

Random audits at Sydney Fish Market return \$278,000 to underpaid workers

1 March 2010

One hundred and forty three workers at the Sydney Fish Market have been reimbursed a total of \$278,000 after random audits by the Fair Work Ombudsman found they were being underpaid.

The markets were targeted by Sydney-based inspectors last year as part of a national campaign focussing on food services.

Investigations found:

- One seafood merchant had short-changed 35 casual workers more than \$148,000 by not paying their minimum hourly rate, the correct annual holiday loading and weekend and late night penalty rates, and
- A second had underpaid 108 workers a total of \$130,000 their correct annual holiday loadings.

Fair Work Ombudsman NSW Director Mark Davidson says the two employers fully co-operated with inspectors and voluntarily repaid all money owed.

Mr Davidson says that as the mistake was inadvertent and the companies are now compliant, there will be no further action against them.

“Our inspectors have a fair and flexible approach to businesses found to be in breach of workplace laws,” he said.

“It is always our preference to work with employers to educate them and help them voluntarily rectify any non-compliance issues we identify.

“However, employers must be aware of their responsibility to ensure they pay staff correctly, and penalties for wrong-doers who end up in court can be severe.”

Mr Davidson says the Fair Work Ombudsman is serious about its job of building knowledge and fairer workplaces, and can help employers to understand their rights and obligations under the National Employment Standards and Modern Awards which came into effect on January 1.

The Agency has a range of user-friendly resources that can help employers comply with workplace laws and operate their business at best practice.

Those seeking advice or assistance should contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit www.fwo.gov.au. Translations are available by calling 13 14 50.

Media inquiries:

Craig Bildstien, Director Media & Stakeholder Relations,
0419 818 484
craig.bildstien@fwo.gov.au

Ryan Pedler, Media & Stakeholder Relations Senior Adviser
(03) 9954 2561, 0434 365 924
ryan.pedler@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.