

Metals workers recoup \$52,000 in unpaid wages

22 January 2013

The Fair Work Ombudsman has recovered almost \$52,000 for 37 metal industry workers across Australia as a result of a national campaign targeting manufacturers of structural metal products.

The campaign was launched early last year as a result of concern that the industry was accounting for a growing number of complaints to the Fair Work Ombudsman from within the manufacturing sector about pay and conditions.

More than 250 separate audits were conducted across Australia over the past year in businesses which manufacture joists, roof trusses, scaffolding, girders, garages, kit homes, sheds, gates, shutters, skylights, window frames and guttering.

Fair Work Ombudsman, Nicholas Wilson, said while a significant sum of money had been recouped for workers, the overall results of the audits was quite positive.

“Seventy-two per cent of all employers were found to be compliant with workplace laws while 28 per cent were found to have breaches for either underpaying staff or record keeping and pay slip breaches, or both,” Mr Wilson said.

Mr Wilson said one audit is ongoing, but all employers were willing to quickly rectify mistakes.

“In one case, an employer responded to the Fair Work Ombudsman’s request for documentation by conducting his own audit first and self-identifying a small underpayment to two employees which he rectified and advised us of,” Mr Wilson said.

“That shows how these audits play a key role in raising awareness amongst employers in particular industry sectors of the need to be constantly checking that their payroll systems are accurate and that a small mistake doesn’t go undetected for a long period, leading to a large reimbursement being required.

“We use these campaigns to not only identify problems in payments to staff and record keeping, but to work with employers to educate them about how to access information through Fair Work Ombudsman to help prevent mistakes in the future.”

Employers or employees seeking information and advice should visit www.fairwork.gov.au or call the Infoline on 13 13 94 8 am-6 pm weekdays.

The Fair Work Ombudsman website has a number of tools and resources, including PayCheckPlus and an Award Finder, to assist business owners calculate the correct pay for their employees.

An ‘Industries’ section on the website provides extra, specialised information for employers and employees in a range of industries, including metal manufacturing.

Campaign result:

- [National Structural Metal Product Manufacturing Campaign Report \(PDF 913.5KB\) \(www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/714/National-structural-metal-product-manufacturing-campaign-final-report.pdf.aspx\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/714/National-structural-metal-product-manufacturing-campaign-final-report.pdf.aspx)
- [National Structural Metal Product Manufacturing Campaign Report \(RTF 5.4MB\) \(www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/714/National-structural-metal-product-manufacturing-campaign-final-report.rtf.aspx\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/714/National-structural-metal-product-manufacturing-campaign-final-report.rtf.aspx)

Media inquiries:

Penny Rowe, Media & Stakeholder Relations
0457 924 146
penelope.rowe@fwo.gov.au

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.