Organisers' Roles Transformed?
Australian Union Organisers and Changing Union Strategy

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Organisers' Roles Transformed

A survey of organisers in thirteen Australian unions indicates that, while progress appears to have been made towards more 'organising' approaches to their work, much remains to be done. Few resources are devoted to 'growth' and organisers still spend a relatively large amount of their time on grievance resolution and a relatively small amount of their time on developing delegate infrastructure. They encounter a variety of obstacles. However, there are some advantages in recruiting former community or student activists. A key role is shown for union leadership in assisting organisers to undertaken their demanding work in a changing context.

Introduction

Australian unions face a crisis; this crisis has been well recognised in the literature (Peetz, 1998, 2006; ACTU, 1987, 1999, 2003; Cooper, 2000; Griffin and Moors, 2004). This crisis has several elements. A decline in union density is its most profound marker, indicative of a decline in union political power and capacity to shape the terms of work in Australia (Crosby, 2002, 2005). It has many causes: more militant employers, hostile governments (including at federal level since 1996), objective changes in industry and occupational structure, the outsourcing of the employment contract by various means, and weaknesses in union strategy in the face of a new environment (Peetz, 1998; 2006).

The crisis in the Australian movement has been met by a change in strategy in many unions, with a growing number focusing on renewed workplace organising: that is, the recruitment and active involvement of members and delegates in union activities at the workplace level (Cooper, 2003). For some unions this means a revitalisation of past approaches to delegate activism, while for others it means a new commitment to a greater role for delegates and members in the union and less reliance upon external institutional road to securing union gains. The former is sometimes refereed to as the 'organising' approach, contrasting with the 'servicing' approach where paid officials take a much greater role in 'delivering' for members, especially through the use of arbitration machinery (often referred to as the 'arbitral model') (Howard, 1977; Griffin and Moors, 2004). Although the organising approach in Australia differs in many respects from the approach being pursued in some US and Canadian unions (Walsh, 2002), the approach has at its core the revitalisation of unionism at the workplace through the activism of delegates and the empowerment of members. Central to this approach is a transformation in the work of paid full-time officials of unions, in particular of organisers (ACTU, 1999, 2003; Cooper, 2004).

Many Australian unions – though far from all - historically placed heavy reliance upon institutions like industrial relations tribunals for significant parts of the 20th century (Ewer et al., 1991; Howard 1977). Under this model, which is set out schematically in figure 1, organisers tended to take a secondary place to industrial advocates (known as industrial officers) and union leaders. In many unions, industrial officers secured strategic gains through legal argument before industrial tribunals, and unions relied upon the strong arbitral power of industrial relations tribunals, which are now significantly weaker. Significant unions like the pace-setting metal, construction and maritime unions (amongst others) would win strategic campaigning victories on the ground through industrial action in strategically placed sites, before these flowed to other sites in their own and other unions by means of the arbitral transmission belt. 'Closed shop' unionism in combination with this arbitral transmission belt, meant that some unions could survive and grow. This was the Australian variant of the 'servicing' model of unionism. Of course models like that in figure 1 impose a crude schema

on a very complex history – diverse both over time, between unions, and between branches within unions. However, such modelling – where it captures some important elements of dominant or widespread approaches - assists analysis by highlighting key elements in contrasting strategies, especially at a time of radical union change.

Figure 1 about here

During the 1990s, as unions faced a deepening membership crisis in the context of increasing state and employer aggression and structural change in the labour market, many began to focus on the workplace as their source of weakness and as a source of revival (ACTU, 1993, 1999). This crisis was exacerbated by the effect of a shift away from industry- and occupation-based awards to enterprise agreements. Such agreements require intensive organiser activity. The latter actually drove an *increase* in servicing effort in many workplaces, an effort that was not well rewarded in terms of membership growth in many workplaces where non-union members have access to gains secured through union agreements.

The ACTU established 'Organising Works' in 1994 'as an avenue for recruiting, training and supporting talented young people into unions as recruiter/organisers' (see www.actu.asn.au/organising/works/unions.html). At first, the primary goal of Australian unions was to recruit new members, which was not really the central focus of the organising theory that being synthesised by the ACTU's Trade Union Training Authority (TUTA). As illustrated in Figure 2, under this 'transitional' approach, resources were redirected towards recruitment, and some organisers were given the task of recruiting new members. In some cases – far from all – these organisers were relieved of some servicing responsibilities. It was hoped that a new population of workplace delegates would emerge from amongst these new members (ACTU 1999). In a number of unions, recruitment became a priority activity, albeit under the banner of 'organising'.

