

## \$34,000 back-pay for Hunter region employees

27 March 2015

Workers in the NSW Hunter region have been back-paid a total of \$34,300 in termination entitlements following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

In one case, three service technicians at a Weston business shared in \$28,300 back-pay after their employer failed to pay their full lawful entitlements when it made them redundant.

The workers should have received a final pay packet of accrued annual leave entitlements, untaken rostered days off and wages in lieu of notice, but they got nothing.

Their employer said cash-flow problems caused a delay in paying the entitlements but promptly reimbursed all money owed after being contacted by Fair Work inspectors.

In another case, a Maitland truck driver who had been laid-off was reimbursed \$6000 in unpaid redundancy pay, annual leave entitlements and travel allowances after Fair Work inspectors educated his employer about its obligations under workplace laws.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says employers must ensure they pay employees their full termination entitlements when an employment relationship ends.

"Paying workers correctly on termination of employment is just as important as ensuring they receive their full entitlements throughout their employment," she says.

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

Ms James says while it was disappointing the underpayments occurred, it was pleasing to see both employers co-operate with inspectors and promptly back-pay the employees.

"Our focus is on educating employers about their obligations and helping them to put processes in place to ensure that any errors don't occur again," she said.

The 'Ending Employment' section of the Fair Work Ombudsman's website - [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) - outlines the entitlements payable in a worker's final pay and includes information on topics such as annual leave and redundancy pay.

Ms James says the Fair Work Ombudsman is making compliance easier for businesses by continually building on the information available on its website.

"Small businesses often don't have the benefit of in-house human resources and payroll staff, so we place a high priority on developing tools and resources to assist them," she said.

Ms James says it is important to build a culture of compliance with workplace laws to ensure that those employers doing the right thing are not competitively disadvantaged.

Employers and employees seeking assistance can visit the website 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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Media inquiries:

Nicci de Ryk, Senior Media Adviser

Mobile: 0466 522 004

[nicci.deryk@fwo.gov.au](mailto:nicci.deryk@fwo.gov.au) (<mailto:nicci.deryk@fwo.gov.au>)

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Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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