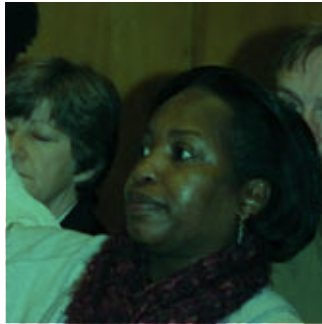


# Guide

## to Organising & Recruitment

July 2010



MAKING AN IMPACT BUILDING A STRONG UNION

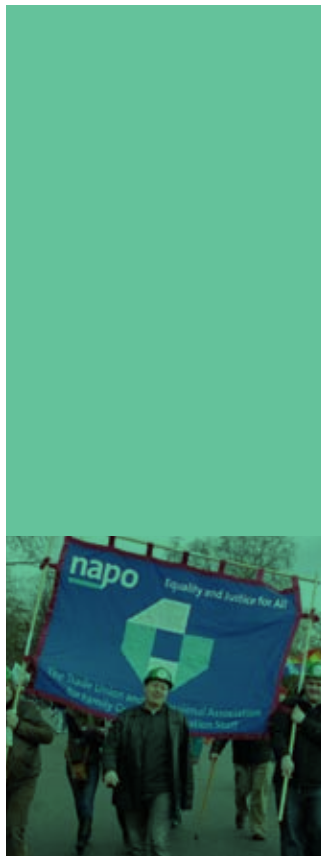
**napo**

The Trade Union and Professional Association for Family Court and Probation Staff

[www.napo.org.uk](http://www.napo.org.uk)

# Contents

<b>1</b>	Introduction	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	Napo's decision-making structure	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	How to map a workplace	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	Organising methods/ techniques	<b>4</b>
	i) Recruiting new members	
	ii) Improving organisation of existing members	
	iii) Additional ideas	
<b>5</b>	Model recruitment plan	<b>9</b>
<b>6</b>	Model membership secretary job description	<b>10</b>
<b>7</b>	Template branch priorities/ action plan	<b>11</b>
<b>8</b>	Ten good reasons to join Napo	<b>12</b>
<b>9</b>	Further reading/Acknowledgement	<b>13</b>



# 1 Introduction

Napo is the largest recognised trade union in both Cafcass and the Probation Service. To ensure we continue and fight as an independent and vibrant trade union and advance the collective professional interests of our members we need to build our membership base and increase activism.

It is recognised that within Napo organising activity varies from branch to branch. Organising is crucial to any successful recruitment initiative. This guide has been produced to support your branch develop a comprehensive 'organising' strategy so that we can defend the individual and collective interests of our members and create opportunities that encourage members to get actively involved in their branches.

This guide will help your Napo Branch Executive to:

- 1) Retain and increase membership
- 2) Increase levels of participation
- 3) Develop new activists
- 4) Communicate with the membership
- 5) Identify priorities for the branch

Although, Napo has a relatively high density within Cafcass and the Probation Service, there are still too many workers not yet in a union. We need to organise better and reach out to these potential members. However, organising is not just about recruitment it's about mobilising members and generating activism.

The next decade will be a challenging one for trade unions. The techniques and strategies detailed in this guide will provide you with advice and ideas to improve your existing practices to recruit new members. Remember, 'Unity is Strength' - the more members we recruit, the more active our branches become, the more power we generate and the more leverage we wield in the workplace.

The first step in any organised branch is to systematically map your workplace. Within this guide you will find out how to undertake this process, which will provide you with a sound foundation to take forward some of the other recommendations detailed in this guide.

As a trade union and a professional association, Napo's effectiveness is dependant upon members taking an active role. As a union we need to create a culture that promotes democratic participation and delivers self-sustaining organised workplaces. This guide will help make sure Napo continues to make an impact and build a strong union.

