



FORMER CEO OF ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICE SENTENCED TO JAIL

Ms Selena Joan Lyons, the former chief executive officer of Riverina Medical and Dental Aboriginal Corporation (RivMed), has today been sentenced in the Wagga Wagga Local Court, New South Wales.

Ms Lyons was sentenced to 15 months' jail, nine months of which is to be served in full-time custody. She was also ordered to repay the \$24,187.25 she wrongfully claimed.

In handing down the sentence, Magistrate Kennedy commented that, 'Ms Lyons' offences amounted to \$24,187.25, every cent of which should have been spent on the local Aboriginal community. In terms of objective seriousness, it's in the lower range. But taking into account the importance of the organisation and the number of charges and the position of trust Ms Lyons held within the organisation—all that elevates the seriousness of her offence. Ms Lyons took little responsibility, continuing to blame others over whom she had authority.'

On 22 November 2017 Ms Lyons was found guilty of exploiting her position as CEO of RivMed on 24 occasions by authorising travel payments to herself to which she was not entitled. The payments occurred between October 2011 and April 2014.

The Acting Registrar, Mr Joe Mastrolembo, said, 'Ms Lyons was the CEO of an organisation with a mission to improve the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people residing in the Wagga Wagga area. Her sustained dishonesty over two and half years constituted a significant abuse of trust and authority.'

'Today's sentence leaves no doubt that it is unacceptable for a CEO to misuse funds meant for the most vulnerable in our community.'

The matter was prosecuted by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.

Background

In August 2016 Ms Lyons was charged with 28 counts of exploiting her position as CEO of RivMed, to authorise payments to herself to which she was not entitled. The charges were laid under section 265-25(3)(a) of the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*.

On 21 September 2016, Ms Lyons pleaded not guilty and the matter was heard by the Court in April, May and October 2017.

For further information about this case please see the Registrar's media releases of 22 November 2017 (MR1718-14) and 8 August 2016 (MR1617-04).

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