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## Unions to go to Fair Work Australia to oppose Fairfax Media sacking thousands of workers

Fairfax Media has breached its legal obligation to consult its workers, and failed to explain why it plans to sack thousands of workers, unions will tell a hearing in Fair Work Australia today.

ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver said workers represented by the MEAA, AMWU, ASU, CEPU and USU did not accept Fairfax's announcement this week it would cut about 1900 positions across all areas of its operations, including all metropolitan printing jobs.

The ACTU will today join the unions representing Fairfax employees, and argue that the company's decision is in breach of requirements it consult about major business changes, including redundancies.

"The company has not met its obligation to discuss the planned job cuts with staff before they went in and wielded their axe, which is in breach of their responsibilities," Mr Oliver said.

"We are extremely concerned that Fairfax failed to consult about the changes and the redundancies, and showed no respect for its workers," he said.

"The workers at Fairfax have many outstanding questions which we will seek to get answers to through the process in FWA today. The way Fairfax has gone about this is wrong."

Mr Oliver said he would also seek an urgent meeting between Fairfax CEO Greg Hywood and unions representing the workers.

"Fairfax must commit to consult with their staff from now on, and stop breaching their agreements," he said.

Mr Oliver said management must accept responsibility for the crisis Fairfax now finds itself in.

"Management is hoping everyone will believe that technology has changed and there's nothing they could have done to stop their planned redundancies, but we don't buy that for a minute. We want to see the full business case and the workers have a right to know what options the company has before we accept any redundancies.

"We don't accept unilateral decisions to slash jobs when they have an obligation to consult staff. The process of informing staff through the media is a disgrace.

"There is little doubt strong competition in the media marketplace presents challenges but slashing jobs is not a panacea.

Mr Oliver said he would also seek a meeting with Workplace Relations Minister Bill Shorten and Communications Minister Stephen Conroy to discuss the company's plans.

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