

## National child care provider to repay \$2.6 million to employees

2 October 2013

A National child care provider is to repay more than 3,000 current and former staff more than \$2.6 million in underpaid wages.

Camp Australia, a national out-of-school-hours care provider operating in all mainland states and territories, identified the underpayments after conducting its own audit in late 2011.

Fair Work Ombudsman, Natalie James, said the case highlights how important it is for employers, large or small, to ensure employees are paid correctly.

"This is a great example of an employer undertaking its own checks to ensure its employees receive everything they should and fixing problems that have been identified," Ms James said.

"Camp Australia has been proactive and cooperative through this process, keeping the Fair Work Ombudsman informed and working closely with our staff to ensure it identifies the problems and puts in place systems to ensure employees are receiving their correct entitlements in the future."

Camp Australia identified a defect in its payroll system and ultimately instigated a detailed audit which found 3,251 employees had been underpaid a total of \$2,617,353 between 1 January 2010 and 30 June 2012. The audit also identified some overpayments to staff in relation to first aid allowances.

As a consequence of its liaison with the Fair Work Ombudsman, Camp Australia has entered into an Enforceable Undertaking under which it will rectify the underpayments by the end of this month (October 2013) and provide evidence of payments made to the Fair Work Ombudsman. Where former staff can't be located payments will be held in trust for payment as employees are located.

The company will also issue an apology to staff who were underpaid and provide improved training to staff in managing human resources, recruitment and payroll functions.

Camp Australia will also undertake further audits, one immediately, by external auditors for the period 1 July 2012 to September 2013 and then every year for the next two years.

Ms James congratulated the company on its positive and cooperative approach to dealing with the issue.

"Small errors in payments to staff can mount up significantly over time and it reinforces the need to ensure rigour is applied to payroll systems and that regular checks are made," Ms James said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman is here to help both employers and employees.

"Whether large or small, it's important for employers to get things right and ensure that they are meeting their obligations under workplace law and that employees are receiving their full entitlements."

The Fair Work Infoline is available for both employers and employees on 13 13 94.

Copy of undertaking: [Enforceable Undertaking Camp Australia Pty Ltd \(PDF 3.1MB\) \(www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/722/Enforceable-Undertaking-Camp-Australia.pdf.aspx\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/722/Enforceable-Undertaking-Camp-Australia.pdf.aspx)

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