

Thursday, May 12 2011

Fairfax to press ahead with outsourcing

Fairfax Media has announced it will press ahead with its plan to outsource its subediting work to Pagemasters, rejecting compromise proposals from staff.

In a meeting between the company and house committee members supported by Alliance representatives, Fairfax metros chief executive Jack Matthews said the company planned to move to the new production arrangements by July 1.

The plan will mean the loss of 82 full-time jobs at the company's major metropolitan mastheads, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *Sun-Herald*, *The Age* and *Sunday Age*. The job cuts will affect subeditors, graphics artists and designers across the four mastheads.

Management rejected a plan put forward by senior production staff which would have saved jobs and positioned the company for full integration across multiple news platforms.

The company could not spell out how the job losses will be broken up across the different categories or across the different papers beyond saying that the losses would be proportional across Sydney and Melbourne.

The company also would not spell out details of the redundancy process. The Alliance set out a list of concerns including how the payments would be assessed, how widely across the group redundancies would be called and the possibility of people transferring to Pagemasters.

Fairfax's plan to cut costs by axing its in-house production staff has met with a huge groundswell of opposition both within the company and from the general public. Yesterday staff handed the company's chairman, Roger Corbett, a petition of about 1,000 people calling for management to rethink the plan. A Facebook page calling for the company to reconsider its plans has gathered more than 900 fans in three days.

Staff will meet today at 4.30pm in Sydney and Melbourne to consider their next move.

For more information, please contact Jonathan Este 0402 850 611



Authorised by Christopher Warren, federal secretary

Web: <http://www.alliance.org.au> | Email: mail@alliance.org.au | Alliance Inquiry Desk: 1300 656 512