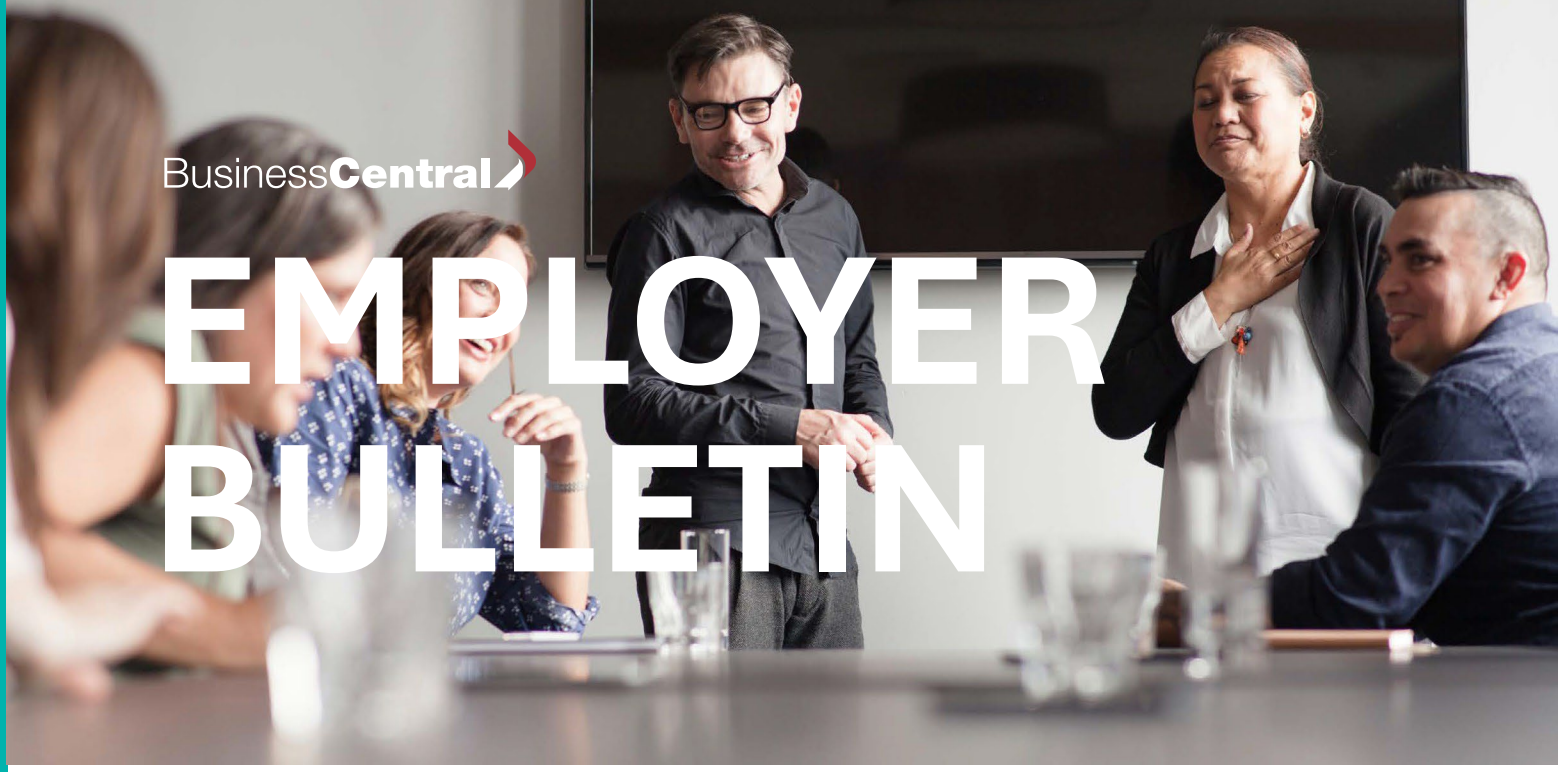


BusinessCentral

EMPLOYER BULLETIN

A Weekly News Digest for Employers

23 November 2026

EMPLOYMENT NEWS

NZ to attend APEC and East Asia Summit

New Zealand will be represented by Prime Minister Christopher Luxon and Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay at the APEC Leaders' Meeting in China and Foreign Minister Winston Peters at the East Asia Summit in Philippines.

