



Press Release from the Funeral Directors Association of NZ

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Sentencing a reminder to choose funeral home carefully

The sentencing of the owners of a funeral home that went into liquidation taking with it the deposits of 12 families is a further reminder of the need for people to choose funeral homes carefully, says the Funeral Directors Association of New Zealand.

Omega Funeral Services and Memorials, of Wainuiomata, went into liquidation in 2005 owing 12 families their deposits for pre-paid funerals. As a result, some families were forced to scramble to find cash to organise last-minute funerals. The former owners were sentenced last week to home detention and ordered to pay some reparation.

Funeral Directors Association (FDANZ) Chief Executive David Moger said it was great the case had been completed.

“It’s been a long process, but justice finally has been done.

“The actions of the owners reflected badly on the funeral industry at the time, even though they were not part of FDANZ, which represents the majority of funeral homes.

“It was reprehensible behaviour that breached the trust of families, some at very difficult times in their lives when they were vulnerable.”

Mr Moger says the sentencing is a reminder that families should choose a funeral director carefully.

“Beware of cowboys because they are not likely to be experienced or properly trained or have solid industry backing.

“Funeral homes that are members of FDANZ sign up to a strict Code of Ethics and Conduct, which covers behaviour and dealings with the public. They are also required to put all monies for pre-paid funeral plans into a special trust – the FDANZ Funeral Trust – which is administered by a group of trustees and chaired by an experienced investment professional who is independent of the industry.

“Our members are dedicated to serving the public at the most difficult times and are fully aware of their obligations under the Code.

“They can also guarantee their funeral directors and embalmers have been formally trained to strict industry standards.

“An example of their dedication is that when Omega Funeral Services failed, three local FDANZ funeral homes – Crofts, Gee & Hickton, and Harbour City – banded together to provide free services to the families left out of pocket. They convened a meeting and offered those who had lost money to contact them when they needed to, and they would take care of them.

“Several of those families have since done that and have received either a free funeral or considerable assistance with funerals, depending on their circumstances.

“That was above and beyond the call of duty but is typical of the attitude of truly dedicated funeral directors,” Mr Moger says.

Further information on FDANZ, its Code of Ethics and Conduct, the FDANZ Funeral Trust, and the list of registered and qualified funeral directors can be found on our website

www.fdanz.org.nz

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For further information contact David Moger 021 622 523



The Funeral Directors Association of New Zealand represents funeral directing companies that carry out the majority of funerals in New Zealand. They are a group of caring professionals who are committed to ensuring that the families they serve receive high-quality service. For more information, visit our website: www.fdanz.org.nz