co.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2024 1:49 PM

To: Zach Boyle <Zachary.Boyle@parliament.govt.nz>; Chris Dekker <chris.dekker@unions.co.nz>

Subject: Re: Meeting with Hon Brooke van Velden

Hi Zach

Thanks for getting in touch.

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Kind regards

Deborah Cunliffe

President NPANZ

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Very happy to discuss if you want to give me a call at the number in my email signature below.

Thanks



Zach Boyle

Private Secretary (Workplace Relations and Safety) | Office of Hon Brooke van Velden

Minister of Internal Affairs

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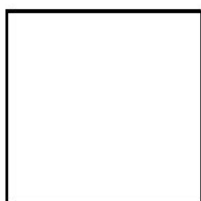
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Deborah Cunliffe

President - NPANZ

E: deborah.cunliffe@nursesunion.co.nz

P: + 64 4 887 6880





Ainsleyana Puleiata

From: Deborah Cunliffe <deborah.cunliffe@nursesunion.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, 19 April 2024 12:57 pm
To: Brooke van Velden (MIN)
Subject: Re: INV060 Re: Meeting request

Dear Cami

Thank you for the opportunity to spend some time with Minster Van Velden on Thursday 23rd May 2024 at 3.30pm
On behalf of my team I accept this invitation and look forward to meeting with you on this occasion
Kind regards
Deborah

On Wed, 17 Apr 2024 at 15:29, Brooke van Velden (MIN) <B.vanVelden@ministers.govt.nz> wrote:

Dear Deborah,

On behalf of Hon Brooke van Velden thank you again for the meeting request below, and sincere apologies for the delay in response.

The Minister would be pleased to set up a time with you. There is a slot on 23 May, 3.30 - 4.00 PM in the Minister's office if that would suit?

Thank you again for writing, the Minister looks forward to getting a meeting locked in.

Kind regards,



Cami Van Ausdall

Private Secretary (Executive Support) | Office of Hon Brooke van Velden

Minister of Internal Affairs

Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety

MP for Tāmaki

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

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From: Brooke van Velden (MIN)
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 5:46 PM
To: Deborah Cunliffe <deborah.cunliffe@nursesunion.co.nz>
Subject: RE: INV060 Re: Meeting request

Dear Deborah,

On behalf of Hon Brooke van Velden thank you for your invitation to meet.

Apologies it is taking some time to come back to you, I recognise it has been a while, I am very sorry about that. This message is just to assure you that this is still on our radar, and I will come back to you as soon as possible.

Will be in touch soon and thanks so much for your patience.

Kind regards,

Cami



Office of Hon Brooke van Velden

Minister of Internal Affairs

Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety

MP for Tāmaki

Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

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From: Deborah Cunliffe <deborah.cunliffe@nursesunion.co.nz>
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2024 10:24 PM
To: Brooke van Velden <Brooke.vanVelden@parliament.govt.nz>
Subject: INV060 Re: Meeting request

Dear Minister Van Velden

Further to my previous emails (December 2023 and February 2024), and on behalf of NZ Unions, I would appreciate the opportunity of meeting with you to discuss issues facing our members in the education and health sectors, and in your capacity as Minister of Internal Affairs and for Workplace Relations and Safety

Your admin team indicated that you would meet with myself and representatives from NZ Unions early in the New Year and we therefore look forward to hearing from you with a mutually convenient date.

Kind regards

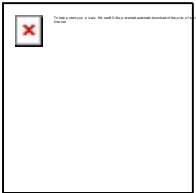
Deborah Cunliffe

Operations Director

NZ Unions

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P: + 64 4 887 6880



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Deborah Cunliffe
President - NPANZ

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P: + 64 4 887 6880

