

60 Minutes producer hires lawyer to fight Nine sacking

THE fallout from a scathing review into the 60 Minutes child snatch debacle has begun, with producer Stephen Rice hiring a top lawyer to fight his dismissal.

Video

Image



The scathing internal review into the kidnapping story, led by the founding 60 Minutes boss Gerald Stone, recommended "management censure, in the strongest terms, those most directly involved in the events". Source:Channel 9

FORMER 60 Minutes producer Stephen Rice has reportedly hired high-profile workplace lawyer John Laxon to fight his sacking by the Nine Network over a bungled Beirut child kidnapping mission.

Mr Rice was fired by the company on Friday and publicly named as the main person responsible for 60 Minutes' botched Beirut story involving Brisbane mother Sally Faulkner seeking to take her children back.

A close friend of Mr Rice has told *The Daily Telegraph* that his decision to hire a lawyer had come because he was angry at being sacked despite the fact an internal review recommended no staff member be singled out for dismissal.



60 Minutes journalist Tara Brown and producer Stephen Rice are mobbed by journalists as they arrive at Sydney International Airport. Picture: AAP Image/Dean Lewins Source:AAP

"They said right from the beginning no one was going to get the sack," the friend said.

Because of that, Mr Rice wasn't legally represented at the review and hadn't sought any legal advice.

The friend said being named by the network as the main person responsible for Beirut had damaged Mr Rice's career, reputation and his prospects of earning income.



Stephen Rice outside his Sydney home. Source:News Corp Australia

Mr Laxon would head negotiations with Nine over Mr Rice's termination.