Issues important to New Zealand's security and prosperity will be discussed at these high-level meetings.

The East Asia Summit is the region's premier forum for dialogue on political, strategic and economic issues and will be held in Manila on 16 and 17 November. The APEC Leaders' Meeting will be held in Shenzhen on 18 and 19 November, providing an opportunity to advocate for practical steps that make trade easier and less costly.

APEC economies purchase 75% of New Zealand's exports and this year's host, China, is New Zealand's largest trading partner.

To read further, please click here.

WorkSafe strengthens frontline capability and practical support to make work safer

WorkSafe's annual report 2025/26 has been published, highlighting progress in strengthening frontline inspectorate, improving practical guidance and taking a proportionate approach to enforcement.

"This year, we improved inspector capability, worked with industry to make guidance clearer and more useful, expanded our options for proportionate enforcement, and increased our oversight of authorised parties," says WorkSafe Chief Executive, Sharon Thompson.

In 2025/26 WorkSafe completed 12,880 workplace assessments, including 10,465 in its four priority sectors: agriculture, construction, forestry and manufacturing. It ran a quarterly sector focus programme to target high-risk sectors.

95% of surveyed workplaces that identified improvements following an assessment had already made the changes or were actively making them. 71% agreed that WorkSafe inspectors helped find practical ways to improve health and safety.

WorkSafe revised its guidance products and launched a new approved code of practice (ACOP) for forestry. It is progressing three further ACOPs for agriculture and residential construction.

WorkSafe issued 4,595 improvement notices and 1,081 prohibition notices to businesses. It also expanded alternatives to prosecution like enforceable undertakings and formal warnings. Nine businesses' enforceable undertakings resulted in $3.2 million in financial commitments, including $1.2 million directed to victims and $2 million in sector health and safety initiatives.

WorkSafe also improved its timeframes for authorisation processes for high-risk work, with 94% of authorisations and renewals decided and notified within agreed timeframes, up from 85% in 2024/25.

To read further, please click here.

WorkSafe visits find machinery safety not good enough at one in six food manufacturers

From July to September 2026, WorkSafe inspectors completed 780 proactive assessments at food manufacturers, from bakeries to meat processors, helping businesses manage their risks and highlighting gaps in machinery safety and hazardous substances management.

Manufacturing has more injuries than any other sector in New Zealand, with food manufacturing one of the three manufacturing subsectors, alongside wood production and metal fabrication, with high levels of work-related harm. In the new year, inspectors will be proactively visiting metal fabrication businesses across the country.

The visits aim to help businesses better understand and manage their health and safety risks and take practical steps to improve safety.

Machinery safety was the biggest issue, with guidance on machine guarding provided to 477 businesses, and 139 businesses (around one in six) required to make machinery safety improvements – mostly to guarding systems.

Alongside machinery safety, recordkeeping and storage of hazardous substances were also frequently found to need improvement – particularly missing inventories and safety data sheets – with improvements required at 99 businesses.

Guidance was provided to 88% of the businesses visited. Most businesses surveyed agreed WorkSafe's resources help them understand their obligations for machinery safety (90%) and for handling hazardous substances safely (89%).

To read further, please click here.

Human Rights Commission welcomes High Court finding that pay equity amendments discriminate against women

Te Kāhui Tika Tangata Human Rights Commission welcomes the High Court declaration that the Equal Pay Act 1972, as amended in 2025, is inconsistent with the right in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 to be free from discrimination on the basis of sex.

The Court found that the amendments have a disproportionate impact on women because pay equity claims are overwhelmingly brought by female-dominated workforces.

