



FORMER ORANA MANAGER JAILED FOR FRAUD

Ms Sandra Gail Newman, a former director and manager of Orana Aboriginal Corporation, was today convicted and sentenced in the Dubbo District Court by Judge Lerve on two counts of fraud.

Ms Newman was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment, to be released on a two-year good behaviour bond, after serving five months in jail. Ms Newman was also ordered to repay an amount of \$67,776.85 to the Orana Aboriginal Corporation.

Between 1 November 2009 and 1 October 2010, Ms Newman made 80 unauthorised payments (totalling \$67,776.85) to herself from the corporation's funds. In her role as a director and officer of the corporation she also failed to act in good faith, and dishonestly used her position to gain a personal advantage.

Ms Newman pleaded guilty to the charges in the Dubbo Local Court earlier this year.

The charges were brought under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* and followed an investigation by the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Mr Anthony Beven.

Orana Aboriginal Corporation is based in Wellington in inland New South Wales at the junction of the Macquarie and Bell rivers. It provides training opportunities and employment services for Aboriginal people living in the area.

In his sentencing remarks, District Court Judge Lerve said that the actions of Ms Newman constituted 'a serious criminal fraud' and that 'no sentence other than custody' was appropriate.

The sentencing of Ms Newman is the latest decision in a series of court proceedings taken by the Registrar since December 2011 against senior staff of corporations that have not acted appropriately.

'Those in responsible roles in a corporation must always behave honestly and do what is in the best interests of the corporation. It is never acceptable to act in self-interest,' said Mr Beven. 'Today's sentence sends a strong message that I will hold to account those that do not live up to their responsibilities.'

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

Background

For further information see the Registrar's media release of 5 December 2012 (ORIC MR1213-21).

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