
Crime check charges

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Australian
23 August 2011

AUSTRALIA'S leading indigenous school allegedly engaged a north Queensland tourism identity to privately teach students at a remote cattle property when he had not been through required criminal background checks, a court has heard.

Gordon John Pringle, of Mossman, owner of Five Star Venues and the Australian Muster Experience outback tourism attraction, has been charged with two counts relating to operating a "regulated business" without a blue card.

Police will allege that between April 1 and May 21 last year, Mr Pringle was engaged by Wangetti, a campus of independent indigenous school Djarragun College, to provide "private teaching, coaching or tutoring" to students at a jackaroo camp.

However, police allege, Mr Pringle had not applied to the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian for himself or his four workers to be issued with blue cards.

Blue card screening involves a national criminal history check to assess previous offences, child protection prohibition orders and whether an applicant is a child sex offender.

Mr Pringle did not appear before Magistrate Raimund Heggie in the Mareeba Magistrates Court yesterday, when the matter was mentioned for the first time. Mr Pringle's solicitor, David Kempton, told the court by telephone that his client had "substantial commitments" and had only been "served late last week". Mr Kempton asked for the court to adjourn for one month, so he could make inquiries about the charges. Mr Pringle was not required to enter a plea and was granted bail.