Figure 2 about here

However, the shortcomings of this transitional model became quickly apparent. Most obviously, the costs of recruitment were not rewarded with a big enough lift in membership. Organiser-based recruitment is expensive. Moreover, in many places recruitment by organisers did not generate the activist workplace structures necessary to viable, active unionism. Meanwhile, in some locations existing members were unhappy about reductions in the service provided by union organisers, who still devoted considerable time to servicing existing members. In some cases, their re-election as organisers depended upon it, as in some unions the membership-based electorate for organisers encourages 'fiefdom' organising, where 'keeping things sweet' with existing members is critical to officials' job security. In some unions leadership commitment to the organising approach was weak or faltering (Griffin and Moors, 2004).

As a consequence, a number of unions moved to a different model of organising with more emphasis upon developing activist workplace delegate structures. For elements of some unions, this was a return to an old activist model that had prevailed long before; for others it meant a new role for officials and delegates. This can be seen as a shift in the organiser's role to one of support for workplace delegate structures. Workplace delegates in turn then support

local members, while the rest of the union structure provides support for the work of organisers and delegates. This is illustrated schematically in figure 3, based on a description by one of the organisers we interviewed. The organisers' role in recruitment is transformed from recruiting members to more emphasis on recruiting workplace delegates and activists – and then providing them with the support and tools necessary to enable them to effectively perform their role at the workplace. This support takes the form of training, information, guidance, access to union resources, and facilitating communication and networking between delegates (ACTU, 2003). In the analysis that follows we define such activities as core organising activities, including finding workplace delegates, building delegate structures and training and developing delegates.

Figure 3 about here

The central idea in this form of organising is to develop workplace activists so that they can recruit and solve some problems directly, allowing organisers to work on developing these self-sustaining and growth capacities. Instead of organisers seeking to 'hard sell' union membership 'cold' to potential joiners, the first recruiting steps of the organiser are to establish contacts, find natural leaders, and uncover issues (TUTA, 1996 a, 1996 b; ACTU 2003). Unions still need to undertake a servicing function, but some of this is now be undertaken by trained, resourced delegates, and most of the rest of it perhaps by a dedicated servicing function within the union office.

This might mean that servicing requests are examined to determine whether they are individual problems, and therefore warrant dealing with in a conventional servicing manner, or are collective in nature and present organising opportunities. In such situations, instead of the union 'solving' the problem for the member, the union provides members with support to solve it themselves, thereby increasing activism, union awareness and broadening the experience of collective action.

In fact, in Australia this shift to organising has been very uneven across different unions as well as within them, branch to branch, and it would be a mistake to see all unions as on a single path, following a uniform strategy. The take up of this shift has been very patchy between unions and between branches within individual unions, and the specific nature of changes has also varied widely.

Nonetheless, this account of a general strategic shift towards greater union organising especially through the contribution of active members and delegates raises a number of important research questions. To what extent and in what ways have the roles of organisers actually changed? To what extent is this consistent with the needs of such an 'organising' approach? What are the main difficulties that organisers now face in their work? How much support are they receiving from the rest of the union in undertaking their work? These questions form the basis for this paper.

The Study

To address these issues we undertook a survey of union organisers in late 2002 and early 2003[2]. Some 13 unions participated, which also involved surveys of state managers and

[2] This research is part of a larger project which includes case studies of union renewal, a large survey of delegates and a smaller qualitative focus group study of delegate experience.

national managers. Of the 13 unions that took part, ten were national unions while three were state branches of national unions. Responses were received from 379 organisers, representing a response rate of approximately 42 per cent. We also obtained data from 31 state branch secretaries and 10 national secretaries, all leaders in their unions.

The thirteen unions included in the study cover a cross-section of industries including manufacturing and a range of private and public service industries. It included seven mostly private sector and six mostly public sector based unions, with four unions having mostly male membership, two mostly female and seven having a mixed gender profile..

