



Members Alliance, which once rented in The Rocket in Robina, has collapsed with debts of around \$30 million. Picture: David Clark

News

# National finance firm Members Alliance collapses with debts of almost \$30 million

Jenny Rogers, Gold Coast Bulletin  
August 11, 2016 6:39am

NATIONAL financial services company Members Alliance has collapsed owing almost \$30 million to the tax office.

Members Alliance, previously headquartered in Robina's corporate power tower The Rocket, also owes \$741,000 in unpaid rent to the Gold Coast City Council.

At least 30 homeowners have been left with half-built houses as a result of the collapse.

Around 90 employees are owed about \$7 million in superannuation, around \$800,000 in entitlements is owed to staff of a labour hire firm and a number of trade creditors are out of pocket.

Members Alliance, headed by former high-flying director Richard John Marlborough, in 2013 moved in its 240 employees and took over five floors in The Rocket, previously occupied by defunct water retailer, Allconnex.

The *Gold Coast Bulletin* revealed earlier this year the company had for some months failed to pay council rent and was kicked out after being given a deadline for the then \$1 million owed in rent.

Members Alliance, which for some time continued to operate at a Varsity Lakes address, was offered \$350,000 as a financial incentive by the council to move into The Rocket and had rented the building until March 2019.

Jason Bettles and Raj Khatri, from Robina-based Worrells Solvency and Forensic Accountants, have been appointed liquidators and/or voluntary administrators of 18 companies which make up the Members Alliance business.



📷 The Rocket building at Robina where Members Alliance have been failing to pay rent. Photo: David Clark



📷 Jason Bettles.

Mr Bettles said the pair were called in by the directors and shareholders “when they realised they were never going to repay the debt”.

Mr Bettles said the largest debt, about \$29 million, was owed to the Australian Taxation Office.

He said the hefty ATO debt included interest and penalties after the amount increased when the business was unable to pay.

Of the \$29 million, around \$7 million is owed in superannuation.

Mr Bettles said at least 30 homeowners who had sought finance for homes built in Queensland, and NSW had been left with partially-built residences after the collapse.

“The houses are in those two states but the homeowners come from all over Australia,” he said.

He said around \$800,000 was owed in unpaid entitlements, including wages and annual leave, to the staff of a labour hire firm.

“The staff were terminated just prior to our appointment,” Mr Bettles said.

He said a Porsche Boxster worth around \$80,000 and a 4WD Mercedes driven by members of the Marlborough family were affected by the collapse.

“However, they are leased by a finance company and we believe the money owed is worth more than the cars,” Mr Bettles said.

Mr Bettles said determining where the money went would take some time due to the “sheer size” of the collapse and the 18 companies involved.

He said Worrells also had been hindered in obtaining information because much of the financial information had been held on a cloud server and the IT bill remained unpaid.