

Workers across regional WA back-paid \$156,000

5 August 2013

Underpaid workers throughout regional Western Australia have been back-paid a total of \$156,900 following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Fair Work Ombudsman, Natalie James, said many of the underpayments were the result of employees being paid the wrong rates or not receiving the correct entitlements on termination.

The biggest recovery was \$27,300 for a Norseman worker not paid wages in lieu of notice, annual leave and redundancy pay entitlements when he was made redundant in 2012.

Ms James said that under workplace laws, it is the responsibility of employers to ensure employees receive their full lawful entitlements.

"Employers must ensure they are aware of the minimum pay rates and entitlements that apply to employees and that their business meets all its obligations under workplace laws," Ms James said.

Other recent recoveries include:

- \$22,900 for two workers at a Laverton business underpaid redundancy pay entitlements upon termination earlier this year
- \$19,400 for a worker in the Wiluna area not paid his outstanding wages and annual leave entitlements upon termination in 2012
- \$17,600 for two maintenance workers at a business in the Tom Price area underpaid allowances when they performed higher duties in 2012 and earlier this year
- \$12,000 for a machine operator in the Karratha area underpaid redundancy pay entitlements upon termination in 2012
- \$10,000 for a Gnowangerup worker underpaid the minimum hourly rate between 2007 and 2012 as a result of his employer not passing on annual July 1 increases
- \$9,200 for three young apprentices at a Bunbury electrical business underpaid the minimum hourly rate in 2012 and earlier this year
- \$9,200 for a Moora retail shop manager not paid her annual leave entitlements and outstanding wages upon termination in 2012
- \$8,400 for a manager at a Kalgoorlie drilling business underpaid redundancy pay entitlements upon termination earlier this year
- \$7,200 for a Donnybrook shop assistant not paid outstanding annual leave and long service leave entitlements upon termination in 2012
- \$7,100 for a Korean national employed as a cook at a Bunbury hotel underpaid the minimum salary under his award from 2011 until earlier this year, and
- \$6,600 for a welder at Karratha not paid for two weeks of work in 2011 and underpaid wages in lieu of notice upon termination.

In all cases, the employees were reimbursed all money owed without the need for further action after Fair Work Inspectors contacted the businesses and explained their obligations.

Ms James said when Fair Work Inspectors identify a problem and contact a business, most employers cross-check their records, realise they have made an error, and fix it immediately.

"When we find mistakes, we're here to assist and give practical advice to employers on how to resolve issues and put processes in place to ensure they comply in the future," she said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman's website - www.fairwork.gov.au - contains a range of free tools and resources to help business owners understand and comply with their workplace obligations.

The 'Termination' section on the website outlines the entitlements payable in an employee's final pay and includes information on topics such as notice periods and redundancy pay.

Other online tools include PayCheck Plus and an Award Finder to help business owners locate the applicable award and minimum pay rates for employees.

Employees and employers seeking further information and advice can also call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

Follow the Fair Work Ombudsman on Twitter [@fairwork_gov_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) (http://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) or find us on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au>).

Media inquiries:

Tom McPherson, Media & Stakeholder Relations

0439 835 855

media@fwo.gov.au

Page reference No: 3222

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.