

Sydney company director faces court over alleged underpayment of staff

15 August 2011

The Fair Work Ombudsman is prosecuting the operator of a former Sydney printing company after five of his staff were allegedly underpaid more than \$55,000.

Facing court is Robert Michael Francis, who owned and ran a printing business on Hudson Street, Chippendale.

Documents lodged in the Federal Magistrates Court in Sydney allege the employees, who performed various print-production roles, were not paid several weeks of outstanding wages and their accrued annual leave entitlements when the business ceased operating in 2010.

Two employees were allegedly underpaid more than \$16,000 each. One of them had been working for the business for more than 20 years.

Fair Work inspectors became aware of the issue when the employees lodged complaints.

They have recovered some of the alleged underpayments through the General Employee Entitlements and Redundancy Scheme (GEERS).

The Fair Work Ombudsman was unable to prosecute Mr Francis' private company, Beaver Press Sales Pty Ltd, after it went into liquidation.

It is alleged that shortly after the appointment of liquidators to Beaver Press, Mr Francis commenced another printing business on the same premises through another company - Goodcrowd Integrated Print Communications Pty Limited – of which he is the sole director and majority owner.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has referred this matter to other regulatory agencies.

The decision to prosecute Mr Francis was made because of the significant amount involved and the employer's failure to rectify the matter.

The Fair Work Ombudsman alleges Mr Francis was involved in four contraventions of workplace laws. He faces maximum penalties of \$6600 per breach.

Employers or employees seeking assistance should contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit www.fairwork.gov.au.

A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50 and information on the website is translated into 27 different languages.

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Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

Need language help?

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

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