Such a survey obviously relies on union cooperation, and it is fair to say that the survey group represents unions that have taken relatively more steps towards the 'core organising' activities described above as key to the 'organising approach'. This means that the analysis that follows includes results from unions that are probably more actively engaged in an organising agenda than the average Australian union. This is something of a concern in view of some of the results.

Amongst organisers who participated in the survey, 57 per cent were male and 43 per cent female. Some 37 per cent worked in New South Wales or the ACT, 21 per cent in Victoria, 15 per cent in Queensland, 12 per cent in South Australia or the Northern Territory, 11 per cent in Western Australia and 4 per cent in Tasmania. Just 5 per cent worked in a national office and 95 per cent in a state branch, division or regional office. Many worked in multiple locations, with 80 per cent sometimes working in a state capital city, 57 per cent sometimes in large provincial cities such as Townsville or Geelong, and 63 per cent sometimes in smaller regional areas or rural areas. Three per cent were simultaneously the state secretary of their union.

The median duration of employment with their union was approximately 4 years. Their median income was approximately $54,000 per annum. In terms of their employment status, 84 per cent were permanent employees, 12 per cent were on fixed term contracts, 4 per cent were on secondment from their normal employer, and 1 per cent were casual. They worked a median of 48 hours per week, with 5 per cent working part-time, 19 percent working 35 to 40 hours per week, and 22 per cent reporting working 55 hours or more per week.

In the absence of a general census of union officials in Australia it is not possible to comment on the representativeness of the survey group relative to the total population of Australian union organisers. However, compared to the workforce, the group of survey respondents differ significantly from the workforce as a whole in that they are older and less likely to speak a language other than English.

The survey respondents' median age was 43 years, with 29 per cent under 35 years of age (well below the 44 per cent of the workforce below this age), 26 per cent aged 35-44 (similar to 24 per cent of the workforce), 33 per cent aged 45-54 (well above the 22 per cent workforce share) and 12 per cent aged 55 and over (around the workforce share). Eighty per cent were born in Australia, and just 3 per cent were born overseas and had a language other than English as their parent tongue, much lower than in the Australian workforce as a whole.

Survey respondents had a variety of work backgrounds, though mainly in the industry where they now organised. Only a minority had experience beyond this. Three-quarters had been a workplace delegate for a union; 73 per cent had worked as an employee in an industry covered by their employing union; 36 per cent had experience campaigning for a political party; 26 per cent had been an activist or employee in a women's, community or environmental group; 21 per cent had been student activists; 3 per cent had worked as advisers to politicians; and 11 per cent had other relevant experience, including 5 per cent

who volunteered they had worked as an organiser for another union. Clearly, many organisers have had an organising ‘career’ of some kind.

They were well educated: 52 per cent had a degree or post-graduate qualifications. The Organising Works program had a significant presence in many unions: 16 per cent of respondents were graduates of the program, another 4 per cent were current trainees, 14 per cent had done part of an Organising Works program. The remaining two-thirds had not been through Organising Works. A third of respondents felt that strategies of their branch had been influenced by trainees and graduates of Organising Works, while 41 per cent disagreed. Four fifths of state secretaries felt that trainees and graduates of Organising Works had influenced their branch activities.

What do organisers do?

Much of the discussion of the organising model has focused upon the appointment of organisers who undertake organising activities alone. However, most organisers in the survey said they also do industrial work. Amongst those who did both organising and industrial work, the median estimated proportion of the time they spend on what they considered to be 'organising' was 60 per cent. A fifth spend less than 30 per cent of their time on organising.

Only 21 per cent said that they were part of a specialist organising unit. Just 15 per cent supervised other organisers.

Most organisers (71 per cent) reported they had recruitment or related targets to meet. Mostly these were multiple targets, with approximately two fifths of organisers reporting targets regarding net change in member numbers (growth minus losses) and similar proportions reporting targets in terms of number of workplace delegates recruited, number of workplace delegates trained and/or and number of workplaces visited.

The majority of organisers worked mostly in workplaces sites that were already, at least in part, unionised. Only two per cent worked ‘always’ in greenfield areas (ie in workplaces where less than ten per cent of potential members were unionised and the workplace as a whole was also mainly non-union) and another seven per cent worked ‘mostly’ in greenfield areas. By contrast, 20 per cent ‘always’ worked in existing unionised workplaces and 53 per cent worked ‘mostly’ in existing unionised workplaces. About 16 per cent were split fairly evenly between the two. In other words few union resources were directed towards 'growth' with less than ten per cent of organisers mainly focused on greenfield sites.