Unlike pay equality, which applies to the same or similar work, pay equity addresses the historic undervaluation of women-dominated occupations by comparing jobs that require similar skills, effort and responsibility.

"Women have the right to be free from discrimination, including discrimination that results in the undervaluation of work performed predominantly by women," Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner Professor Gail Pacheco said. "This outcome matters for the nurses, teachers, care and support workers and for everyone working in a female-dominated occupation."

The Court concluded that the amendments could not be justified under the Bill of Rights Act and that no evidence was presented to support the proposition that the previous system was not working as it should. It referred to the right to freedom from discrimination and on the Court's role in assessing whether limitations on rights are justified under the Bill of Rights Act.

The Court's declaration does not require the Government to change the law but triggers a process requiring Parliament to consider it and respond.

To read further, please click here.

Petrol and diesel prices rise in October

Petrol and diesel prices both increased in October 2026, compared with September 2026, according to figures released by Stats NZ.

Petrol prices were up 11.9%, while diesel prices were up 11.1%.

"Fuel prices rose for a third consecutive month in October 2026," prices and deflators spokesperson Jason Attewell said.

Domestic airfares rose 13.6% more in October 2026 than September 2026. This follows a 9.6% increase in September 2026. Annually they increased 33.5% between October 2025 and October 2026.

"The 33.5% annual increase in domestic airfares was the largest since the year ended April 2023," Attewell said.

Food prices increased 2.3% in the year ended October 2026, following a 2.4% rise in the year ended September 2026. The October 2026 prices all increased compared to October 2025. The largest contributor was the restaurant meals and ready-to-eat food group, up 3.4%, followed by the grocery food group, up 2.1% annually.

"Onion prices more than doubled in the year ended October 2026," Attewell said. "In October 2025, the average price for a kilogram of onions was $1.76. In October 2026 onions rose to $3.66 a kilogram."

To read further, please click here.

Business price indexes: September 2026 quarter

Business price indexes includes the producers price index (PPI), capital goods price index (CGPI), and farm expenses price index (FEPI).

All these indexes rose in the September 2026 quarter compared with the June 2026 quarter.

In the September 2026 quarter, prices received by producers of goods and services (outputs) increased 0.8% compared with the June 2026 quarter. Prices paid by producers of goods and services (inputs) increased 0.7% over the same period.

The largest output industry contributions were from sheep, beef cattle, and grain farming. The largest input industry contributions were from meat and meat product manufacturing, and electricity and gas supply.

To read further, please click here.

National population estimates: At 30 September 2026

National population estimates give the best available measure of the population, by age and sex, usually living in Aotearoa New Zealand.

At 30 September 2026, the estimated resident population of Aotearoa New Zealand was 5,372,400, split into 2,664,700 males and 2,707,600 females. The median age of males and females was 37.8 and 39.4 years respectively, and 38.6 years overall.

Over the last year (12 months ended September 2026), provisional estimates show New Zealand's population grew by 41,100 (0.8%). Estimated net migration (migrant arrivals minus migrant departures) was 22,600, 55% of total growth.

Within the last quarter (three months ended September 2026) this growth was by 15,000 (0.3%), and estimated net migration (migrant arrivals minus migrant departures) was 11,700.

To read further, please click here.

MBIE operation targets employment and immigration risks in Gisborne

Teams from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) last week carried out an operation in Gisborne to assess compliance with employment and immigration laws and identify risks of worker exploitation and workplace harm.

"Operation Teacake" involved visits to 36 workplaces across the hospitality, retail and horticulture sectors. Labour inspectors assessed compliance with minimum employment standards, including record-keeping requirements, employment agreements, minimum wage obligations, leave entitlements and wage deductions.

"Operations like this help us engage directly with employers and workers, assess compliance with employment and immigration requirements, and identify risks and emerging issues," Margaret Meafua, the Labour Inspectorate's Compliance Manager, Central, says.

"The information we collect helps us build a clearer picture of compliance risks and target future activity where it is needed most."

