

## Back-pay for workers in Melbourne's south-east

21 April 2016

Failure to pass on annual wage increases has left a Dandenong manufacturing company with an unpaid wages bill of \$25,800.

The 25 casual employees, who worked various day, afternoon and night shifts, were paid below what they were entitled to under the Manufacturing and Associated Industries and Occupations Award.

The employees were underpaid their minimum rate, shift loadings and first aid allowance.

The largest underpayment for an individual worker was \$3700.

The employer told Fair Work Inspectors the business believed it had been paying the correct amount and attributed the underpayment to not receiving notification of revised rates.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says employers should undertake their own checks of Award provisions and periodically self-audit their compliance.

"In our experience, a common cause of underpayment of wages is the failure by employers to pass on annual wage increases," Ms James said.

"Our Online tools and resources can assist employers to determine their applicable Modern Award, as well as classification and pay rates, including base pay rates, allowances, overtime and penalty rates.

"Our focus is on educating employers about their obligations and assisting them to put processes in place to ensure that any errors we find don't occur again.

The underpayment was discovered during pro-active auditing of businesses in the Dandenong region.

In separate matters, the Fair Work Ombudsman has also recently recouped:

- \$13,800 for an apprentice mechanic, who was underpaid his minimum wage and an adult trades labourer who was paid a junior apprentice rate in Keysborough,
- \$8200 for six casual automotive employees who did not receive overtime penalties after working more than five days a week in Springvale,
- \$5600 for a production line worker in Dandenong who did not receive his entitlements while on sick leave,
- \$5300 for a retail manager in Narre Warren who did not receive his wages for time worked, personal leave, annual leave and leave loading upon resigning, and
- \$5100 for a casual factory employee in Dandenong who did not receive his annual wage increase.

Employers and employees seeking assistance can visit at [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) (<http://www.fairwork.gov.au/>) or phone the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available by calling 13 14 50. Small businesses calling the Infoline can opt to receive priority service to assist with their inquiries.

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Media inquiries:

Lara O'Toole, Media Adviser

Mobile: 0439 835 855

[lara.otoole@fwo.gov.au](mailto:lara.otoole@fwo.gov.au) (<mailto:lara.otoole@fwo.gov.au>)

## Contact us

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

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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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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