

## Gold Coast security operator faces Court

17 February 2016

A Gold Coast security company and its owner are facing Court action for allegedly underpaying eight security guards more than \$22,000.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has commenced legal proceedings against Owen Ivor Jennings and his company Step Ahead Security Services Pty Ltd.

The security guards were allegedly underpaid a total of \$22,779 between May and August, 2014.

Step Ahead Security Services allegedly underpaid their minimum hourly rates, casual loadings, shift allowances, minimum shift pay and penalty rates for night, weekend and overtime work.

The Fair Work Ombudsman investigated after employees contacted the Agency for assistance.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says the matter has been referred to the Federal Circuit Court in Brisbane because the alleged underpayments have not been rectified and Mr Jennings has previously been put on notice of the need to pay minimum lawful entitlements.

Step Ahead Security Services faces maximum penalties of up to \$51,000 per contravention and Mr Jennings faces penalties of up to \$10,200 per contravention.

To try to discourage Mr Jennings from further contraventions, the Fair Work Ombudsman is seeking a Court Order for 25 per cent of any penalty imposed on him to be suspended and activated if he is found to be involved in underpaying workers in future.

In addition to the penalties, the Fair Work Ombudsman is seeking an Order for Step Ahead Security Services to back-pay the employees in full – or for Mr Jennings to personally pay the employees compensation.

The Fair Work Ombudsman is also seeking an injunction restraining Mr Jennings from underpaying security industry workers in future.

The Fair Work Ombudsman referred the matter to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission for suspected phoenixing activity.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has previously received underpayment allegations from workers in relation to another security company run by Mr Jennings that subsequently went into liquidation.

Employers and employees seeking assistance can visit [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) 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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## Contact us

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Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50

Hearing & speech assistance

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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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