

Illawarra workers back-paid \$42,000 after regulator intervenes

15 October 2010

Workers in the NSW Illawarra region have been back-paid more than \$42,000 as a result of recent investigations by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The biggest recovery was \$11,000 for a casual horticultural worker in the Dapto area who was underpaid his hourly rate.

The worker lodged a complaint with the Fair Work Ombudsman after he was underpaid for more than three years.

After Fair Work inspectors contacted the company and explained its obligations, the worker was back-paid in full.

The recovery is one of a number of cases in the Illawarra region finalised recently. The underpayments were discovered through a combination of routine audits and investigations into complaints from workers.

They include:

- \$7500 for a Shellharbour security guard underpaid the minimum hourly rate and annual leave entitlements,
- \$7200 for a Wollongong consultant not paid pay in lieu of notice, annual leave or long service leave entitlements,
- \$6500 for a Wollongong salesman who had unauthorised deductions from his annual leave entitlements,
- \$5300 for a Wollongong clerk underpaid the minimum hourly rate, and
- \$5000 for a Bowral construction worker underpaid his redundancy entitlements.

Fair Work Ombudsman Executive Director Michael Campbell says educating and assisting employers is a key part of the Fair Work Ombudsman's role.

"In most cases, we do not prosecute employers for accidental breaches of workplace laws," he said. "We prefer to educate employers and assist them to voluntarily rectify any issues we identify."

The Fair Work Ombudsman has a number of tools on its website - www.fairwork.gov.au - to assist employees and employers to check minimum rates of pay.

Small to medium-sized businesses without human resources staff can also ensure they are better equipped when hiring, managing and dismissing employees by using free template employment documentation with step-by-step instructions.

Employers or employees seeking assistance or further information can also contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 from 8am-6pm weekdays. For translations, call 13 14 50.

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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.