

\$206,000 back-pay for 260 Cobbler Plus and Watch Works employees

16 August 2012

Past and present employees of Cobbler Plus and Watch Works kiosks throughout Australia are to be reimbursed more than \$206,000 in underpaid wages and superannuation.

The back-payments are the result of an investigation by the Fair Work Ombudsman into a complaint from a single worker.

Following resolution of the initial complaint, the Fair Work Ombudsman asked the operator of the kiosks - Soderberg Group Pty Ltd - to conduct a self-audit to determine if other employees had also been short-changed.

The company discovered that it had incorrectly classified its employee rates of pay following the introduction of the General Retail Industry Award 2010.



As a result, it has entered into a repayment plan with the Fair Work Ombudsman, committing to repay around 260 past and present employees almost \$182,000 in underpaid wages and more than \$24,000 in underpaid superannuation.

Soderberg Group operates 131 Cobbler Plus and Watch Works kiosks in every State and Territory except Tasmania.

As part of an Enforceable Undertaking with the Fair Work Ombudsman, the company has agreed to:

- Advise within 60 days steps it has taken to implement systems and processes to ensure its ongoing compliance with workplace laws
- Place a public notice in the Adelaide Advertiser, Sydney Morning Herald, Canberra Times, Northern Territory News, Melbourne Herald Sun and Brisbane Courier Mail apologising for its contraventions
- Ensure company representatives undertake accredited workplace training courses on minimum entitlements under the Fair Work Act
- Appoint at its own expense an independent auditor to report annually each year for three years on its compliance with workplace laws, and
- Take all reasonable steps to relocate and reimburse underpaid former employees.

Acting Fair Work Ombudsman Mark Scully says Soderberg has co-operated with the Agency and the matter is being dealt with by way of an Enforceable Undertaking as an alternative to litigation.

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- [Soderberg Enforceable Undertaking \(PDF 632.8KB\) \(www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/721/Soderberg-Enforceable-Undertaking.pdf.aspx\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/721/Soderberg-Enforceable-Undertaking.pdf.aspx)

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