

## 4 Airlie Beach workers share \$56 000 back-pay

21 July 2015

Four employees laid-off by an accommodation business at Airlie Beach in Queensland have been back-paid more than \$56,000 following an investigation by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Employed in management, front-counter and housekeeping positions, the workers were made redundant last year – but did not get any of their entitlements.

The owners told the four female staff that the business was experiencing financial difficulties and they therefore did not have to pay them anything.

The employees approached the Fair Work Ombudsman seeking clarification.

Fair Work inspectors investigated and found that the employees were indeed entitled to outstanding wages, accrued leave entitlements, redundancy pay and wages in lieu of notice.

One employee had more than 10 years' service and was owed over \$25,000.

Despite the employer's claim to the contrary, Fair Work inspectors found that the business did have the funds to pay all the outstanding entitlements.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says the employer has narrowly avoided enforcement action by co-operating with the Agency and back-paying all money owed.

"The business admitted it did the wrong thing and was quick to rectify the problem after we became involved," Ms James said.

"This case is a timely reminder to employers that financial difficulties or the closure of a business do not mean workplace laws regarding redundancy and other termination entitlements can be ignored.

"Redundancy entitlements play a vital supporting role for people while they attempt to pick themselves up, find a new job and get back on their feet."

Ms James says the Fair Work Ombudsman's website – [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) – contains a range of tools and resources to assist employers to understand their workplace obligations.

The 'Ending Employment' section outlines the entitlements payable in a worker's final pay and includes advice on topics such as annual leave, long service leave and redundancy pay.

The website also includes a calculator to determine the correct notice periods for employees and information relating to employee entitlements if a business becomes bankrupt.

Employers or employees seeking further assistance can contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is also available on 13 14 50.

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

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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