



Fortescue launched raids

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Body

Andrew Forrest's **Fortescue** has launched secret raids on the homes and offices of directors of a green steel competitor in a move described by Federal Court judge John Logan as a potential "industrial-scale forensic debacle" amid claims of intellectual property theft.

Fortescue won court orders authorising the searches in May, targeting the offices of would-be green steel competitor Element Zero and the homes and computers of company directors - including former **Fortescue** chief scientist Bart Kolodziejczyk, long-term Andrew Forrest lieutenant Michael Masterman and former **Fortescue** staff member Bjorn Winther-Jensen.

Fortescue sought the co-called Anton Pillar orders after accusing all three men of taking **Fortescue**'s intellectual property with them when they quit the iron ore and would-be green energy giant, in what the mining giant describes as "industrial scale misuse" of their positions in the company.

A spokesman for Element Zero said on Thursday the claims were "spurious" and "entirely without merit".

Element Zero won the first round in the battle to prevent **Fortescue** from accessing the devices and documents on Wednesday, ahead of a further hearing into arguments to set aside the orders.

"Other affidavits â€¦ give pause for thought about whether, as the **Fortescue** parties have alleged, there was 'industrial scale misuse', or rather whether what occurred in the obtaining of the search orders, and the obtaining of material upon their execution, was what one might describe as an 'industrial-scale forensic debacle'," Justice Logan said in his decision. Suppression orders covering the case were only partially lifted by Justice Logan on Tuesday, but the case centres around allegations made by **Fortescue** that Element Zero directors used confidential **Fortescue** intellectual property about **Fortescue**'s green iron - carbon-dioxide free - technology to found their own company.

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