

## Melbourne media company faces court for allegedly underpaying young workers

17 July 2013

The Fair Work Ombudsman has launched legal action against a Melbourne media company for allegedly underpaying two young workers - including one who was allegedly not paid anything during seven months with the company.

Facing Court is Crocmedia Pty Ltd, which develops and sells radio and television programs.

It is alleged that Crocmedia underpaid the two workers, who produced radio programs broadcast on the SEN network, a total of \$22,168.

It is alleged the workers routinely worked multiple shifts each week, including many midnight-to-6am shifts.

One of the workers was a sports journalism student at university aged 20 to 21 at the time and the other was a recent graduate from a journalism course at university and aged 23 to 24 at the time.

It will be alleged in Court that the workers should have been classified as casual employees and paid more than \$18 an hour, but were instead misclassified as volunteers or contractors.

The younger worker was allegedly entitled to be paid \$5,767 for work she performed between August 2012 and February 2013 - but was paid nothing.

The other worker was allegedly entitled to be paid \$19,341 for work he performed between June 2011 and August 2012 - but was paid only \$2940.

Fair Work Inspectors discovered the alleged underpayments when they investigated complaints lodged by the workers.

Crocmedia allegedly also breached pay slip and frequency of pay laws. The company rectified the alleged underpayments earlier this year.

Fair Work Ombudsman Executive Director, Steve Ronson, said the significant alleged underpayment of vulnerable, young workers and the need to deter employers from such behaviour were key factors in the decision to commence legal action.

Crocmedia allegedly committed multiple breaches of workplace laws and faces maximum penalties per breach ranging from \$16,500 to \$51,000.

A directions hearing is listed in the Federal Circuit Court in Melbourne on August 12.

The legal action follows the Fair Work Ombudsman's commissioning of a report into unpaid work arrangements in Australia, [which was released earlier this year \(www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/archived-media-releases/2013-media-releases/february-2013/20130207-unpaid-work-media-release\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/archived-media-releases/2013-media-releases/february-2013/20130207-unpaid-work-media-release).

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

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## Contact us

Fair Work Online: [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)

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