To read further, please click here.

Employment Relations Authority: Five Cases

Employer prescribed corrections on enforcing drug policies

Mr Brown worked for Alliance Group Ltd (Alliance) at its Mataura meat works from 1987, latterly as a butcher and A-grade slaughterer. He contested his dismissal by Alliance, which it based on his usage of prescribed medicinal cannabis violating its drug policies.

Mr Brown's safety-sensitive role involved slaughtering, tutoring workers, and reporting health, safety and hygiene issues. Around 2016 he suffered a serious workplace injury causing chronic pain and sleep problems. After prescribed analgesics, he began prescribed medicinal cannabis in 2022. In February 2023 he gave Alliance a GP certificate confirming prescribed THC/CBD drops. Alliance filed it but did not put in place coherent monitoring, medical assessment, support, or any process for managing possible impairment risk.

In July 2025, Mr Brown failed a random saliva drug test after again disclosing medicinal cannabis use. He completed a rehabilitation programme and signed a contract, though Alliance later accepted the programme targeted recreational drug use and served little purpose. Alliance issued a final written warning. Within subsequent tests, a new non-negative result came in on 27 January 2026. Although presented as random, Alliance accepted its testing was targeted because he was on a final warning. After producing the non-negative saliva result and declining a urine test, Mr Brown was suspended until producing a clear test on 29 January 2026.

At a meeting on 30 January 2026, Mr Brown explained his injury history, prescribed cannabis use, dose timing, belief he was not impaired, and willingness to stop using cannabis and discuss alternatives with his GP. His union said the test did not prove impairment, no supervisor had reported concerns, and Alliance's policy did not properly address prescription medication. After a brief adjournment, the decision maker deemed Alliance had to be consistent with earlier treatment of the failed drug tests and summarily dismissed him. Alliance emailed a dismissal letter that afternoon confirming this.

Mr Brown claimed unjustified dismissal and sought reinstatement, lost wages and compensation. Alliance maintained the dismissal was justified because he had failed a second drug test while subject to a final warning and worked in a safety-sensitive role, meaning it could no longer be satisfied that he was unimpaired and safe to work. It opposed reinstatement on the same health and safety grounds and later relied on a separate allegation of misconduct, based on video footage said to show Mr Brown pulling a chair from under a co-worker.

The Employment Relations Authority (the Authority) considered whether Mr Brown's conduct amounted to serious misconduct and whether summary dismissal was fair and reasonable under s103A of the Employment Relations Act 2000. It found significant procedural unfairness. Alliance's letter on the non-negative result was muddled, wrongly referred to illegal drugs despite the known prescription, and stipulated an unclear process. Its investigation focused almost entirely on testing documents. It did not review Mr Brown's file, properly consider his earlier disclosure, seek medical information, assess impairment signs, speak to co-workers, or explore alternatives such as medical assessment, adjusted medication, or monitored return.

The meeting moved too quickly to an outcome and Alliance failed to follow its own checklist requiring feedback on a proposed decision. Although drug testing served a legitimate safety purpose, the process was rushed and inadequate in the circumstances.

Substantively, the Authority held that a second non-negative test while on a final warning did not automatically establish serious misconduct. Mr Brown had disclosed his prescribed medication, there was indeed no evidence of impairment at work, and Alliance had not shown he deliberately took medication knowing it would cause a positive result. He was not treating prescription status as a complete defence; his point was that Alliance's policy did not coherently accommodate disclosed medicinal cannabis use. Referring to Australian decisions, the Authority said drug policies may be legitimate, but zero tolerance has limits and individual circumstances must be assessed in good faith. Serious misconduct was not objectively established, and the dismissal was unjustified.

On reinstatement, Alliance argued unresolved cannabis-related risks made return unsafe and daily testing impractical. It also relied on the alleged misconduct. The Authority found no subsequently discovered misconduct issue because Alliance knew enough before dismissal but did not investigate it or put it to Mr Brown. It declined Alliance's request to permit a later disciplinary investigation. Mr Brown's former position remained unfilled, his work history was strong, and he was willing to undergo occupational health assessment. Reinstatement was practicable and reasonable.

