



NEWS

Building Duo Jailed for Fraud

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Owners of a failed building company who committed fraud to try to save it were jailed yesterday despite a prosecution recommendation.

Judge Nick Samios ignored submissions for wholly suspended sentences and jailed one defendant for nearly three times what the Crown requested and the other defendant double.

The District Court in Brisbane heard Stephen Glen Black and Suzanne Margaret Sutton fraudulently obtained a licence for Designer Steel Homes, and when it hit financial trouble used other dishonest means in an effort to stave off receivership.

The court heard the company was hit by building supply shortages from the pre-GST building boom and the rush to get the Sydney Olympic facilities completed and went into liquidation with losses of about \$1.3 million.

Prosecutor Callum Cassidy, and barristers Chris Wilson (for Black) and John Fraser (for Sutton) had all made submissions for wholly suspended 12-to-18 month jail terms for both.

Black, 48, pleaded guilty to fraud, falsifying documents, forgery and uttering between November 1998, and May 2000. Sutton, 37, pleaded guilty to fraud and making a false statement.

Black was jailed for five years to be suspended after 15 months and Sutton for two years suspended after three months.

Mr Cassidy said Black gave the Queensland Building Services Authority a false document understating his company debts and forged a Justice of the Peace's name on invoices so he could get payments from the Queensland Housing Commission.

Source: The Courier Mail, 29 June 2004.