If you would like any further information or discuss any of your branch's organising activities please get in touch at [rsingh@napo.org.uk](mailto:rsingh@napo.org.uk)

**Ranjit Singh**  
**National Official**

# 2

## Napo's decision-making structure

### Annual General Meeting

#### Supreme Policy Making Body

All members are entitled to attend, but only full and professional associate members can participate and vote in debate. The AGM reviews the work of the committees and the National Officers. Policy motions are considered every year which have been proposed by the NEC or any of its committees, a branch, the PSO forum, or two full and professional associate members.

### National Executive Committee (NEC)

The NEC meets 5 times a year. It implements AGM policy and oversees the work of the union. It also has the power to make policy between AGMs. The NEC comprises of 2 co-representatives for each Probation Branch and the Family Court Section. The 2 co-representatives have 1 vote for every 50 Branch members. The national Chair, 4 Vice Chairs and Treasurer (all elected lay Officers) are also voting members of the NEC. Paid Officials can also attend and contribute to debate but they have no vote. The NEC also elects sub-committees to carry out specific tasks.

### National Committees

These are sub-committees of the NEC. There are currently 12 such committees. All committees meet 3 times a year and report back to the NEC. Their task is to further Napo policy. Members of the committees are nominated by their branches, (in the case of Equal Rights Committee, autonomous groups can nominate members) and are elected to the committees by the NEC.

### Branches and Family Court Section

Napo has probation branches in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The Family Court Section covers Cafcass in England. Each Branch/Section holds its own AGM to elect its Officers, NEC co-representatives and local negotiators. All members are entitled to attend their Branch or Section meetings and propose motions. Branches/Section can also nominate members to stand for election to a national committee. Membership is recruited and processed through individual Branches/Section. Branches meet 6 – 7 times a year. All members in Probation receive *Napo News* and the *Probation Journal*. Family Court members receive the *Cafcass Journal* and *Napo News*. These are national publications; some Branches also produce local union newsletters.

# 3

## How to map a workplace

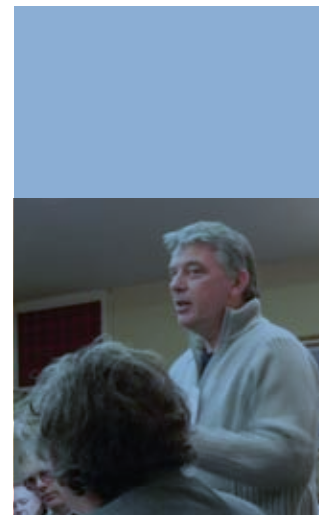
Mapping a workplace is an important tool for branches to use. There are many ways in which you can map a workplace, or indeed you may wish to map the Probation Area/ Cafcass Region your branch covers. Mapping a workplace will help you to identify potential members and current members, and should help you gain a better grasp over what the state of membership is like in your branch. Make use of the Probation Directory and the information sent to you from the Membership section at Napo HQ to identify where staff and members are based by location/workplace.

How to map a workplace:

On a piece of flipchart paper, draw out the workplace you wish to map identifying different departments/ sections – you may wish to make this more visual and draw a floor plan of each part of the building

- 1 For each location note down the number of:
  - a. Current Napo members
  - b. Members of other unions
  - c. Eligible, but not Napo members
  - d. Unknown membership
- 2 For the unknown and potential Napo members note down details of the person. These can include:
  - a. Whether someone is male or female
  - b. What grade they are
  - c. Whether they work full or part time
- 3 Using the above information, are there any trends in people not joining the union? For example, is there a very low uptake of membership amongst PSOs? If so, is there a specific issue that is causing these people not to join?

Using all of the information you have gathered above you should be able to see where your Branch's strengths and weaknesses are in relation to membership. You should then be able to build up a profile of potential members across your branch and use this to form a local recruitment strategy and address the concerns of the potential members thereby encouraging them to join Napo.



