

Two Wimmera workers back-paid \$40,000

19 April 2010

An Edenhope worker has been back-paid \$34,600 after an investigation by the Fair Work Ombudsman found he was underpaid.

The attendant – who worked in the service industry – lodged a complaint with the Fair Work Ombudsman after he was underpaid his minimum hourly rate, weekend penalties and allowances. After inspectors contacted the company, the employer promptly reimbursed the worker without the need for further action against the company.

In a separate case, a cook in Warracknabeal has been reimbursed more than \$6000 after being underpaid the minimum hourly rate, shift allowances and annual leave entitlements.

Inspectors discovered the underpayment when they investigated a complaint lodged by the worker.

Fair Work Ombudsman Executive Director Michael Campbell says the underpayments were the result of a lack of understanding by the employers about their responsibilities with respect to wages and entitlements.

"Underpayments like this highlight the need for our strong focus on educating employers and assisting them to understand and comply with workplace laws," he said.

Mr Campbell says in most cases, the Fair Work Ombudsman does not prosecute employers for accidental breaches of workplace laws.

"However, employers need to be aware that they can face fines of up to \$33,000 per breach if we do take matters to court," he said.

Mr Campbell says employers or employees seeking up-to-date information on wage rates and conditions should visit www.fwo.gov.au or contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. Translations are available by calling 13 14 50.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has a range of user-friendly resources which can help employers and workers understand their rights and obligations under the National Employment Standards and Modern Awards, which took effect on January 1.

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

NOTE: We are unable to publicly identify the individual businesses listed.

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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

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