

Perth security company allegedly underpaid guards \$200,000

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A Perth security company is facing Court for allegedly underpaying its guards more than \$200,000.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has commenced legal action against Sureguard Security Pty Ltd, based at Rockingham, alleging it underpaid 22 security guards a total of \$205,408 between December, 2014 and January, 2016.

The Fair Work Ombudsman conducted a self-initiated audit of Sureguard Security in October, 2015 as part of proactive campaign in Perth's southern suburbs.

It is alleged that Fair Work inspectors found that guards were paid flat hourly rates of between \$21.50 and \$24 for static guard work and \$25 for patrol work.

It is alleged that this led to the workers being variously underpaid their minimum hourly rates, casual loadings, overtime pay and penalty rates for night, weekend and public holiday work under the Security Services Industry Award.

The Fair Work Ombudsman claims 13 of the guards worked permanent night shifts.

Alleged underpayments of individual workers range from \$227 to \$20,174.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says the significant size of the underpayments and the failure to rectify the matter were key factors in the decision to commence litigation.

The company faces maximum penalties of up to \$54,000 per contravention for several alleged contraventions of workplace laws.

The Fair Work Ombudsman is also seeking Court orders for the company to back-pay the workers in full and to commission workplace relations training for its managers.

An injunction restraining Sureguard Security from underpaying workers in future is also being sought. If the injunction is granted, the company could face contempt of court proceedings for any further underpayment contraventions proven in court.

A directions hearing is scheduled in the Federal Court in Perth on 3 March.

Ms James says payment of flat rates leading to underpayments of guards is a persistent problem in the security industry and improving compliance in the industry will continue to be a focus for the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Employers and employees seeking assistance can visit www.fairwork.gov.au or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. An interpreter service is available by calling 13 14 50.

Follow Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James on Twitter [@NatJamesFWO](https://twitter.com/NatJamesFWO) (<http://twitter.com/NatJamesFWO>), the Fair Work Ombudsman [@fairwork_gov_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) (http://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) or find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au (<http://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au>).

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Media inquiries:

Matthew Raggatt, Senior Media Adviser

Mobile: 0466 470 507

matthew.raggatt@fwo.gov.au (<mailto:matthew.raggatt@fwo.gov.au>)

Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

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