# 4

## Recruiting new members



### i) Recruiting new members

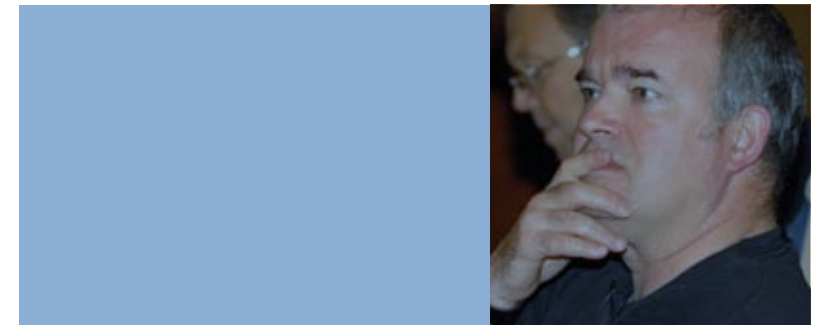
#### Introduction

Any individual working for Cafcass or the Probation Service is eligible to join Napo. Representation from Napo is not dependant on their grade or place of work although it is important to point out that Napo only has negotiating rights for managers and practitioners.

We do not endorse or encourage branches to recruit members who are already in a union. As an affiliate of the TUC, Napo is bound by protocols that govern inter-union relationships commonly referred to as the 'Bridlington Agreement'. If an employee is already in a union we **do not** ask them to join Napo. The focus of all our recruitment activity should be geared towards potential members who are not in a recognised union.

Below are some techniques and methods to consider:

- Recruit by using good quality, one-to-one, verbal and written communication between a branch officer / activist and a potential Napo member. Likely to be followed up with a 'Napo & You' booklet' / or an application pack.
- Focus recruitment on employees in one or two particular grades, all of whom work at the same site or at a site very close by (e.g. focus on PSOs or Hostel Workers) and use verbal arguments / letters / leaflets / newsletters that are specially tailored to these grades.
- Adopt a policy of 'like recruits like' i.e. Union recruiters are matched with potential members on factors such as the following: age, sex, ethnic origin, grade.
- Have a lay member post, called 'office rep', in each office. All these lay 'office reps' to meet together each quarter in order to discuss recruitment progress and to help each other.
- Participate in Napo's National Recruitment week events and get hold of Napo promotional items from Napo headquarters. Plan events well in advance.
- Link recruitment to a national Napo campaign on a workplace issue (e.g. poor health & safety, workloads, anti cuts).
- Link recruitment to Napo's bargaining with your employer (e.g. a recent bargaining objective or a bargaining victory).
- Invite non-members to attend a regional or national Napo event against unacceptable workplace changes. To encourage participation, lay on cheap and easy coach travel to the event. Try and get those taking part to join the union.
- Use incentives to encourage potential members to join Napo (like cheaper insurance etc).
- Use incentives to encourage Napo activists / officers to recruit new members (e.g. prize draws, shop vouchers, gift vouchers, free Union products, Union awards for efforts made).
- Hold a series of Napo advice surgeries and attractively advertise these surgeries to 'target employees'. Try and get those attending the surgeries to join the Union.
- Work with your Branch Union Learning Representatives, to run a 'learning at work day' event or other learning activity.
- Set up an eye-catching Napo recruitment stall at a staff conference or in a public part of the workplace and staff the stall for as long as possible.
- Write to all current Napo members in the 'target area' enclosing some 'Napo & You' leaflets plus some identifiable Napo application forms. In the letter try and persuade each existing member to recruit at least one 'target employee' and then to send back the completed application form. If there is no response from a member within a reasonable time, send a second letter or ring them up.
- Write to all current Napo members in the 'target area' stressing the need for recruitment and inviting every member to a meeting to agree a realistic & effective area-wide recruitment strategy. Try and ensure a good attendance at this meeting by ringing all the 'keen members' beforehand. Following the meeting, attempt to implement the agreed strategy.
- Invite non-members to a local Napo recruitment meeting (in the workplace or in a nearby venue) at which a Napo presentation is made, followed by a question & answer session. You may consider offering refreshments to those attending.
- Write to the employer and request reasonable recruitment facilities. Where Napo membership is already good, those workplaces to be excluded. If the employer response is positive, then Napo must mount an appropriate and effective recruitment campaign.
- Leaflet and meet potential Napo members at or near the entrances / exits of a workplace.
- Set up an attractive official local Napo group on a social networking website, with a view to persuading website users to join Napo and to support Napo's campaigns. As younger people tend to be the biggest users of such websites, adoption of this technique could result in more younger members.
- Improve Napo local policies, organisation, rules and image so as to make the Union more relevant and effective, thereby making it more attractive to join and to participate in. Publicise these improvements to potential members.



