

Restaurants short-changed workers \$25,000

5 November 2015

Dozens of workers at two Alice Springs restaurants have been back-paid almost \$25,000 in wages and entitlements following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Waiters and kitchen staff at one restaurant shared \$15,000 in back-pay after being underpaid their minimum hourly rates and penalty rates for weekend and night work.

The largest individual underpayment was \$6600.

The errors occurred because the business had received incorrect advice from an accountant about how to calculate wages.

A second restaurant inadvertently short-changed its employees almost \$10,000 because the business applied the incorrect modern award.

The wage issues were identified during a pro-active compliance and education campaign by the Fair Work Ombudsman in Alice Springs.

Overall, the campaign resulted in more than \$70,000 being returned to 216 employees across 22 separate businesses.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says the two restaurants acted quickly to rectify the underpayments after they were discovered.

“It’s important for employers to be fully aware of the pay rates that apply to their employees, otherwise they can end up facing wages bills they weren’t budgeting for,” she said.

Tools and resources available at www.fairwork.gov.au include templates for time-and-wages records, an online learning centre and a Pay and Conditions Tool (PACT) that provides advice about pay, shift, leave and redundancy entitlements.

The My Account tool allows users to save tailored information such as pay rates and conditions of employment specific to your circumstances.

Employers and employees seeking assistance can visit the website or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. An interpreter service is also available by calling 13 14 50.

Small business can opt to be put through to a Small Business Helpline, which has now assisted more than 250,000 callers since it was established.

Ms James says the Fair Work Ombudsman is working hard to build a culture of compliance with workplace laws to ensure an even playing field for all businesses.

“We are committed to supporting compliant, productive and inclusive Australian workplaces by providing practical advice that is easy to access, understand and apply,” she said.

Follow Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James on Twitter [@NatJamesFWO](https://twitter.com/NatJamesFWO) (<http://twitter.com/NatJamesFWO>), the Fair Work Ombudsman [@fairwork_gov_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) (http://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) or find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au (<http://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au>).

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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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