

Kalgoorlie, Esperance and Ravensthorpe employers focus of new campaign

11 February 2011

Employers of young workers in Kalgoorlie, Esperance and Ravensthorpe in regional WA are the latest focus of the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The Fair Work Ombudsman is contacting 100 businesses across the three centres to provide them with educational information about workplace laws.

Forty employers are also being asked to provide time-and-wages records for examination by Fair Work inspectors.

Employers in the hair and beauty, building and construction, childcare, electrical and communications, manufacturing and hospitality industries are being audited.

Fair Work Ombudsman Executive Director Michael Campbell says there is a deliberate focus on industries that employ significant numbers of trainees, apprentices and junior workers.

“Young workers can be vulnerable because they are often not fully aware of their workplace rights and can be reluctant to complain, so it is important we ensure they are receiving their full entitlements,” he said.

“Where Fair Work inspectors find records are not adequate or identify other non-compliance issues, they will provide information and assistance to employers and request they voluntarily rectify any problems.

“In cases where employers don’t, or where we suspect deliberate underpayments or other serious breaches have occurred, we may launch a full investigation.”

Recent cases of young workers being underpaid include a Kalgoorlie employer underpaying two apprentices amounts of \$14,300 and \$2700 after inadvertently applying the wrong pay rates for more than three years.

The employer took out a bank loan and voluntarily back-paid the young workers late last year. No further action was required.

Mr Campbell says the campaign aims to raise awareness of the Fair Work Ombudsman’s role among country employers and workers.

“It is important regional employers and workers are aware they can turn to the Fair Work Ombudsman for free workplace advice and assistance,” he said.

Fair Work inspectors will be among the presenters at a free information session for employers of apprentices and trainees being hosted by Small Business Centre Goldfields on February 18, 7am-8.30am. Register at www.sbcgoldfields.com.au (http://www.sbcgoldfields.com.au/)

Mr Campbell says there is a range of tools available for employers on the Fair Work Ombudsman’s website at www.fairwork.gov.au.

Resources include pay slip and record-keeping templates, a self-audit checklist, template letters and fact sheets on dozens of topics including leave, industrial action, public holidays, enterprise bargaining, gender pay equality and family-friendly workplaces.

The ‘Industries’ section on the Fair Work Ombudsman’s website provides information specifically tailored for employers and workers in the hair and beauty, clerical, retail, cleaning, security and horticulture industries.

As well as Online resources, the Fair Work Ombudsman has advisers available to speak with employers and workers with questions on its Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 from 8am-6pm weekdays. Translations are available on 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.