

## 1000 Hunter businesses benefit from Fair Work Ombudsman's educational visits

13 May 2011

Fair Work inspectors have made educational visits to about 1000 businesses in the Newcastle-Hunter region over the past 12 months to help them understand workplace laws.

Visiting Newcastle today, Australia's Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson said the informal visits also allowed inspectors to promote the Agency's helpful tools and resources.

Mr Wilson says the visits targeted mostly small to medium-size employers previously covered by the NSW industrial relations system and aimed to explain key changes such as the National Employment Standards and the introduction of Modern Awards.

Inspectors have distributed information packs with useful materials such as fact sheets, employment templates and Best Practice Guides, as well as references to the Fair Work Ombudsman's website – [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) – and national Infoline, which takes an average of 4000 calls daily on 13 13 94 from 8am-6pm.

Mr Wilson, who was in Newcastle to meet with his regional staff, said inspectors based at the Agency's Wharf Road office had also conducted a number of targeted campaigns over the past year focussing on international students, the shuttle-bus and coach industry and the metal industry.

Last financial year, the Newcastle office recovered more than \$1 million for employees who had been underpaid at work and to the end of March this financial year has so far recouped another \$740,000.

Three recent significant recoveries include \$55,000 severance pay for the estate of a deceased automotive parts worker, \$38,000 for a number of child care workers underpaid their minimum rates and \$34,000 for a bus driver underpaid the minimum hourly rate and penalty rates.

Mr Wilson encouraged Newcastle-Hunter employers to access the suite of innovative educational tools and resources on the Fair Work Ombudsman website.

"These resources are excellent tools for assisting employers to understand and comply with workplace laws and are freely available," he said.

An "industries" section provides information specifically tailored for employers and workers in the retail, cleaning, clerical, hair and beauty, security, horticulture, fast food and hospitality industries.

### Attention newsrooms

Australia's Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson will hold a Media Conference at 2.30pm today at the FWO office at Suite 2, 265 Wharf Road, Newcastle.

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## Contact us

Fair Work Online: [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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