

Information Sheet No.20

School Canteens

When a P&C association operates a school canteen it is recommended that the P&C establishes a sub-committee which is responsible for its management. The committee is accountable for all of its funds to the P&C Association.

The canteen sub-committee should include in its membership one or more members of the P&C executive committee. The P&C president and/or principal may be included as ex-officio members. The canteen manager may be invited to attend committee meetings in an advisory capacity. Only members of the committee are entitled to vote.

The canteen sub-committee is responsible for:

- overseeing, with discretion, the general operation of the canteen
- deciding the basic policy in relation to the serving of suitable food at reasonable cost
- reviewing prices, menus and goods for sale on a regular basis
- the adherence to guidelines regarding hygienic food preparation, serving and storage
- recruiting and encouraging volunteer helpers where necessary
- appointing and paying employed canteen staff and defining their duties (these should be ratified by the P&C association)
- reporting to the P&C association at their general meetings and submitting an audited financial statement at the AGM.

The canteen committee should aim for open and clear communication between the canteen and the P&C and should be supportive of all employed staff. The P&C, through the canteen committee, has certain obligations with regard to current award (*The Retail and Wholesale Industry - Shop Employees - Award 1995*) rates, superannuation and long service provision and a legal obligation to carry workers compensation. (Please see Information Sheet No.15 – *The P&C as employer* for more information)

When employing staff, it is important to follow correct procedures with regard to providing duty statements, carrying out interviews, signing contracts, etc. Employees who work 30+ hours per week are considered permanent part-time and qualify for holiday and sick-leave pay. Casual employees must be given a minimum of three hours pay with a percentage loading. To minimise physical hazards in the workplace under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, contact **ACT WorkCover** on 62050200. ACT WorkCover can also advise on workers compensation, long service leave and annual leave.

Guidelines for canteen policy are available from the **ACT School Canteen Association** provides valuable support for canteens and can be contacted on 62822158 or 62813763.

A new school canteen policy was released by the Department of Education in 2007. This is available at <http://www.decs.act.gov.au/policies/pdf/canteen.pdf> The policy states that if a P&C ceases to run the school canteen, or its contract with an outside provider ends, the responsibility for future arrangements with outside providers belongs to the school and not the P&C association. ★