

Thursday 22 December 2016

All we want for Christmas is to safeguard penalty rates

The Australian Council for Trade Unions (ACTU) is calling for charitable Christmas spirit by asking the public to consider those at work this Christmas, and a need to safeguard their penalty rates.

Throughout Australia this Christmas, hundreds of workers will be working overtime, in overdrive, to support the holiday season and they should be compensated fairly.

Quotes attributable to Dave Oliver, ACTU Secretary:

“All we want for Christmas is to safeguard penalty rates – lets do the right thing.

The Fair Work Commission was expected to rule in September on whether to reduce Sunday rates in line with rates on Saturday for certain industries - the decision was delayed for late this year.

“We’re pretty sure that Santa would pay his elves penalty rates, and Australian employers should do the same – whilst this is a season for fun, for many this is the most demanding work period of the year, and there should be penalty rates for that.

“The ACTU have been fighting to safeguard penalty rates, so we’re asking people to consider having to work on a public holiday, and be paid the same as a weekday.

“During a period with changeable hours, business closures and overtime, penalty rates payments help low-wage earners survive.

“Christmas is an expensive time for families, and penalty rates help low income workers save a little more to get through the season and treat their loved ones.”

“When you go out for a drink or meal this holidays, remember that hospitality and food workers are in the bottom 30 per cent of Australian income earners.

“As you do you last-minute shopping this holiday, spare a thought for those overworked retail workers – along with hospitality, retail has the largest proportion of low paid workers in Australia.

“Let’s face it, no one wants to work on a holiday, that’s why weekend and public holiday penalty rates are an important for workers who make that sacrifice.

“Everyone deserves to be home for Christmas, but if they have to work instead they should be compensated, and that’s why penalty rates are essential,”

The ACTU will continue to [campaign to save weekend penalty rates](#) in 2017.

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