



MEDIA RELEASE

**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Justice
Minister for Industrial Relations**

Thursday, December 4, 2008

CHRISTMAS CHEER MUST SPREAD TO WORKERS

NSW Minister for Industrial Relations John Hatzistergos today urged retailers to make sure the thousands of extra workers employed to cover the pre-Christmas trading period were paid fairly.

Mr Hatzistergos said with Christmas just around the corner, retailers were opening their doors for longer as they offered extended trading hours for the shopping convenience of their customers.

“This is a busy time with everyone buying gifts and extra supplies to cover the festive season,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“Many retailers will be employing additional casual staff or requiring their existing workers to cover the longer opening hours.

“It is important they meet all their pay obligations to their staff in line with their changing requirements.

“Employers need to ensure they pay the correct penalty rates, overtime and provide their staff with the appropriate meal and rest breaks they are entitled to.”

Mr Hatzistergos said inspectors from the NSW Office of Industrial Relations were visiting 13,000 workplaces across the state during 2008/09 to ensure businesses are competing fairly and complying with their obligations as an employer.

“Most employers want to do the right thing, but mistakes can happen if they are not fully informed,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“I would encourage any retailer who is unsure of their responsibilities or any worker who wants to check on the pay and entitlements they should be receiving to contact the Office of Industrial Relations on 131 628.

“Staff can provide information on correct rates of pay and penalties and any other entitlements that may apply.

“It is important that retailers pay correct wages in exchange for the hard work of their staff to make the pre-Christmas trading period a profitable one for them.”

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