## ii) Improving organisation of existing members and developing activists

### Introduction

Whatever their roles, branch activists are at the frontline of Napo activities – be it as branch reps: health and safety reps; or more recently union learning reps. Without them we would not be able to function. They are the building blocks of our union. There are many ways in which branch members could get involved with Napo, at both a local and national level. We need to develop the next generation of Napo activists who are willing and able to take on Napo roles.

An analysis of Napo's membership database shows that we have an increasingly ageing activist base. Over the coming decade many of our most active members are heading towards retirement. In order to replenish our activist base we need to act now to recruit the branch reps of the future.

We need to remind members that Napo's effectiveness is dependent upon members taking an active role, and making the most of the democracy of the union to shape Napo policy.

Below are some methods and techniques to consider:

- Maintain regular communication with every one of your members in the workplace (e.g. by one-to-one chats, notice boards, intranets, regular meetings, agendas, bulletins, social events, web blogs and Napo's website).

- Keep all members informed of Napo activity and Union achievements. If there is a lack of local success stories publicise national achievements.
- Every now and again, sound out members, especially new ones, about possible bargaining priorities. Also, try and widen discussion to include items such as equal opportunities and training. Activists to take note of the issues that concern members but not to encourage unrealistic bargaining expectations.
- Ensure that every member and all shifts are covered by a Napo Rep of some sort and ensure that Union meetings / events are held at times and places that are reasonably convenient for all.
- Encourage and train members to participate and to become more active in Napo. This to include explaining to members how Napo's democracy works and that the members are Napo. Also, discussion as to how bargaining aims can be achieved in practice.
- Invite guest speakers on professional issues' so as to increase collective expertise whilst at the same time stimulating member interest and participation. Invite speakers from the staff associations. For instance, there could be networks / sections for some or all of the following groups; black and ethnic minority members; LGBT members; women members in your branch.

- Napo officers / activists to persuade members to stand for Union positions by using one-to-one, verbal communication.
- Deliberately create local or workplace Union positions that are less onerous so as to encourage more members to become Union activists. (e.g. allow positions to be shared, split up big posts, create posts such as: 'Assistant Rep', 'Deputy Rep', 'Committee Member', 'Forum Member').
- Train and encourage all those holding workplace Union positions to be available to members, to supply helpful information to members and to be seen and heard doing their best for members.
- Set up and run an active Union organising committee in the workplace. (Committee normally composed wholly of lay members and to have two main roles: firstly, to allow Reps to help & advise each other and, secondly, to carry out organising activities).
- Using the workplace 'map', the workplace committee can plan realistic and effective workplace campaigns to recruit new members and to improve the level and quality of Napo activity. One reasonable approach is for the branch to periodically agree a rolling 'action plan' that sets out the branch's objectives for the next 6 to 12 months

- Negotiate facilities to specifically aid organising, including recruitment (e.g. paid time off to attend Union general meetings in the workplace, Napo to receive list of new starters, Union induction sessions with new employees, employer statements encouraging Union membership.)
- Quickly contact members who are in subs arrears in order to find out why. Then the relevant Napo Rep to take, or organise, appropriate action to try and solve the problem or at least prevent it getting worse. Preferably, contact with the member to be face-to-face.
- Advise members who are leaving the workplace because they are on long-term sick, going on maternity/paternity/education leave, changing job, or retiring. That they can benefit from retaining Napo membership and advise them of the different subs rates that could apply to them in the future.
- Improve Napo's local organisation, rules and image so as to make the Union more relevant and effective, thereby reducing membership loss and encouraging Union activism. Publicise these improvements to existing members.
- Make local links and actively campaign on behalf of Social Movement/ wider Labour Movement organisations identified by the membership and therefore make the branch more attractive to belong to and participate in.



