

## \$35,000 back-pay for Sunshine Coast workers

20 March 2012

Six workers on Queensland's Sunshine Coast have shared a total of \$35,200 back-pay following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The largest recovery was \$12,000 for two labourers at Buderim.

The male employees - aged 22 and 35 - lodged complaints with the Fair Work Ombudsman after they were underpaid the minimum hourly rate, overtime rates and allowances and had unauthorised deductions made from their wages.

The workers were underpaid \$6200 and \$5800 respectively between 2008 and 2011.

After a Fair Work inspector contacted the business and explained its obligations, the employees were reimbursed without the need for further action against the employer.

Other recent recoveries include:

- \$11,900 for two cleaners at Tewantin underpaid the minimum hourly rate and allowances after they were incorrectly classified as independent contractors,
- \$5700 for a Noosa security guard not paid for contracted minimum hours per week and personal leave entitlements, and
- \$5600 for a Coolool construction worker not paid redundancy entitlements.

Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas 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.

"When we find mistakes, we're here to assist and give practical advice to employers on how to voluntarily fix them," says Mr Wilson.

The Sunshine Coast businesses involved have now corrected the errors that led to the underpayments and put processes in place to ensure they will not happen again.

Mr Wilson says the Fair Work Ombudsman's Assisted Voluntary Resolution team is now achieving resolution of about half its referrals within the first month.

The Fair Work Ombudsman recovered a total of \$6.082 million in back-pay for 5142 underpaid workers in the Queensland last financial year. Nationally, the Agency recouped \$26.7 million for 17,360 employees.

Workers or employers seeking support should get in touch with the Fair Work Ombudsman via the website - [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) - or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

An 'Industries' section on the website provides extra, specialised information for employers and employees in the retail, cleaning, clerical, hair and beauty, security, horticulture, fast food, hospitality and vehicle industries.

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Media inquiries:

Richard Honey, Adviser, Media & Stakeholder Relations,  
(03) 9954 2716, 0457 924 146  
[richard.honey@fwo.gov.au](mailto:richard.honey@fwo.gov.au)

## Contact us

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

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