

Friday 9 December, 2016

## Systemic underpayment of workers shows the system is broken

Australian Unions are calling for action by the Turnbull government to address the systematic flouting of our workplace laws and the exploitation of our young people.

Working people, particularly young workers, are being exploited by employers who are flouting the weaknesses in Australian employment and workplace relation laws.

Employers test the boundaries of labour laws to minimise their obligations to employees knowing the only thing smaller than the chance of getting caught is any fine they might have to pay

Today's reports show how poorly the system is coping with those who seek to exploit loopholes, low penalties and vulnerable workers.

Australian Unions stand ready to assist any worker in Australia that believes they have had their wages and can go to [www.checkyourpay.com.au](http://www.checkyourpay.com.au) to get more information and assistance.

The details of endemic underpayment in Wollongong published today by Fairfax show the depth of the problem but this is an issue which faces workers nation-wide and desperately needs to be addressed.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver:

"Reports of systemic underpayment of workers in Wollongong show that there are serious problems with labour laws in this country that the Turnbull Government refuses to address."

"It is clearly too easy for employers to flout standards that every Australian would expect them to abide by – not least of which is paying workers what they are owed."

"Employers flouting even basic entitlements such as minimum wage is creating a whole layer of poverty level jobs. This is not just ripping people off, it destroys good jobs, and yet the Turnbull Government is focussed on attacking the very mechanism that have protected Australia from this kind of behaviour: Unions."

"Australian Unions could be the largest enforcement and workplace compliance force in the country but the Turnbull government would rather reduce union access, limit people's rights to union support and allow exploitation to occur than admit that unions have an important role to play in society."

"We are not going to allow dodgy employers to steal workers wages and undermine quality jobs in Australia just because the Turnbull government prefers to adopt an ideological stance against unions. That's why we have created [www.checkyourpay.com.au](http://www.checkyourpay.com.au) so all workers can get the assistance they need regardless of the barriers their dodgy boss or the anti-union government might try to create.

"People are not being paid their proper wages, the government needs to focus on stopping the exploitation and work with unions to send a strong signal to employers that this behaviour will not be tolerated."

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<http://www.actu.org.au/actu-media/media-releases>