

Brisbane teenager allegedly unpaid for 150 hours

7 March 2019

The Fair Work Ombudsman has commenced legal action against the former operator of a Sunshine Coast-based business, alleging he failed to pay an 18-year-old labourer.

Queensland man Bradley Wells, who operated Attain Solutions Pty Ltd before the company was placed into liquidation last year, is facing the Federal Circuit Court in Brisbane.

Attain Solutions provided civil works and underground services for the installation of telecommunications infrastructure to entities contracting to NBN Co Limited for work on the National Broadband Network in Queensland.

It is alleged the young employee was paid no wages for 150 hours work digging trenches and laying pipes at various locations in South-East Queensland in June 2017.

Fair Work Ombudsman Sandra Parker said the regulator investigated after the 18-year-old employee requested assistance.

“Young workers can be particularly vulnerable to exploitation because they are often unaware of their entitlements or reluctant to complain. Any employer that fails to comply with their fundamental obligation to pay wages for work performed will face serious consequences,” Ms Parker said.

The FWO alleges that under the Electrical, Electronic and Communications Contracting Award 2010, Attain Solutions had a lawful obligation to pay the employee a total of \$3,945 in minimum wages, casual loadings, overtime and an industry allowance.

It is alleged that Mr Wells was involved in the company’s failure to meet that obligation.

Attain Solutions also allegedly failed to comply with a Notice to Produce Records and Documents issued during the investigation. It is alleged that Mr Wells was involved in this failure by not ensuring that the company complied with the Notice.

The matter will be listed for a directions hearing in the Federal Circuit Court in Brisbane, where Mr Wells faces penalties of up to \$10,800 per contravention. The FWO is also seeking a Court Order for Mr Wells to back-pay the employee in full.

“We urge any young workers with concerns about their wages or entitlements to contact the Fair Work Ombudsman for free advice and assistance,” Ms Parker said.

Know a workplace that isn’t doing the right thing, but don’t want to get involved? [Report it to us anonymously \(www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/how-we-help-you/anonymous-tipoff\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/how-we-help-you/anonymous-tipoff) .

Employers and employees seeking assistance can visit www.fairwork.gov.au or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. Small business callers can opt to receive priority service. An interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

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Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

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