

\$64,000 back-pay for Darling Downs workers

22 March 2012

Several workers in Queensland's Darling Downs region have been back-paid a total of \$64,200 following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The largest recovery was \$18,000 for a security industry worker at Warwick.

The female employee - aged in her 40s - lodged a complaint with Fair Work Ombudsman after she was paid a flat hourly rate for all hours worked and not paid penalty rates over a period of several years.

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

Other recent recoveries include:

- \$11,100 for three Toowoomba labourers underpaid the minimum hourly rate and penalty rates for 12 months,
- \$8600 for a truck driver west of Toowoomba who had unauthorised deductions from wages,
- \$8200 for a Toowoomba sport and recreation industry worker underpaid long service leave entitlements,
- \$7200 for a vehicle industry worker in Toowoomba underpaid the minimum hourly rate,
- \$5600 for four service industry workers south west of Toowoomba not paid for all hours worked, and
- \$5500 for a Toowoomba labourer underpaid the minimum hourly rate.

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.

"It's a fact that some businesses inadvertently breach workplace laws. 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 Darling Downs 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 Queensland last financial year. Between July 1, 2009 and December 31, 2011 the Fair Work Ombudsman recovered a total of \$68.2 million for 41,224 underpaid workers.

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

The website has a number of tools and resources, including PayCheck Plus and an Award Finder, to assist business-owners to calculate the correct pay for their employees.

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.

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.

Free documentation is available Online for employers to use when hiring, managing and dismissing staff, including letters of engagement and probation, timesheet and pay slip templates, leave application forms, a self-audit check list and workplace complaint form.

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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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.