



# POLICE ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

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## Police Association condemn lax sentencing for repeat violent offenders

Violent offenders should not be provided with simultaneous suspended sentences as it sends the wrong message to the community and undermines the work of police.

In responding to the suspended sentences of the three men who were involved in two separate assaults of people from Asian backgrounds in recent months, Sergeant Randolph Wierenga said that his members felt let down by the courts and the community should expect more.

“The community and our members expect people who habitually offend by way of violent assaults to spend some time behind bars. We don’t expect free chance after free chance to re-offend to be given.

“How else will they learn if we continue to suspend their sentences?

“The Police Association’s members are continually troubled by what they see as inadequate sentencing from the courts.

“Our members are sick of fulfilling their role in relation to people who are a threat to our community, only for them to be put back on the streets without proper punishment – or in this case any real punishment at all.

“In this case, we have offenders who have committed breaches the community finds appalling. They’ve assaulted two people whom we should be welcoming to our community, and damaged the reputation of all Tasmanians.

“The problem here is the lack of response to these violent attacks. As police, we hold little hope for these attacks to somehow miraculously end without proper punishment being metered out by the courts and the strongest message being sent to the community.

“For our officers policing in Tasmania, without the support of the courts, our work is like Groundhog Day. We are forced to re-arrest violent offenders who have are essentially given the green light to continue re-offending because of the message they get from the courts.

“Because these individuals are not getting the message that violent assaults are not welcome in our community they continue re-offending. This isn’t news to the state’s police, but it is very frustrating,” said Sergeant Wierenga.

For more info please call Adrian Dodd on 0401-726-476