$65,000 in back-pay for Perth workers

11 April 2013

Workers at Perth have been back-paid a total of $65,900 following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Acting Fair Work Ombudsman, Michael Campbell, said a common cause behind many of the underpayments was employers' lack of awareness of the minimum pay rates and award entitlements that applied to their staff.

The biggest recovery was $24,400 for 14 employees working for a business with sites at Guildford and Bayswater who were underpaid wages and weekend penalty rates in 2011 and 2012.

In another case an attendant at a Greenwood business was back-paid $16,200 after being underpaid wages in 2011 and 2012.

Other recent recoveries in the area include:

- $15,200 for a worker at a business in the Perth Airport area underpaid wages, penalty rates and overtime entitlements between 2010 and 2012, and
- $10,100 for an East Perth tradesman not paid annual leave entitlements upon termination of employment.

Mr Campbell said that in all cases, the employees were reimbursed all money owed without the need for further action against the employer.

"When we find mistakes, we're here to assist and educate employers on how to voluntarily resolve issues. These businesses have now corrected the errors that led to the underpayments and put processes in place to ensure they will not happen again," Mr Campbell said.

Mr Campbell says employers need to ensure they take the time to check what minimum pay rates and award entitlements apply to their staff.

"This involves determining what modern award or agreement apply to their staff, and the correct classification, minimum wages, penalty rates, and any other entitlements payable," he said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman's website - www.fairwork.gov.au - has a number of tools and resources, including PayCheck Plus and an Award Finder, for business-owners to check what pay rates and entitlements they are obligated to pay their staff.

Last financial year the Fair Work Ombudsman recovered over $2.6 million in back-pay for more than 2000 workers in WA.

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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