

\$1.7 million back-pay for WA employees

25 October 2011

The Fair Work Ombudsman recovered a total of \$1.788 million back-pay for 1480 workers in Western Australia last financial year.

Of the 1825 complaints finalised in WA, 43 per cent were resolved voluntarily by the employer without the need for a formal investigation.

Nationally, the Fair Work Ombudsman recouped \$26.7 million for 17,360 underpaid employees in 2010-11.

Of this, \$7.9 million was reimbursed to 8215 workers under an informal, but supervised voluntary resolution process.

The Assisted Voluntary Resolution (AVR) team is now achieving resolution of about half its referrals within the first month.

Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson is keen to build on this success and is trialling the expanded use of mediation for low-level underpayment claims.

"Typically, about half the complainants who come to us are found to have been underpaid," Mr Wilson said.

About two-thirds of matters are settled for amounts of less than \$2000 and about three-quarters for amounts less than \$3000.

Mr Wilson says that when Fair Work inspectors identify a problem and contact a business, most employers check their records, realise a problem has occurred, and fix it immediately.


In September, the Fair Work Ombudsman launched PayCheck Plus, a new Online tool to assist employers keep up-to-date with their obligations.

PayCheck Plus calculates minimum rates of pay per hour, per shift or per week and takes account of payments for overtime, penalty rates and allowances.

Additionally, the Agency's National Employer Program is now working with and supporting 31 large national enterprises who together employ 209,000 staff.

The program involves working closely with participating businesses to provide education and advice and identify specific areas the employer can improve or strengthen its workplace policies or practices.

The Fair Work Infoline - 13 13 94 - is open from 8 am to 6 pm weekdays. The website - www.fairwork.gov.au - delivers a range of free, self-service tools and resources that can be accessed 24 hours a day.

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

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Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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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

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