



MEDIA RELEASE

11 September 2014

Retailers' attempt to rob young workers of pay defeated

A peak retail employers' representative body has again failed in its attempt to deny 20-year-old workers increases in pay first awarded by the Fair Work Commission in March this year, with the Court today ruling in favour of retail workers.

The Full Federal Court today dismissed the National Retailers Association's second attempt to stop 20-year-olds being paid the full adult rate of pay.

The Fair Work Commission ruled in March this year that 20-year-old retail workers were being paid unfairly, and that the industry should begin the process of moving to pay these workers full adult rates. Prior to the FWC ruling, 20-year-olds were being paid 10 per cent less than their 21-year-old co-workers. The Fair Work Commission ruled that the move to fair rates of pay for 20-year-olds should occur in two phases – 95 per cent pay from 1 July 2014 before moving to 100 per cent pay on 1 July 2015.

Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association Secretary Joe de Bruyn said the Court's decision to dismiss the NRA's attempt to have the Fair Work Commission decision overturned is a great outcome for the country's younger workers.

"It was disappointing that the retailers continued to resist the decision of the Fair Work Commission to give wage increases to younger workers to properly reflect the contribution they make to their employer's business, but we are very pleased that the Court has today comprehensively upheld the original Fair Work Commission decision," Mr de Bruyn said.

"We know that 20-year-old retail workers deserve to be paid the full adult wage and it is fantastic that the Federal Court today agreed that the Fair Work Commission made no error in granting the SDA's original application.

"20-year-olds are adults doing the same job as their fellow adult co-workers. They deserve to be paid appropriately for their work.

"By launching this attack, the National Retailers' Association has shown a complete disregard for the younger workers keeping the retail industry running.

"Despite what the retail lobby groups say, paying 20-year-old retail workers the full adult rate will only have beneficial outcomes for employment in Australia.

"It's disappointing that our younger workers are having to weather these attacks from the retail lobby groups, but in the end we've had a good outcome.

"Our 20-year-old retail workers can now rest assured that they'll be paid fairly for the work they do."

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