

Cairns workers back-paid \$45,000

4 April 2013

Workers at Cairns have been back-paid a total of \$45,200 following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The largest recovery was \$15,300 for a chef who was underpaid annual leave entitlements upon termination of employment.

After Fair Work inspectors contacted the business and explained its obligations the employee was reimbursed all money owed without the need for further action against the employer.

Other recent recoveries at Cairns include:

- \$11,300 for a shop assistant underpaid wages and penalty rates between 2007 and 2011,
- \$10,200 for a Japanese national on a working holiday visa underpaid wages while employed as a cleaner between 2009 and 2012, and
- \$8,400 for an office manager at a business services firm underpaid wages in lieu of notice and annual leave entitlements upon termination.

Fair Work Ombudsman Group Manager, Michael Campbell, says 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 resolve issues," Mr Campbell said.

"These businesses have now corrected the errors that led to the underpayments and put processes in place to ensure they will not happen again.

"It is important that employers are aware that if small errors in wages and entitlements are left unchecked they can mount up and become significant back-payments of thousands of dollars. This is why it's important that employers ensure they get it right the first time around."

Last financial year the Fair Work Ombudsman recovered just over \$8.6 million in back-pay for 4906 workers in Queensland.

More than 148,000 Queensland employees and employers sought advice from the Fair Work Infoline in the last financial year.

Employers and employees seeking information and advice should visit www.fairwork.gov.au or call the Infoline on 13 13 94.

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Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

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Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

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

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