

## Compliance high in Hunter Valley, Fair Work audits reveal

14 December 2009

Random audits of employers in the metal, engineering and associated industries in the NSW Hunter Valley region have found most are complying with workplace laws.

Newcastle-based Fair Work inspectors checked the books of 15 businesses in Cardiff, Rutherford and Muswellbrook following recent changes to the main Award.

Inspectors found just two businesses failed to provide employees with correct payslips or were keeping insufficient time-and-wages records.

Once the employers were informed of their obligations they immediately rectified the problem.

Fair Work Ombudsman NSW Director Mark Davidson says the random visits were an opportunity to provide employers with further information and advice.

“Changes to the Metal, Engineering and Associated Industries Award 1998 have provided a move away from traditional time-based apprenticeships to competency-based apprenticeships,” he said.

In NSW, as soon as an apprentice has been approved as having gained the skills required for a particular stage of an apprenticeship, they progress to the next stage of the apprenticeship and their wages need to be adjusted to reflect this.

“While 13 employers were compliant with workplace laws many were not progressing apprentices according to the new Award provisions,” Mr Davidson said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman can help employers and workers to understand their rights and obligations under new National Employment Standards and Modern Awards to take effect on January 1, 2010.

“We have a flexible and fair approach and our preference is always to work with employers to educate them and help them voluntarily rectify any non-compliance issues,” Mr Davidson says.

“However, employers must be aware that it is their responsibility to ensure they pay staff correctly.”

Employers or employees seeking assistance should contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit [www.fwo.gov.au](http://www.fwo.gov.au) where payslip and record-keeping templates and other tools are available. For translations call 13 14 50.

The Fair Work Ombudsman promotes harmonious, productive and co-operative workplaces. It also monitors compliance and investigates breaches of national workplace laws.

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## Contact us

Fair Work Online: [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

For TTY: 13 36 77. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

Speak & Listen: 1300 555 727. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

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