Alliance was ordered to permanently reinstate Mr Brown to his former position and seniority and place him back on payroll from 23 August 2026 at the wage he would have earned, but for dismissal. Before active duties, he was to undergo specialist occupational health assessment focused on pain management, Alliance's safety concerns, and supportive reintegration. Alliance was also ordered to pay $25,000 compensation and lost wages from 30 January to 29 July 2026.

***Brown v Alliance Group Ltd* [[2026] NZERA 569; 20/08/26; D Beck]**

Employee's behaviour nullified all his remedies, but he was still entitled to costs

In April 2026, the Employment Relations Authority (the Authority) found that Mr Gorrett had been unjustifiably dismissed by Skibo Ltd (Skibo). However, it considered a 100 percent reduction in remedies was warranted, finding that Mr Gorrett's conduct was not only blameworthy but had wholly contributed to the situation giving rise to his dismissal. The Authority concluded that any award of remedies would be inconsistent with its statutory duty to act according to equity and good conscience.

The Authority reserved the issue of costs and encouraged the parties to resolve that matter themselves. The parties did not reach resolution, so Mr Gorrett applied to the Authority for a costs determination. He sought $2,250 as a contribution to his actual legal costs. This amount reflected half of the Authority's daily tariff of $4,500, because the investigation meeting had lasted half a day. Skibo submitted that each party should meet its own costs.

Costs are discretionary but generally follow how events and the associated expenses fall. The starting point is the notional daily tariff, which may be adjusted where relevant factors justify an

increase or decrease. Costs awards in the Authority are usually modest, and costs are not to be used as punishment, although unnecessary conduct that increases costs may be taken into account.

Although the earlier determination had found Mr Gorrett's conduct blameworthy and found that it wholly contributed to the situation leading to his dismissal, the Authority said it would not be appropriate to take that same conduct into account again when assessing costs. It also said it would be wrong in principle to deny costs to an employee who had been unjustifiably dismissed simply because there had also been a substantial finding of contribution.

The Authority therefore found that Mr Gorrett was entitled to a contribution to his legal costs of $2,250 and the filing fee of $71.55.

Gorrett v Skibo Ltd [[2026] NZERA 387; 18/06/26; S Greening]

Struggle with shortfall in funding must not be followed by shortfall in process

Ms Hull was engaged by Sleaktek Ltd (Sleaktek) from October 2022 and became chief executive of its start-up business developing a waterproof biodegradable coating. Mr Lawrence was sole director. As the company encountered financial difficulties, their relationship deteriorated, ultimately leading to Ms Hull's dismissal and subsequent personal grievance.

Ms Hull worked for periods without pay while funding was limited, but began receiving her pay after helping secure further funding. Her role included fundraising, management, board advice, officer oversight, financial performance, programmes, strategy and ESG culture.

In 2023 and early 2024, Sleaktek's funding relied on loans, grants and prospective investment. Investor Mr Craig loaned $150,000 and provided mentoring. After positive product testing, the company pursued further investment. In March 2024, Mr Lawrence sent messages saying he had resigned as director, although he remained registered. His wife, Mrs Lawrence, became more involved instead, with discussions between all involved parties across the business about possible capitalisation tables.

By April 2024, Sleaktek was short of cash. Mrs Lawrence said operations needed to pause, but investment efforts continued. Ms Hull proposed reducing or deferring salary for equity. Mr Lawrence then directed that she not be paid. Meanwhile, at Mrs Lawrence's request, Ms Hull texted Mr Craig seeking confirmation he would not call in his loan; he confirmed he would not do so before June 2025. Mr Lawrence later called this blackmail. On 17 April 2024, despite possible funding, Mr Lawrence said Sleaktek needed restructuring because he wanted Ms Hull "out" and did not trust her.