# 5

## Model recruitment plan

- Recruit, organise and train branch reps so as to provide greater and better practical support to lay Union activists organising in the workplaces. A significant part of this practical support to be in the form of relevant and convenient training for existing and potential activists.
- Encourage activists and members to take up appropriate training courses from Napo's education programme, the TUC and GFTU courses.
- Make contact with your national Link Officer and/or Official who can provide you with support and advice to assist you develop your organising and recruitment strategy.

### iii) Additional Ideas

You may choose to adopt some of the methods and techniques listed below which will indirectly assist Napo's organising activities, including recruitment.

- Negotiate more agreed time off, preferably paid, for Trade Union duties, activities and training. The time off to include time for workplace organising (part of which is recruitment).
- Negotiate greater use of employer facilities (e.g. meeting rooms, office space, notice boards, telephone, e-mail, photocopying, Intranet etc.)
- Negotiate 'fair employment clauses' with the employer so that firms bidding to supply them with goods or services cannot win contracts merely by undercutting fair pay & conditions.
- Negotiate agreements well in advance to minimise the likely adverse effects on members resulting from possible big changes (e.g. relocation, use of new technology, redundancy, etc).
- Request relevant bargaining information direct from the employer and if the employer refuses, consider using the law to obtain disclosure.
- Develop information and solidarity links with workers/Trade Unionists employed elsewhere by the same employer or by related employers.
- Make contact and develop links with your regional Trade Union Congress and local Trades Councils who can be a valuable source of help and advice.

1. Map the workplace  
Mapping the workplace will help your Branch establish:
  - a) number of staff in area eligible to join
  - b) total number of members
  - c) number of workplaces
  - d) distribution of current members by workplace
  - e) distribution of current members by grade
  - f) number of unison/ other union members
2. Identify friendly faces in as many workplaces as possible this includes both activists and members.
3. Target one workplace or set of related workplaces at a time, eg, one office, or a group of hostels.
4. Establish from existing members what their issues are, devise a short questionnaire to survey all staff (not just members) on those issues. Ask what they would like to see happen to tackle those issues. Issues around Health and Safety may be useful to focus on as we can be seen to get a result quickly in most cases, whereas issues like workloads for example are a longer campaign.
5. Arrange and publicise in advance a workplace meeting that is **open to all** on one or two member led specific issues. Present the results of the survey to inform the debate and ask for further ideas. Remember that all grades of staff employed by Probation or Cafcass can join, this includes administrators. Have Napo membership forms and publicity materials handy at the meeting as well as any promotional items from Napo HQ.
6. When arranging meetings, make sure to take account of shift patterns etc especially in relation to unpaid work, programmes and hostel staff. It may be necessary to have a few smaller meetings at each workplace, or to set meetings just before a big team meeting staff would all be going to.
7. Make sure to present the union activists as people who can co-ordinate action, not solve problems for other people. We want them to see Napo as a club they want to join, not a service they want to buy.
8. Aim to get at least one volunteer in each workplace who takes responsibility for maintaining and updating a Napo noticeboard. Ensure you have blank copies of membership forms pinned to the noticeboard along with addressed envelopes to return to the Membership Secretary.
9. Where people do not attend the meeting, for whatever reason, leave behind publicity materials in pigeonholes as well as on noticeboards.
10. Repeat as required!

# 6

## Model membership secretaries job description

The Membership Secretary will:

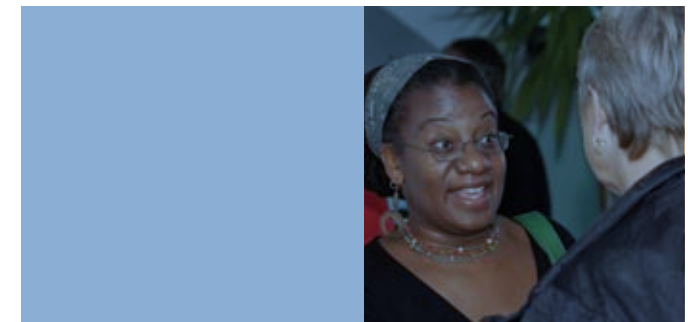
- 1 Be a member of the Branch Executive Committee/ Section Executive Committee (SEC).
- 2 Take the lead responsibility for recruitment of new members and provide regular feedback on progress of recruitment to the Branch/ Section.
- 3 Maintain a database of members specifying grade and location, in compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. Monitoring information will be available from Chivalry Road, if required.
- 4 Liaise with HR to receive up to date information on new and existing staff.
- 5 Arrange for all new staff to receive recruitment literature within the first month of starting work.

