

FWO alleges stadium cleaners underpaid

13 January 2020

A late-night visit by Fair Work Inspectors to Etihad Stadium (now Marvel Stadium) after a 2017 AFL match has led to legal action against the then Etihad Stadium's principal cleaning contractor, a sub-contractor and two individual directors.

The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) has commenced action in the Federal Circuit Court against:

- Quayclean Australia Pty Ltd, a national cleaning company that held the principal contract to provide cleaning services at the stadium.
- A Melbourne-based company Ranvel Pty Ltd, which was formerly subcontracted by Quayclean to provide some of the cleaning services at the stadium.
- Ranvel owner-director Indika Udara Lokubalasuriya.
- Harjot Singh, who was a director of Melbourne-based company Lionheart Pty Ltd (now in liquidation), which was also formerly subcontracted by Quayclean to provide some cleaning services at the stadium.

The FWO alleges that 25 cleaners, 14 employed by Ranvel and 11 employed by Lionheart, were underpaid a total of \$99,637 between 1 February and 30 June 2017 after being paid flat rates for cleaning work performed at the stadium.

Fair Work Ombudsman Sandra Parker said that addressing supply-chain risks is one of the [workplace regulator's key priorities](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2019-media-releases/june-2019/20190603-aig-pir-media-release) (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2019-media-releases/june-2019/20190603-aig-pir-media-release>).

"The Fair Work Ombudsman prioritises any matters involving a supply chain in the cleaning sector. Workers employed in this sector are low-paid, often vulnerable migrant workers with limited understanding of their workplace rights. We investigated this matter after receiving an underpayment allegation through FWO's online anonymous report tool (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/how-we-help-you/report-a-workplace-issue-in-your-language>). Any other workers with concerns can contact us on 13 13 94."

"We also encourage cleaning companies to join the [Cleaning Accountability Framework](http://www.cleaningaccountability.org.au/) (<http://www.cleaningaccountability.org.au/>). This industry-led initiative promotes the adoption of best practice throughout the cleaning supply chain to improve labour and cleaning standards in Australia," Ms Parker said.

The affected employees were allegedly underpaid entitlements under the Cleaning Services Award 2010, such as minimum ordinary hourly rates, casual loadings and penalty rates.

Lionheart and Mr Singh allegedly paid 11 cleaners flat hourly rates ranging from \$7 to \$23, resulting in total underpayments of \$75,138.26. Ranvel and Mr Lokubalasuriya allegedly paid 14 cleaners a flat rate of \$16 per hour, resulting in total underpayments of \$24,498.80.

The FWO alleges that Quayclean paid amounts to Ranvel and Lionheart that were not sufficient for the subcontractors to meet various Award entitlements, and was involved as an accessory in some of the underpayment contraventions.

Quayclean Australia Pty Ltd and Ranvel Pty Ltd each face Court penalties of up to \$63,000 per contravention and Mr Lokubalasuriya and Mr Singh each face penalties of up to \$12,600 per contravention. Lionheart cannot be pursued because it is in liquidation.

The alleged underpayment amounts owed to the Ranvel and Lionheart employees have been rectified in full. A directions hearing is listed for 18 February 2020 in the Federal Circuit Court in Melbourne.

Follow the Fair Work Ombudsman [@fairwork_gov_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) [ⓧ](http://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) (<http://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au>).

Sign up to receive the Fair Work Ombudsman's media releases direct to your email inbox at www.fairwork.gov.au/mediareleases (www.fairwork.gov.au/mediareleases).

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

Need language help?

Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50

Hearing & speech assistance

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

The Fair Work Ombudsman is committed to providing advice that you can rely on. The information contained on this website is general in nature. If you are unsure about how it applies to your situation you can call our Infoline on 13 13 94 or speak with a union, industry association or workplace relations professional. Visitors are warned that this site may inadvertently contain names or pictures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have recently died.