While the organising model emphasises delegate-based recruitment rather than organiser-based recruitment, the reality for the majority of organisers in the survey was some distance from this. We offered two competing statements to organisers and asked them to choose between them. In terms of recruiting, 43 per cent preferred the statement 'most of the recruiting of members in my area of coverage is done by organisers like me', while only 31 per cent preferred 'most of the recruiting of members in my area of coverage is done by workplace delegates’. Just over a quarter were neutral between the two.

A similar dissonance between the theory of the organising model and its practice was evident in the ways that organisers spent their time, although it was also clear that some shifts were underway. We asked respondents about the proportion of time they spent on various activities. The results are shown in table 1 (excluding responses that were not codable or credible). We can see some change in the way that organisers spend their time over the two years leading up to the survey, with the amount of time spent on core organising activities (finding workplace delegates, building delegate structures and training and developing

delegates) increasing by a third, or three percentage points. However, these core organising activities accounted for only 12 per cent of their time.

Table 1 about here

Similarly, time spent on the core servicing activity of handling members' grievance had fallen by about four percentage points. However, organisers clearly had some distance yet to travel before we can consider the shift as very significant. Grievance handling still took up more than twice as much time as core organising work at the time of the survey. Organisers were aware of this problem: they thought that they should be spending much more time on delegate development and related activities than on grievances. To put it another way, they thought that, in the preceding two years, they had progressed only one fifth of the necessary distance towards achieving an appropriate mix of core servicing and core organising work.

These results illustrate the difficulties associated with the transitional model. Although organisers report that, on average, they - rather than delegates - are doing the majority of recruiting, they still only manage to spend ten per cent of their time on recruitment, and there has been a small decline in the time they spend on it.

Interestingly, although table 1 includes all organisers (whose responses we could code), the outcome was similar amongst those who did only organising work (ie they did no industrial work). Even these 'non-industrial organisers' spent twice as much time handling grievances as on delegate development and related organising activities. However, this group reported greater progress towards their 'ideal' allocation of time: they thought they were between a third and a quarter of the way there. They were spending just 13 per cent of their time on delegate development, and 13 per cent on recruitment.

While the organising model would appear to imply some specialisation of organisers' roles, organisers do not see this as occurring: 71 per cent said that the number of different roles they performed in their job had increased (including 59 per cent of those who did only organising work). Only 4 per cent said their number of roles had diminished.

Half of organisers felt that some things they did would be better done by somebody else. The most common activities they wanted transferred to other people related to membership records and administration (that is, clerical duties). Seventeen per cent of organisers wanted these shifted as their first priority. Eleven per cent wanted servicing (including handling grievances and inquiries) shifted as a first priority and seven per cent wanted industrial issues or negotiation shifted to others. Only 1 per cent referred to recruitment. They suggested that these tasks be undertaken by other people in the union office.

Problems and assistance for organisers in their work

We asked organisers about the level of support they received from their union. Overall, organisers appeared generally satisfied: three-quarters felt that the support they received was 'mostly' or 'very effective' (18 per cent gave the latter response). At the other end of the scale, a fifth said it was not very effective and five per cent felt that it was not at all effective. The quality of management and leadership was a key element in the support organisers received and valued. When asked an open-ended question as to what type of support the union was best at providing, 42 per cent gave answers relating to collaboration and assistance, 41 per cent referred to leadership and management, while 20 per cent referred to technology or IT. Just seven per cent referred to communications and the same sized minority referred to working conditions (multiple responses were permitted). Organisers were less likely to

nominate a form of support that the union was *worst* at providing, but on this question 23 per cent referred to leadership and management, six per cent to information technology, six percent to collaboration and assistance, and two per cent to communications and the same proportion to working conditions.

