



Press Release

Offenders should not hide behind name suppression

According to the New Zealand Herald a prominent Waikato businessman caught sharing child porn with an undercover investigator in an online chatroom is now fighting to keep his identity secret.

The company director yesterday admitted a raft of child porn charges - including distributing objectionable images - after sharing computer files and passwords with the Department of Internal Affairs investigator.

A sentencing-indication hearing at Tauranga District Court yesterday heard how the man had turned to pornography to assist sexual difficulties, which led to an addiction.

He viewed the material both at work and on a personal laptop computer while his wife, who was unaware of her husband's secret activities, was not present.

Alan Bell, Director of child protection agency ECPAT Child ALERT says "Unless the safety of a child needs protecting there is no case for name suppression for those who choose to flout the law and support the illegal child sex abuse industry. This person knew he was doing wrong and hid his actions. He should have thought about the consequences before he offended."

Judge Rollo said "I don't believe any right-minded person anywhere on our planet would condone this sort of offending and what was involved in the production of these images. It would be described as universally wrong by any right-minded person."

"The defence argued that revealing the offenders identity might have a significant impact on his business" states Bell. "But what about the impact on the victims? Should this not be the paramount consideration? Children depicted on these illegal child pornography sites are real and often very young. Those who access them only serve to increase the demand and the need for more victims to be abused and exposed on the Internet."

Judge Rollo allowed interim suppression to continue and is expected to release a written decision before the man's sentencing in March.

Bell says "This case should send a message to other people considering accessing illegal child sex abuse sites. The Department of Internal Affairs and the Police are vigilant, highly skilled and dedicated to track these people down and prosecute them. Offenders should expect no favours and should be prepared to have their acts made public."

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ECPAT Child ALERT is a registered charitable trust working to prevent all forms of child sexual exploitation including prostitution, pornography and trafficking. (CC43653)