



News Release - SafeWork SA

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COMPLAINT LEADS TO FINE OVER UNPAID WAGES

A complaint to a SafeWork SA inspector has resulted in the operators of a northern suburbs motel being fined \$7,000 for underpaying staff.

Greenearth Pty Ltd, trading as the Comfort Inn – Manhattan Motor Inn at Enfield, was convicted of 12 counts of failing to comply with the relevant Award, the *Motels (SA) Award*.

The SA Industrial Relations Court heard that not only were two staff members not paid under the prevailing Award rate at the time in 2004, but also:

- they were not offered a meal break, or payment in lieu, after 5 hours of work; and
- they were required to start work 15 minutes before their rostered time, *for no pay*.

In his judgement, Industrial Magistrate Stephen Lieschke said the breaches went:

“...to the financial advantage of Greenearth and to the financial and personal detriment of each worker...”

“Paying the correct minimum rates of pay... is the very foundation of an award system that ensures a fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work.”

SafeWork SA noted the magistrate’s concern at the lack of any system to keep up with changes to the relevant Award and put those changes in place.

“As this case shows, employers must realise the need to keep abreast of such changes, which are legally binding upon them, “ says SafeWork SA Executive Director, Michele Patterson.

“SafeWork SA is always ready with current information for employers, and their relevant employer or industry associations are also able to help.

“Similarly for employees on state-based awards who have issues with their pay and conditions, SafeWork SA’s telephone Help Centre is ready with answers and advice,” Ms. Patterson says.

For help on state-based industrial relations and the relevant laws, SafeWork SA operates a telephone Help Centre on 1 300 365 255 or 8303 0400.

To report serious accidents or incidents, in the workplace call 1 800 777 209

For further information contact Peter Adams, Principal Communications Officer,
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