We asked organisers whether particular things were currently problem areas for them, or were helping them to do their job. In table 2 we show the items that were most commonly helping a great deal, while in table 3 we show those items that were most commonly a major problem. In the first column of table 4 we show the average net help or difficulty for organisers in relation to each item, where 1 indicates the matter is a major problem area and 5 indicates it is helping a great deal. Overall, there were more items with a net negative score than with a net positive score. The items that organisers identify as being of the greatest immediate assistance or difficulty for them need not be the factors that have the greatest influence on the difficulty or organisers' work, or on outcomes for the union. Consequently, we calculated an overall 'index of difficulty' for organisers, which was simply a sum of responses for each of the component questions ($\alpha = .83$). In table 4 we show the correlations between each of the component factors and the overall index of difficulty. The higher the correlation, the greater the role a particular factor plays in the overall difficulty (or ease) of work for an organiser. We also show correlations with the perceived change in the rate of union joining over the past two years where 1 indicates the rate at which employees are joining the union has increased a lot, and 5 indicates it has decreased a lot.

Tables 2 and 3 and 4 about here

Table 2 shows that the factor most commonly cited by organisers as being a great deal of help for them, and most commonly cited as being their biggest help, was their own experience. Yet table 4 shows that this was the fourth least important factor out of 25 in explaining the overall difficulty or ease of organisers' work, and was the least important of all (and non-significant) in explaining changes in membership joining. Conversely, table 3 shows that the difficulty most commonly cited by organisers as being a great problem is the workload faced by delegates. However, table 4 shows that this item has the weakest correlation with the overall index of difficulty and was the second weakest (and non-significant) in explaining union joining. That is, while these factors – organisers' own experience and delegates' workloads – were perceived as being the biggest help and problem respectively, in practice variation in them had relatively little impact on organisers' work and no significant impact on their success. For example, training was much more important than experience in explaining both the ease or difficulty of organisers' work and membership joining outcomes.

Overall, the factors most influential in shaping the difficulty of organisers' jobs were the image and reputation of the union (one being a net positive, the other a net negative), the resources available to organisers (a net negative), members' expectations (a large net negative), the priorities of the union leadership (a positive), and the skills and confidence of delegates (a slight negative). Perceived union joining was shaped by image, reputation and expectations but especially by leadership priorities, the personal values of potential members (a slight negative), and the level of cooperation or rivalry within the union (a net negative). Two other influential factors were the ease or difficulty of identifying workplace activists (a slight negative) and the current level of commitment and experience of workplace activists (almost a net neutral).

Information systems and IT featured prominently as both a positive and as a negative, and also correlated significantly with overall difficulty and joining. The item that was most frequently mentioned as organisers' single greatest problem was 'how many demands are currently made on your time and energy (eg. responding to member grievances)', and this was fairly strongly related to both outcome measures in table 4. This problem was much worse for organisers who also did industrial work (36 per cent said it was a major problem) than for those who only did organising work (17 per cent rated it a major problem). Organisers who were part of a specialist organising unit were more likely than those who were not to identify the current priorities of union leadership as a major help. Young organisers (aged under 30) were more likely to report the support they got from other officials in the union as a problem, and more likely to rank the effectiveness of support they received as not very effective.

Image problems were more common for organisers recruiting in greenfield sites than in unionised workplaces. They were also more common where the majority of recruiting was done by organisers than where delegates did half or more of the recruiting. Organisers who were former student activists reported fewer problems arising from the image of the union. Organisers who were former community or student activists found it much easier to identify workplace activists.

Organisers as employees

Generally speaking, organisers were satisfied with their job: 83 per cent agreed that they were satisfied with their job and only nine per cent were dissatisfied. A large proportion (79 per cent) expected to be still working for the union in two years, and only ten per cent did not. However, 59 per cent agreed that their workload was too great, and only 12 per cent disagreed.

Interestingly, workload complaints in themselves did not significantly correlate with expectations that respondents would leave in less than two years. However, the index of difficulty referred to above correlated strongly with anticipated departure. Of all the items in the index, the level of support organisers were getting from other officials in the union had the strongest relationship to expected departure. Organisers were more likely to expect to leave when they felt that the leadership vision of the union was not clear, leaders did not pay attention to what organisers say, there was insufficient emphasis on training and members did not have a strong influence on branch activties. In short, organisers expected to leave not because their workload was heavy but because they were frustrated with a difficult job that lacked effective support and where members' influence was weak.

