

## Cleaning company steps up as industry leader to support fair workplaces

18 July 2013

Ensuring compliance with workplace laws through the procurement chain is the focus of an agreement between the Fair Work Ombudsman and a major cleaning company.

Asset Industries Australia Pty Ltd has agreed to self-audit its own staff as well as cleaners employed through its sub-contractors in the delivery of cleaning services across Australia.

Fair Work Ombudsman Executive Director, Steve Ronson, said this was a significant move in an industry that generates a steady stream of complaints to the Fair Work Ombudsman.

"The Fair Work Ombudsman has been concerned for some time about the wages and entitlements of workers employed through subcontracting arrangements," Mr Ronson said.

"We have seen situations where workers are unaware of who their employer actually is and have been paid well below minimum entitlements. It is not good enough for companies to wipe their hands of responsibility for breaches of workplace laws that occur through the procurement chain.

"It is particularly welcome that a cleaning company is willing to stand up publicly by entering into this Proactive Compliance Deed with the Fair Work Ombudsman, to declare that it believes cleaners employed through its procurement arrangements, as well as its own direct employees, should have confidence that they are receiving their full entitlements."

Under the three-year Deed of Proactive Compliance with Asset Industries, the company will undertake annual self-audits of its own staff and cleaners engaged by its sub-contractors to ensure compliance with workplace laws.

The company is undertaking these audits voluntarily and has also agreed to correct any underpayments identified within 30 days. It will report the outcomes of the audits to the Fair Work Ombudsman annually. The employment records to be audited in the first year will include Easter 2013, to ensure workers received their correct entitlements for the public holidays, and the first full pay period commencing after 1 July 2013, to ensure that the Annual Wage Review increases have been passed on to workers.

As part of the agreement with the Fair Work Ombudsman, Asset Industries will establish mechanisms within the company for its own staff and those employed by contractors, to raise concerns about their workplace entitlements.

Asset Industries last year recently won a tender for the provision of cleaning services to the Fair Work Ombudsman at sites in Victoria, the ACT, South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland and New South Wales. The company also has a number of cleaning contracts with other Commonwealth departments.

The Deed was negotiated after the Fair Work Ombudsman, in considering tenders for cleaning services at some of its own sites, advised that it had previously received complaints about the company.

"This is the first Deed that the Fair Work Ombudsman has entered into that has a particular focus on ensuring compliance with workplace laws through the procurement chain," Mr Ronson said.

"I congratulate Asset Industries on its willingness to demonstrate corporate responsibility not only to its own staff, but also to those employed under its contracting arrangements.

"This should serve as an example to other businesses in this industry."

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The Deed is available at: [List of pro-active compliance deeds \(www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/our-role/enforcing-the-legislation/compliance-partnerships/list-of-proactive-compliance-deeds\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/our-role/enforcing-the-legislation/compliance-partnerships/list-of-proactive-compliance-deeds)

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