Sleaktek proposed disestablishing Ms Hull's role because it risked trading while insolvent. Sleaktek rejected her appeal for information, saying she already possessed it as CEO. After mediation failed, her email access was removed and she raised personal grievances.

On 7 June 2024, Sleaktek alleged serious misconduct without particularising the breaches. On 11 June 2024, it terminated her employment immediately, referring to redundancy and alleged misconduct that it said would have justified dismissal had she still been employed.

The respondents denied liability for the personal grievances Ms Hull raised. They also made a counterclaim, alleging threats, blackmail, failure to raise funds, a hostile takeover attempt and other misconduct. They sought damages, expenses, return of gifted shares and costs.

The Employment Relations Authority (the Authority) accepted there was sufficient financial information to consider restructuring, but found Sleaktek did not consult fairly. Ms Hull was not given a reason alternative options were dropped, which included funding from expected sources like grants or proposed figures from the investors, or her own proposal to reduce her salary. The 17 April 2024 meeting was not genuine consultation. Mr Lawrence's comments showed the outcome was predetermined and affected by his adverse view of Ms Hull. The redundancy dismissal was unjustified. Sleaktek's later claim that employment ended on 20 March 2024 was rejected because it continued treating Ms Hull as employed until 11 June 2024.

The Authority rejected the serious misconduct allegations. It received evidence that Ms Hull's action of making Mr Craig's investment an unsecured loan was done with Mr Lawrence and Mr Craig's consent. She was also accused of blackmailing Mr Lawrence into resigning, but this had also been approved by Mr Kanji and Mrs Lawrence. She had corresponded to a funder in a way characterised as a "begging email" but this was a realistic correspondence for the state they were in. Allegations that Ms Hull's only duty was fundraising, that she tried to take over Sleaktek through capitalisation discussions, or that she held a secret meeting with Mr Craig were also rejected. No misconduct or contribution was found. As a result, Sleaktek's counterclaims for damages, expenses and return of shares were dismissed.

Ms Hull was found to have experienced some disadvantages. The restructure process deprived her of a real opportunity to argue for alternatives, and Mr Lawrence unjustifiably criticised her integrity and competence in a non-private setting, including Sleaktek's lawyer and investors, instead of raising concerns privately and fairly.

The Authority awarded Ms Hull $45,000 compensation, made up of $35,000 for unjustified dismissal and $10,000 for unjustified disadvantage. It also awarded $50,000 gross for three months' lost remuneration, $41,815.36 gross for unpaid wages and holiday pay from 1 April to 11 June 2024, $16,615.38 gross for four weeks' notice plus holiday pay, and $27,692.28 gross for outstanding holiday pay on termination. Interest was ordered on the monetary awards from 11 June 2024 until payment.

Sleaktek was also ordered to pay a $7,000 penalty for deliberately failing to pay wages, with $5,000 to Ms Hull and $2,000 to the Crown. Mr Lawrence aided or abetted that breach by directing non-payment to her and was ordered to pay Ms Hull a $1,500 penalty.

The orders in Ms Hull's favour totalled $187,623.02, plus interest on specified amounts. The Authority also granted Ms Hull leave to recover unpaid wages and holiday pay from Mr Lawrence personally to the extent Sleaktek was unable to pay, finding that he was a person involved in the company's breach of employment standards.

Hull v Sleaktek Ltd [[2026] NZERA 579; 21/08/26; C English]

Employer's comprehensive disciplinary process is affirmed in sexual harassment case

Mr Gates worked for Fulton Hogan Ltd (Fulton Hogan) as a full-time traffic controller ("STMS") in Nelson from March 2020. It ended his employment for a finding of having committed sexual harassment. Mr Gates contested the dismissal and claimed he experienced disadvantage during his employment.

Mr Gates fell under the scope of disciplinary action in February 2023 when female employees complained about his alleged inappropriate sexual conduct and comments. Fulton Hogan advised him of the allegations and suspended him on full pay after consultation while it investigated. The disciplinary process resulted in a final warning. In June 2023, another employee, OTO, made further allegations. Fulton Hogan followed the same steps, which resulted in Mr Gates being summarily dismissed.

