

South Grafton abattoir operator faces court

17 August 2010

The Fair Work Ombudsman has launched a prosecution against the operator of the abattoir at South Grafton, in NSW.

Documents lodged in the Federal Court in Sydney allege that the company denied 11 of its employees more than \$60,000 when it terminated their employment.

Facing court over alleged contraventions of workplace laws is Ramsey Food Processing Pty Ltd and its director/company secretary Stuart Bruce Ramsey, who is also abattoir manager.

The Fair Work Ombudsman alleges that a number of staff were underpaid more than \$60,000 when their employment was terminated in November, 2008.

The underpayment allegedly comprises \$33,683 in severance payments, \$16,219 in accrued annual leave and \$10,234 wages owed in lieu of notice.

It is alleged that Mr Ramsey knowingly breached workplace laws when he directed his then personnel officer not to pay the workers their outstanding entitlements.

The Fair Work Ombudsman alleges that Ramsey Food Processing committed multiple breaches of workplace law and Mr Ramsey was involved in all of them.

The company faces a maximum penalty of \$33,000 per breach and Mr Ramsey a maximum penalty of \$6600 per breach.

Fair Work Ombudsman Executive Director Michael Campbell says a decision to prosecute was taken after a lengthy, complex investigation and the failure of the employer to rectify the underpayments.

"We treat allegations of deliberate withholding of employee entitlements very seriously," he said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has a range of user-friendly tools and resources for both employers and employees seeking advice or assistance.

Go to www.fwo.gov.au or contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 from 8am-6pm weekdays. For translations call 13 14 50.

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Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

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Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50

Hearing & speech assistance

Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

For TTY: 13 36 77. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

Speak & Listen: 1300 555 727. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

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