Conclusion

The data suggest some progress towards a reorientation of organisers' work towards the goals embodied in the 'organising' model, but that progress is slow, with a long way still to travel. It is apparent that the redirection of resources to date to support an organising approach has been only partial, as might be expected during a period of major reform. In this group of unions few resources are devoted to membership growth in non-union areas, with unions instead focusing on developing delegates and workplace infrastructure in existing unionised workplaces. While this may make sense in terms of building on strength, and halting the haemorrhage of membership due to weak workplace structures, a return to rising density will require movement into such non-union growth areas. Notwithstanding this, there remain many problems. Most organisers are not dedicated exclusively to organising. There has been a noticeable but small increase in the proportion of time organisers devote to developing workplace delegate structures, but it is less than one fifth of the increase that they believe needs to be achieved. Similarly, the cutback in dealing with individual grievances is less than

a quarter of what is seen by organisers as necessary. Organisers are not specialising – instead their jobs are becoming more varied.

There are some hints about the types of people who should be recruited as organisers. Activists from other fields – former community or student activists – appear to do well in terms of fighting image problems and identifying workplace activists. But organisers under-represent young workers, which may be an impediment to like-with-like organising strategies, and young organisers feel less support from their unions and fellow officials. This, more than workload, is what induces organisers to quit, and so unions run the risk of losing a key group of organisers if they do not improve support for them.

Finally, the data suggest the importance of effective union leadership in assisting organisers to undertake their demanding work in a changing context. Organisers see union leadership as a key issue in terms of support. Good (or bad) leadership has a significant influence on the ease (or difficulty) of the organiser's job, and the likelihood they will leave. Leaders provide vision and allocate resources, including into important areas such as information technology. On average, organisers see leaders as helping them in their work. Much more will be expected of them, however, if unions are to effectively revive in Australia.

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Table 1: How organisers spend their time

Activity	***proportion of time***		
	that was spent 2 years ago	***that is spent now***	***that you personally believe should be spent***
Handling individual **grievances** of members	34	**30**	17
Visiting unionised workplaces for other purposes, talking to members	16	**14**	16
Negotiation with management	13	**12**	10
Finding workplace delegates, building **workplace delegate structures** and training and developing delegates	9	**12**	26
Directly **recruiting** members	11	**10**	13
Undertaking **administrative** work	8	**10**	5
Writing communication material	7	**8**	8
Other	3	**4**	4

Table includes all organsers except responses that were not codable or credible

Table 2: Things that may be going well: What helps organisers in their work?

	this is helping a great deal	**total: this is helping**	**this is the biggest help**
*how much **experience** you have had personally to date*	*44*	*74*	*19*
*how much **support** you currently get **from other officials** in your union*	*28*	*55*	*14*
*the union's **information systems** and information technology (eg. membership databases)**	*21*	*42*	*3*
*how much **access** you currently have to targeted workplaces*	*18*	*36*	*4*
*the current **priorities** of the union **leadership***	*19*	*44*	*8*
*how much in the way of **resources** are currently available for your use*	*15*	*42*	*3*
*the current level of **commitment and experience of workplace activists** **	*14*	*43*	*8*
*how extensively you have personally been **trained to date***	*13*	*44*	*5*
how easy or difficult it currently is for you to access to good quality **research** *	8	29	*2*
the **image** the union currently has (with women, young workers, etc) *	8	29	*1*
*how easy or difficult it currently is to **identify workplace activists** **	*7*	*26*	*3*
how much **cooperation or rivalry** there currently is **within the union** *	6	17	*2*

* For these items, more respondents said this matter was a problem than said it was a help.

Table 3: Things that may not be going well: Problems facing organisers in their work

	this is a **major** problem area	total: this is a problem	this is the biggest problem
the **workload** currently faced by actual and potential **workplace delegates** in their normal job	34	84	*9*
the **economic and workplace changes** in the industries in which your members work	31	76	*7*
how many **demands** are currently made on your time and energy (eg. responding to member grievances)	28	75	*15*
the **expectations** members currently have of what the union will do for them	24	70	*4*
the **legislation** under which you operate	24	56	*7*
*the union's **information systems** and information technology (eg. membership databases)*	*22*	*50*	*4*
employers offering **individual contracts** such as AWAs	18	55	*3*
how much **cooperation or rivalry** there currently is **within the union**	18	40	*3*
current **employer opposition** to or **cooperation** with the union	15	55	*3*
how much **cooperation or rivalry** there currently is **from other unions**	15	49	*2*
the **size** of workplaces in the industry	15	45	*1*
how easy or difficult it currently is for you to access to good quality **research**	14	49	*1*
*how much **support** you currently get **from other officials** in your union **	*13*	*31*	*2*
the **image** the union currently has (with women, young workers, etc)	12	46	*1*

* For this item, more respondents said this matter was a help than said it was a problem.

