

## Court imposes penalties over teen's dismissal

16 November 2012

The operators of a Perth business have been penalised a total of \$15,840 for sacking a 16-year-old because the boy's mother queried his pay.

Port Kennedy-man Stephen Ashley has been fined \$2640 and his Willetton-based private company West Coast Propellers Pty Ltd a further \$13,200.

The penalties were imposed in the Federal Magistrates Court in Perth after Ashley admitted being involved in his company - which is engaged in repairing, servicing and selling aeroplane propellers - breaching a teenager's workplace rights.

Ashley hired the teenager in November, 2010 and told him he would be paid \$5.32 an hour.

The boy's mother contacted the Fair Work Infoline and received advice that the pay rate should be more than \$7 an hour.

On her son's behalf, the woman subsequently met Ashley during her son's first week at work to query the pay rate he had been offered.

Immediately after the meeting, Ashley told the employee his employment had been terminated.

Fair Work inspectors investigated the matter after the employee and his mother lodged a complaint.

Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson says the Court's decision illustrates that breaching a young worker's rights is a serious matter.

"Under the Fair Work Act, it is unlawful to dismiss or take any other adverse action against an employee for exercising a workplace right, such as querying or complaining about pay rates," Mr Wilson said.

"We treat breaches of young worker's rights particularly seriously because young workers are often not aware of their rights or can be reluctant to complain.

"Employers must take steps to ensure they treat young workers fairly at all times and we can assist those who are unsure of their obligations."

Employers or employees seeking assistance should contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au). A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

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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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For TTY: 13 36 77. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

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