

Tipoffs, pay calculations and app downloads hit major milestones at Fair Work Ombudsman

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It has never been easier for Australian workers and their employers to obtain information or provide intelligence about their workplaces, with three of the Fair Work Ombudsman's newest online tools passing major milestones.

The Record My Hours app has recently been downloaded for the 10,000th time, while the agency's Anonymous Report function has received its 10,000th tip-off.

And two years after it first went live, the public has now used the agency's mobile-friendly Pay and Conditions Tool (PACT) for more than 10 million calculations.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James said the popularity of the three different online functions highlighted her agency's commitment to make it as easy as possible for Australians to understand and protect their workplace rights.

"We are glad to see these tools have been embraced by the public," Ms James said.

"Whether you want to automatically record your hours at work, access information on your workplace rights and obligations or provide anonymous intelligence about a potential breach, our free tools are there to help."

The Record My Hours smartphone app, which uses geofencing technology to provide an automatic record of hours spent at work, has proven to be a strong success since it was launched two months ago.

"We've mapped it against some other federal government app downloads and this is one of the most popular," Ms James said.

Feedback from users of the app has been overwhelming positive.

"This is no surprise; as a worker, the app could save you hundreds or even thousands of dollars if you are concerned that you are not being paid your correct entitlements," Ms James said.

"Businesses are also encouraged to use it to complement, but not replace, their own records."

The agency appreciates feedback on the app and remains committed to enhancing and refining its features. Users can provide feedback via app@fwo.gov.au (<mailto:app@fwo.gov.au>).

The Anonymous Report function was launched in May last year and has proven to be a valuable source of information helping the Agency confirm and identify trends.

Figures show that 65 per cent of people who have used the tool provided information about their current employment.

"That's important, because we understand it can be hard to front up to your boss and make a complaint, so now workers can tell us their concerns without being identified," Ms James said.

The hospitality sector has been the source of 35 per cent of tip-offs, the largest of any industry, with concerns about flat rates common.

"We've used that information to help guide our inspectors when completing audit campaigns. For example, the agency's [Glebe Point Road campaign](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/archived-media-releases/2016-media-releases/november-2016/20161124-glebepointroad-campaign) (www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/archived-media-releases/2016-media-releases/november-2016/20161124-glebepointroad-campaign) was informed from information received via our anonymous tipoff function, in addition to other sources," Ms James said.

"It helps us to target our effort exactly where the alleged non-compliance is. It also helps us build a profile of the types of businesses in certain areas that may also be non-compliant and to focus our proactive activity accordingly."

More than three-quarters (76 per cent) of the tip-offs have been about pay concerns.

For those looking to receive rather than provide information, the PACT has been a first point of call for reliable advice on wages and entitlements.

The tool has been accessed by almost 4.8 million users who have run more than 10 million calculations since it went live in May,

2015.

The tool combines pay, shift and leave calculators with an intuitive interface for mobile devices. It can locate the correct Modern Award for an employee's position and quickly determine what wages apply, including any overtime, penalty rates or allowances payable. Wages can be worked out per hour, per shift or for an entire pay period.

Ms James said the tool, while also accessible from desktop systems, had proven popular for the many businesses that don't operate from an office and can access pay rates without a computer or tying up their phone line.

"More than 40 per cent of PACT sessions have occurred on a mobile or tablet device," Ms James said.

"The overall preference for going online is allowing our Infoline to focus on more complex telephone inquiries and to prioritise calls from small business."

PACT can also determine the entitlements payable when employees resign or are terminated, including wages in lieu of notice, leave and redundancy pay.

It is linked to another online tool, My Account, which enables employers and employees to save the advice they receive and review it at any time.

The Record My Hours app is available for download from iTunes or Google Play stores.

The Anonymous Report function can be accessed at www.fairwork.gov.au/tipoff (<http://www.fairwork.gov.au/tipoff>) .

The PACT can be accessed at [www.calculate.fairwork.gov.au](https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/) (<https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/>) .

Employers and employees can seek assistance at www.fairwork.gov.au or contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

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