Table 4: Correlations of problems/assistance with overall difficulty or organiser work and perceived change in rate of member joining

	net ease (high) / difficulty (low) of this item*	correlation with overall index of difficulty	correlation with perceived change in rate of joining
the **image** the union currently has (with women, young workers, etc)	2.79	.60	.25
the union's current **reputation and record** among potential members	3.26	.59	.25
how much in the way of **resources** are currently available for your use	3.11	.56	.14
the **expectations** members currently have of what the union will do for them	2.19	.56	.24
the current **priorities** of the union **leadership**	3.21	.52	.29
how **skilled and confident** the **workplace delegates** currently are in your area	2.83	.52	.15
the personal **values** of members and potential members	2.79	.51	.31
the union's **information systems** and information technology (eg. membership databases)	2.91	.49	.17
how much **cooperation or rivalry** there currently is **within the union**.	2.70	.48	.30
how easy or difficult it currently is for you to access to good quality **research**	2.75	.48	.16
how much **support** you currently get **from other officials** in your union	3.42	.48	.18
current **employer opposition** to or **cooperation** with the union	2.49	.46	.19
the way this branch has **traditionally** done things such as recruiting members	2.89	.46	.12
how many **demands** are currently made on your time and energy (eg. responding to member grievances)	2.05	.46	.12
how extensively you have personally been **trained to date**	3.19	.44	.11
how much **access** you currently have to targeted workplaces	3.23	.41	.14
how easy or difficult it currently is to **identify workplace activists**	2.82	.41	.22
the current level of **commitment and experience of workplace activists**	2.98	.40	.20
how much **cooperation or rivalry** there currently is **from other unions**	2.47	.38	.12
the **size** of workplaces in the industry	2.53	.36	.13
the **legislation** under which you operate	2.35	.35	.13
how much **experience** you have had personally to date	4.00	.33	.01
the **economic and workplace changes** in the industries in which your members work	2.04	.32	.17
employers offering **individual contracts** such as AWAs	2.33	.29	.11
the **workload** currently faced by actual and potential **workplace delegates** in their normal job	1.86	.27	.02

* A score greater than 3 indicates this item is a net positive, a score less than 3 indicates it is a net negative.
Correlations of .12 and above are significant at the 5 per cent level..

Figure 1
An arbitral model of union structure

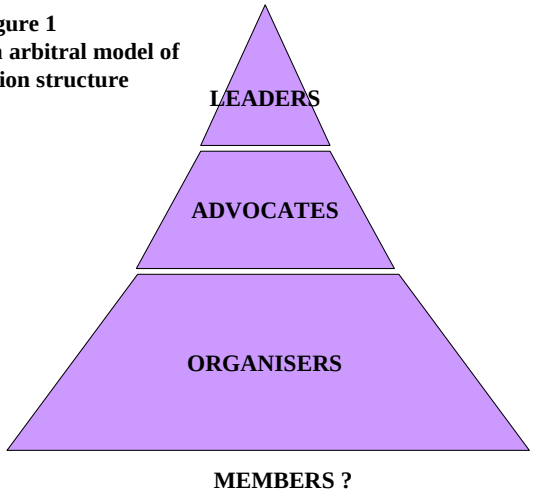

Figure 2
A transitional model of union structure

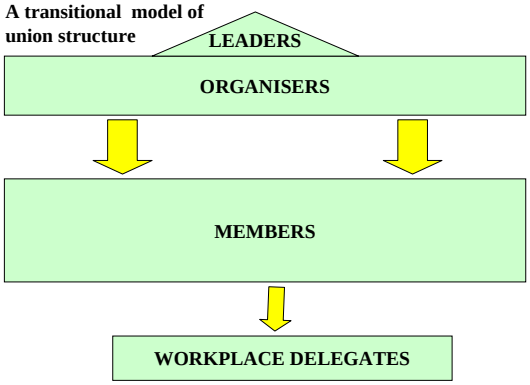

Figure 3
An organising model of union structure