

## Hyatt Muscat responds to Omani employee demands

**Louise Birchall, September 21st, 2011**

**The Grand Hyatt Muscat is among hotels in Oman that have improved staff working conditions in response to widespread industry strikes by Omani employees earlier this year.**

The hotel has reduced the working week from six days to five days, almost doubled service charge to AED 900 per employee per month, and reviewed annual holidays, according to general manager Christophe Franzen.

Franzen told *Hotelier Middle East* that the hotel was one of only two in Oman which wasn't forced to close due to disruption caused by Omani national employees protesting over working conditions at many of the country's hotels between March and April.



"We put an offer on the table before our staff struck," said Franzen.

"We've been lucky because we made a union three or four years ago with an elected committee of Omanis who keep communication open with staff, and 50% of my executive committee are local Omanis," he added.

The hotel is now in the process of hiring 15% of its current staff base of 460 employees to counteract the reduced working hours of existing employees.

It has also "marginally" increased room rates and reviewed the "efficiency" of operations to reduce the impact on the bottom line, according to the general manager.

A new labour law addressing issues raised by Omani staff was expected to be released by the Oman Ministry of Manpower in August, however, this is yet to happen.