Mr Gates claimed unjustified disadvantage and unjustified dismissal arising from both suspensions, the first investigation and final written warning, and his summary dismissal. He sought reimbursement, lost benefits and compensation.

The Employment Relations Authority (the Authority) tested if Fulton Hogan had been a fair and reasonable employer, including whether Fulton Hogan sufficiently investigated, fairly raised concerns, gave Mr Gates reasonable opportunities to respond, and genuinely considered his explanations.

The first suspension was justified. Given the seriousness and sexual nature of the allegations, Fulton Hogan had proper grounds to protect the investigation. Mr Gates had the weekend to consider the proposed suspension and could have sought more time. The collective agreement allowed paid suspension, and for it the allegations were sufficiently summarised with him able to comment.

The first investigation and final warning were also justified. The Authority rejected claims that Mr Gates had inadequate input on the terms of reference, that a witness unfairly became a complainant, or that favourable evidence and possible motives were ignored. It found Ms McBreen, South Island HR manager, considered contrary evidence, gave Mr Gates and his lawyer the material and chances to respond, and reached conclusions open to a fair and reasonable employer. Mr Stobie, the regional manager, then fairly ran the disciplinary stage and issued a final written warning for three upheld allegations of different types of sexual harassment. Those findings and the warning were justified.

The Authority rejected Mr Gates' claim that suspension on full pay should have included overtime and night-shift earnings. He was guaranteed 40 hours, while overtime depended on business needs. Fulton Hogan met its obligation by paying 40 hours at his hourly rate during both suspensions.

The second suspension was justified as well, with Mr Gates again receiving full information before his 27 June 2023 meeting and not contesting the proposal. Mr Gates argued Fulton

Hogan, in its dismissal, relied on an unsafe warning and flawed second investigation. The Authority disagreed. Mr McCabe, HR manager, fairly investigated OTO's complaint by interviewing many involved parties, including those Mr Gates nominated or thought were involved in a set-up. He was entitled to prefer OTO's evidence based on their reliability. He found Mr Gates's behaviour across a number of instances caused her harm and made her feel unsafe.

In this round, Mr Stobie again fairly raised the disciplinary concerns, gave Mr Gates and his lawyer a reasonable opportunity to respond, and genuinely considered their responses. A fair and reasonable employer could find the conduct was sexual harassment under Fulton Hogan's code of conduct and, with the recent final warning, that it was serious misconduct warranting summary dismissal.

Fulton Hogan was found to have justifiably suspended Mr Gates twice on full pay, issued the final written warning and summarily dismissed him. Mr Gates' personal grievance claims were dismissed.

Gates v Fulton Hogan Ltd [[2026] NZERA 399; 23/06/26; P Cheyne]

Costly case of noncompliance

Between March and December 2024, the Labour Inspectorate received several complaints from employees of The Indian Taste Ltd (The Indian Taste) alleging serious minimum employment standard breaches. The Inspector sought to recover the arrears with interest, and unlawful premiums, and applied for personal liability against Mr Khandelwal if the company could not pay, plus penalties against him personally.

Mr Khandelwal had been The Indian Taste's sole director and shareholder during the period investigated and the Labour Inspector alleged he was personally involved in the breaches. It was then sold to Mr Singh on 17 April 2024, after the relevant events. Since the breaches did not occur under Mr Singh's direction, no penalties were sought against The Indian Taste itself.

The Labour Inspector alleged breaches of the Employment Relations Act 2000, Minimum Wage Act 1983, Holidays Act 2003 and Wages Protection Act 1983. These included inaccurate or incomplete wage, time, holiday and leave records; failure to include an accurate work description in one employment agreement; underpayment of minimum wages and contractual wages; unlawful deductions; non-payment of public holiday entitlements and alternative holidays; incorrect and late final holiday pay; and employees paying premiums.

