

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 04 JUNE 2021**

**RE: FORMER TIMBER COMPANY MANAGER GETS 12 YEARS FOR THEFT**

The Port Elizabeth Regional Court sentenced Morne Pretorius (38), former branch manager of a timber wholesale company to 12 years imprisonment for theft amounting to just over R1.4 million.

Pretorius pleaded guilty on 26 August 2020 at the Port Elizabeth Specialised Commercial Crimes Court.

He was employed by Supply Five Distribution Pty Ltd as the manager of their Gqeberha branch. His duties included managing sales, marketing, invoicing and stock control. Supply Five Distribution trades as wholesalers of timber products.

Between January and December 2018, Pretorius stole stock belonging to the company worth R1 479 521 and started his own business named Ubuntu Supply. He also stole and sold the Supply Five Distribution stock to the public in an attempt to finance his business.

The General Manager of Supply Five Distribution, Marlene Bradnick, testified in August 2020 that the theft had a crippling effect on the business and that the company was forced to close the Gqeberha branch. This led to the retrenchment of local employees, he added.

The matter was successfully prosecuted by Senior State Advocate Clint Jacobs.

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