

Issue 66 of 2021 - 17 September

NSW CFMMEU OFFICIALS CHARGED WITH CORRUPTION OFFENCES

Members are advised that the NSW Trade Union Taskforce (a joint agency taskforce comprising members of the AFP and NSW Police) today charged NSW State Secretary Darren Greenfield and Assistant State Secretary Michael Greenfield with corruption offences as part of a long-running investigation into allegedly corrupt payments from builders to union office holders.

It will be alleged in court that they both solicited and accepted payments from the owner of a building company in exchange for preferential treatment from the union and access to building contracts.

The owner of a building company was charged on 18 November 2020 with six counts of giving a corrupting benefit, contrary to section 536 D(i) of the Fair Work Act 2009, and one count of attempt to deal with proceeds of crime of more than \$50,000, contrary to sections 11.1(i) and 400.5(i) of the Criminal Code (Cth).

The building company owner has entered guilty pleas in relation to the charges and is scheduled for a sentencing hearing on 24 September 2021 in the Downing Centre District Court.

A total of 10 search warrants were executed on premises in the Sydney suburbs of Bradbury, Caringbah South, Pyrmont, Liverpool, Rhodes, Fairfield East and Surry Hills in November 2020 as part of this investigation.

AFP Detective Superintendent Craig Bellis said this investigation was focussed on the alleged criminal conduct of individuals in the building industry.

“The construction industry is a key driver of both the State and Australian economies. As a major employer of people in NSW, it should operate free from unlawful influence and corrupt activity,” he said.

“The diligence and thorough nature in which this investigation was conducted demonstrates the gravity of the alleged offending. It also highlights the strong commitment of all agencies involved to remove corrupt actors from the industry and bring them before the courts.”

NSW Police Criminal Groups Squad Commander, Detective Superintendent Rob Critchlow, said the arrests followed a lengthy investigation examining allegations of corruption in the New South Wales building industry.

“The taskforce has uncovered a significant amount of evidence suggesting the two men arrested today benefited from illegal cash payments on more than one occasion in their positions as union officials.

“Irrespective of anyone’s job, corruption and corrupt activity will not be tolerated by policy and I encourage those who see it or know it is occurring, to come forward, “Det Supt Critchlow said.

Master Builders understands that Mr Darren Greenfield has been charged with four counts of receiving a corrupting benefit contrary to section 536(D)(2) of the Fair Work Act 2009. Mr Michael Greenfield has been charged with making a false declaration, contrary to section 25 of the Oaths Act 1900 (NSW) and two counts of receiving a corrupting benefit contrary to section 536(D)(2) of the Fair Work Act 2009.

The maximum penalty for these offences under the Fair Work Act is 10 years imprisonment or a \$1.11million fine, or both. The maximum penalty for the offence under the Oaths Act 1900 is five years imprisonment.

Master Builders also understand that both Mr Darren Greenfield and Mr Michael Greenfield are expected to face Sydney Central Local Court this afternoon.

The CFMMEU National Construction Secretary David Noonan released a Statement today regarding the above matter. A copy is attached for your information.

CFMEU

CONSTRUCTION

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STATEMENT - CFMEU National Construction Secretary Dave Noonan

Friday 17th September 2021

Australian Federal Police task force charge two officials from the CFMEU NSW construction division with criminal offences.

The union was aware that the Australian Federal & NSW Police task force has today charged two officials from the NSW CFMEU Construction division with criminal offences. It is important to note that these officials voluntarily attended the office of the task force to assist with their enquiry.

The two officials are State Secretary Darren Greenfield and Assistant State Secretary Michael Greenfield who both deny the allegations and will vehemently contest the charges.

The CFMEU construction division unequivocally support Darren and Mick and ask that like all Australians they be entitled to the presumption of innocence while the legal process takes its course.

It should be noted that this police task force exists as an outcome of the Heydon Trade Union Royal Commission and on three previous occasions charges laid against union officials after investigations by this same task force were **withdrawn** before trial.

This ongoing witch hunt for nothing but political gain has resulted in damage to the reputations of innocent people who have been victimised for doing their jobs and has caused their family's unwarranted distress.

We ask the media to bear this in mind when reporting these allegations and to not let this become a case of trial by media but instead allow the legal process to take its course. We will not make any further comments on the matter while it is in front of the courts.

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