- 6 Arrange for new staff, who have not joined after two months, to be contacted.
- 7 Maintain and encourage a cohort of office/ workplace reps who can approach new staff and non-members about joining Napo.
- 8 Negotiate right to attend at Area/Regional induction and trainee events to introduce new entrants to Napo.
- 9 Regularly review local/national recruitment material to keep it fresh.
- 10 Inform Membership at Napo Head Office as soon as possible about changes to members' details such as change in office location, grade and where known if the member has left the service.'
- 11 Ensure that new application forms are completed in full and that only current application forms are used.

# 7

## Template Branch priorities

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1 All Branch reps attend appropriate education courses												
2 Undertake a mapping exercise in the workplace												
3 Identify a local campaign to organise around												
4 Make links with wider trade union initiatives												
5 Establish and maintain a Napo Notice board												
6 Work with local ULRs to run a learning at work day event												
7 Request information from employer on starters and leavers												
8 Include membership as a standing item on branch agendas												
9 Maintain a membership profile of your branch												
10 Develop a local organising and recruitment strategy												
11 Ensure you have the correct facilities to ensure the branch can function												
12 Send a representative to regional Napo Meetings												



# 8

## Ten good reasons to join Napo

- Napo is the only specialist union and professional association in the probation service and Cafcass. Napo authoritatively speaks for probation and family court workers in the press and in parliament. We understand the issues.
- Napo negotiates your pay and conditions. We represent members' interests.
- Napo locally provides trained representatives who can advise you about workrelated issues. We can help with problems.
- Napo has health and safety representatives who deal with live issues like stress and bullying. We work to protect you.
- Napo offers members a wide range of legal and financial services. We can save you money.
- Napo is directly involved in the training bodies and professional organisations relevant to your work. We influence your career through them.
- Napo is an effective campaigning organisation around criminal justice and social policy issues. Napo has a proud and proven record of defending our members jobs and services against attack. We can change things for the better.
- Napo has strong commitment to combating racism and other forms of discrimination. We are positive about diversity.
- Napo members are directly involved at all levels of the union's democracy. We do what members decide.
- Napo is a strong union and together, we will be stronger. We want you to join and help make that happen.

# 9

## Further reading/ acknowledgements

'Organising for union recruitment',  
LRD booklet, May 1997

'Bargaining basics – a trade unionist guide,'  
LRD booklet, Feb. 1992

'The fruits of our Labour', TUC New Unionism  
booklet, 2003

'Bargaining to organise – a guide for trade unionists',  
LRD booklet, Oct 2005

'Guide to organising: a framework for planning,  
implementation and winning organising campaigns'  
TUC booklet 2007

'Organising at work: building stronger unions  
in the workplace' TUC booklet, 2008

'Union organising and the health of the union  
movement in Britain', Institute of Employment  
Rights pamphlet, March 2010

[www.napo.org.uk](http://www.napo.org.uk)  
[www.tuc.org.uk/organisation](http://www.tuc.org.uk/organisation)

This guide was produced with the kind support  
and information provided by the GFTU and the  
TUC Organising Academy.



Napo  
4 Chivalry Road  
London SW11 1HT  
Telephone 020 7223 4887  
Fax 020 7223 3503  
[www.napo.org.uk](http://www.napo.org.uk)

MAKING BUILDING  
AN A  
IMPACT STRONG  
UNION  
**napo**

The Trade Union and  
Professional Association  
for Family Court and  
Probation Staff