

Coffs Harbour company back-pays four workers \$16,000 after regulator intervenes

31 March 2010

Four Coffs Harbour mechanics have been reimbursed a total of \$16,000 after an investigation by the Fair Work Ombudsman found they were underpaid.

The workers complained after they were not paid their accrued annual leave or payment-in-lieu of notice when their employment was terminated.

After inspectors contacted the employer to explain its obligations, the four were back-paid their outstanding entitlements.

The company told inspectors a downturn in trade had forced the job losses.

Fair Work Ombudsman NSW Director Mark Davidson says that because the employer co-operated and voluntarily rectified the underpayments, there would be no further action.

"We have a flexible and fair approach and our preference is always to work with employers to educate them and help them voluntarily rectify any non-compliance issues," he said.

However, Mr Davidson says employers must be mindful of their lawful obligations to ensure they pay staff correctly.

"Tough economic conditions represent challenging times for businesses, but they are no excuse for failing to pay workers their full entitlements," he said.

"Termination and redundancy entitlements play a vital supporting role for people while they attempt to pick themselves up, find a new job and get back on their feet."

Mr Davidson says his office can help employers to understand their responsibilities when laying off staff.

Employers or employees seeking assistance should contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit www.fwo.gov.au. For translations call 13 14 50.

The Fair Work Ombudsman promotes harmonious, productive and co-operative workplaces. It also monitors compliance 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

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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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