

\$180,000 returned to underpaid Cairns workers

27 July 2011

A number of workers in and around Cairns have recently been back-paid a total of \$180,100 following intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson - visiting Cairns today - revealed that the largest recovery was \$55,000 for a food processing supervisor not paid for overtime.

Mr Wilson says that after a Fair Work inspector contacted the employer and explained its obligations, the employee was promptly reimbursed all money owed.

In a separate case, a plant operator at a local construction firm was reimbursed \$52,000 after inspectors found the worker was not paid annual leave or long service leave entitlements when his employment ceased.

Other recent recoveries include:

- \$25,400 for three engineers underpaid redundancy entitlements,
- \$22,000 for a chef not paid for time worked and overtime,
- \$8500 for a hospitality worker not paid overtime or penalty rates for night shift work,
- \$5900 for a shop assistant underpaid the minimum hourly rate and overtime allowances,
- \$5700 for a customer service officer underpaid the minimum hourly rate, and
- \$5600 for a farmhand underpaid annual leave entitlements.

Mr Wilson says that given all employers co-operated with inspectors and put processes in place to ensure the errors are not repeated, there will be no further action.

"It's a fact that some businesses inadvertently breach workplace law. When we find mistakes, we're here to help and give practical advice to employers on how to voluntarily fix them," he said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman provides a single point of contact for people running a business or working in Australia to get accurate information about their workplace rights and obligations.

Those seeking support should visit the Fair Work Ombudsman website at www.fairwork.gov.au or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 from 8am to 6pm weekdays. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

The website has a number of tools and user-friendly resources to assist calculate pay rates, including PayCheck, Payroll Check, a Pay Rate Calculator and an Award Finder.

Follow the Fair Work Ombudsman on Twitter [@fairwork_gov_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au)  (http://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) .

Media inquiries:

Mr Wilson will be available from 10.30 am at the FWO office, Level 1, 104 Grafton St, Cairns, for local Media interviews.

Craig Bildstien, Director, Media & Stakeholder Relations, 0419 818 484 , travelling with Mr Wilson
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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.