

Brisbane cafe back-pays students \$120,000 after Fair Work Ombudsman investigation

22 February 2010

A Brisbane cafe has underpaid dozens of international students almost \$120,000, an investigation by the Fair Work Ombudsman has found.

Fair Work inspectors discovered that 41 staff – all but one of them foreign students - were underpaid their minimum hourly rate and penalty rates over a three year period.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has not ruled out legal action against the employer.

Queensland state director Julie Wade says that almost half of the money is being held in trust because the employer has been unable to locate all its former staff.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has a search engine on its website – www.fairwork.gov.au – to assist employees who think they may have been underpaid in a previous job.

Ms Wade said the case was a good example of why Fair Work inspectors were taking part in O-week activities around Australia.

The Fair Work Ombudsman will visit students at the Queensland University of Technology (Gardens Point campus) today and the James Cook University (Cairns) on tomorrow.

Ms Wade says knowledge is the best defence for young workers against being unwittingly taken advantage of and Fair Work inspectors are keen to explain to students, especially international students, how they can find out more about their workplace rights.

Workers who are concerned they are not receiving their full entitlements can contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 between 8am and 6pm weekdays.

Students can also visit www.fairwork.gov.au/youngworkers

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

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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

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.