

\$60,000 back-paid to Townsville workers

Wednesday, 12 June 2013

Underpaid workers at Townsville have been back-paid \$60,200 following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The biggest recovery was \$44,000 for seven employees at a beauty industry business. They were underpaid their minimum hourly rates over a six month period in 2011 as a result of their employer being unaware of the correct rate.

Acting Fair Work Ombudsman, Michael Campbell, said the case highlights the need for employers to get the basics right when it comes to their workplace obligations.

“That means knowing what modern award or agreement applies to their staff, the correct classifications for employees and the minimum pay rates that apply,” Mr Campbell said.

“Small underpayments in hourly rates can accumulate over time and result in employers being required to make large back-payments they were not budgeting for.”

Other recent recoveries include:

- \$6,000 for a young painter’s labourer underpaid minimum hourly rates over a 10-month period in 2011-2012,
- \$5,100 for 16 employees at a security business underpaid the minimum hourly rate and penalty rates for weekend and public holiday work over 12 months in 2010-2011, and
- \$5,100 for a young carpenter’s labourer underpaid the minimum hourly rate, travel allowances and annual leave entitlements in 2012.

Mr Campbell said when Fair Work Inspectors identify a problem and contact a business, most employers check their records, realise a problem has occurred, and fix it immediately.

“When we find mistakes, we’re here to assist and give practical advice to employers on how to voluntarily resolve issues,” he said.

“It was pleasing to see all of these businesses co-operate with Inspectors and reimburse employees all money owed without the need for further action.”

More than 148,000 Queensland employees and employers sought advice from the Fair Work Infoline in the last financial year and just over \$8.6 million in back-pay was recovered for more than 4900 workers in Queensland.

The Fair Work Ombudsman’s website - www.fairwork.gov.au - contains a number of tools and resources, including PayCheck Plus and an Award Finder, to help business owners calculate the correct pay rates for workers and for employees to check what they’re entitled to.

Employers and employees seeking information and advice should visit the website or call the Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

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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

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