

Popular Heart FM presenter quits amidst bullying claim

According to the *Weekend Argus* (IOL) and the website *capetownetc.com*, Heart FM and Clarence Ford is set to part ways after a run-in with management.



Ford, who has been with the station for 24 years, and hosts the popular *MeTime* show on a Sunday as well as his weekday lunchtime programme, has said that bullying from management led to his decision to quit the station. He refers, in particular, to an incident in February, that he says “was a particularly bad one... where I had to draw the line”.

He told the *Weekend Argus* that the February experience related to an attempt to bully on a public platform. “And I was on the receiving end. And I don’t take to bullies very kindly. And I met the bully halfway in a language only bullies understand. And I expected the response would be, let’s just call it an emotionally intelligent response. And that is exactly what has brought us to this particular time.”

No truth to the claims

The station has said that there is no truth to his claims, adding that “it’s definitely not the reason for the departure of Clarence.”

Denver Apollus, the head of Radio Innovation has said that there was “absolutely no truth” to Ford’s claims of bullying.

"It's definitely not the reason for departure of Clarence." "I don't even engage much with Clarence. I don't know where the bullying comes from. He doesn't even engage with management much."

However according to IOL, "numerous staff members have indicated that there is a "toxic work environment" at Heart FM, with many too afraid to publicly speak out as they may be victimised by management".

Apollus also refuted the claims in the *Weekend Argus*. "Maybe there is an environment that exists that I am not aware of. There's a very specific culture at the office. It's a culture of family. And we drive people to hold each other accountable and some people subscribe to it, and some don't. I am extremely disappointed that people still feel there is a toxic environment. There is no toxic environment."

Ford has said that he has made peace with his departure from the station and is looking forward to his new future.

Sources: Weekend Argus and capetownetc.com

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