The Employment Relations Authority (the Authority) accepted the Labour Inspector's evidence, finding her methodology clear and thorough. It found The Indian Taste failed to pay the applicable adult minimum wage let alone the recorded contractual wages of $29.66 per hour. Minimum wage arrears totalled $82,522.83, unlawful wage deductions totalled $26,588.97, public holiday arrears totalled $19,883.93, final holiday pay arrears totalled $10,287.79, and unlawful premiums totalled $60,245.63. The total arrears and premium reimbursement owed to seven complainants was $199,529.15.

The complainants described long undocumented hours, frequent underpayment, and payments demanded for immigration-related or job-security reasons. They were migrant workers dependent on visa sponsorship, had limited English and little understanding of New Zealand employment law. Several described fear, pressure, intimidation, debt, poor living conditions and emotional harm. The Authority agreed that Mr Khandelwal's conduct was serious and exploitative. It found the breaches were not isolated or accidental, but persistent, systemic, and deliberate, designed to obtain labour at an unlawful discount and to extract payments from vulnerable employees.

The Authority deemed Mr Khandelwal a person involved in the breaches. As the sole director and shareholder at the time, he was involved in recruitment, operations, finance and administration. The Authority therefore found that he could be personally liable for the employees' outstanding arrears if The Indian Taste could not pay.

The Labour Inspector sought $175,100 in penalties against Mr Khandelwal. The Authority found the breaches were grave, deliberate, and affected multiple vulnerable workers. There were no mitigating steps: Mr Khandelwal had denied responsibility and had not paid any arrears. The Authority accepted globalising the breaches into broad categories where appropriate, but treated the individual harm to employees as significant. It deducted 10% off its total in assessing proportionality to other cases, because of the serious exploitation and the amount unlawfully withheld.

The Authority ordered The Indian Taste to pay arrears and premium reimbursements for the following complainants: Ajay Kumar receiving $29,598.69 in arrears and $15,819.76 in premium reimbursement, respectively; Ajay Bhandari receiving $38,904.14 and $11,365.87; Pushpinder Kumar receiving $33,052.84 and $6,885.00; Pritam Halder $37,727.85 in wage; Anil Gairola $14,400 for his premium; Deepak Singh $4,200 in his premium; and Arvind Bartwal $7,575 in his premium. If The Indian Taste could not pay, leave was granted for recovery from Mr Khandelwal personally. Interest was ordered on the total of $199,529.15 from 3 March 2025 until payment. Mr Khandelwal was also ordered to pay penalties totalling $177,300, comprising $142,300 to the Crown and $35,000 to be divided equally among the seven complainants.

A Labour Inspector v The Indian Taste Ltd [[2026] NZERA 392; 19/06/26; M Piper]

Legislation

Note: Bills go through several stages before becoming an Act of Parliament: Introduction; First Reading; Referral to Select Committee; Select Committee Report, Consideration of Report; Committee Stage; Second Reading; Third Reading; and Royal Assent.

Bills open for submissions to select committee: Six Bills

References to Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi Amendment Bills

Building Amendment Bill

Local Government (Rates Capping) Amendment Bill

Taxation (Annual Rates for 2026-27, FBT Simplification, Foreign Investment Funds, and Remedial Measures) Bill

Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Claims Settlement Bill

Rēkohu Wharekauri Shared Redress Bill

There are currently no select committees following the dissolution of the 54th Parliament on 1 October 2026.

As a result, no closing date has been set on bills currently open for submissions. However, the public is encouraged to submit by 1 December 2026, so submissions are processed and readied in time for the next Parliament.

Overviews of bills and advice on how to make a select committee submission are available at: New Zealand Parliament - Make a submission

The Employer Bulletin is a weekly update on employment relations news and recently published legal decisions. It is EMA's policy to summarise cases that contain legal issues relevant to employers. The purpose of the Employer Bulletin is to provide and to promote best practice in employment relations. If you would like to provide feedback about the Employer Bulletin, contact: advice@ema.co.nz