

Joshua Thompson, you plead guilty to unlawfully setting fire to property. A about 4.00 am on Monday 6 May 2019 you, in your car, drove another man to the place in York Street, in central Launceston, where the complainant's Nissan Navara dual cab utility was parked. You parked your car and walked across the road. As you and your companion reached the vehicle an object was thrown into the cabin which set the car on fire. You then returned to your car and drove away. The fire smouldered in the cabin for some time before taking hold and causing the utility to explode. The owner of a nearby property heard a loud bang. Tasmania fire Service attended and extinguished the fire.

The utility and its contents, which together were worth almost \$20,000, were destroyed. The owner was not insured and was left with a debt to his finance company of about \$13,000. You did this at the request of another person who thought that the owner of the car had stolen his girlfriend. You did not know the owner, but you owed this third person about \$600 for drugs and acted in return for the debt being cleared. You resisted the request for some time but eventually agreed.

You were 22 at the time. You have two convictions for alcohol related driving offences but you have not been in trouble for anything as serious as this. For many years you have been troubled by mental health problems and addiction. You have the support of your parents which whom you live with your sister, who suffers from a serious disability. You have ADHD, depression and generalised anxiety. You are on a variety of medications. Your treatment is managed by a general practitioner but you also receive advice from a psychiatrist and a psychologist. It is not suggested that your culpability for this crime is reduced. You have abused illicit drugs which, when you were 19, graduated to use of methylamphetamine. That is not mitigating. Crime driven by drug addiction is a significant community problem.

After you committed this crime you started to receive threats yourself, which made you worried about your parents and sister. Your involvement was eventually suggested by analysis of CCTV. You attended the police station with your father in November 2019. To your credit you admitted what you had done. You are still a relatively young man. It is in your favour that you have pleaded guilty at an early stage. I will make a compensation order so that, in addition to the punishment I impose, you will responsible for paying for the loss you caused. However it will be a long time before you are able to pay it off, if ever. I may only allow 28 days to pay. If you require longer you must enter into a repayment arrangement.

Your crime was planned and deliberate. It was serious not only because of the damage you did but because of the potential for danger to other persons and property. It is fortunate for you that no other damage was caused. Given the location of the vehicle when it was set alight the consequences could have been much worse. Even so, I have decided that actual imprisonment is not necessary. In my assessment, if your drug abuse and mental health can be adequately addressed, the risk you pose to the community is much reduced. In all the circumstances, a suspended sentence combined with supervision, is the appropriate response. I would have given you community service as well but you have been assessed as unsuitable because of your current illicit drug use. Instead, you will be required to complete programs related to your addiction. You should understand that if you commit any other offences which are punishable by imprisonment while the suspended sentence is in force, it is almost inevitable that you will have to serve the prison sentence.

Joshua Thompson, you are convicted. I make a compensation order in favour of Graeyme Leerson in the sum of \$19,620. I may only allow 28 days to pay that sum, although you may apply to enter into a repayment arrangement. You are sentenced to imprisonment for eight months, wholly suspended for two years from today. It is a condition of that order that while it is in force you do not commit any offence punishable by imprisonment. If you breach that condition then a court must order that you serve that term unless it is unjust. In addition, I make a community corrections order for a period of two years from today. The core conditions of that order will be specified in the order you will be given and include that you not commit an offence punishable by imprisonment, that you report to and comply with the directions of a probation officer, and that you must not leave Tasmania without permission and that you must notify of any change of address. It is a condition that within two working days of today you report to a probation officer. I impose special conditions that you must, within the operational period of the order:

- (a) attend educational and other programs as directed a probation officer;
- (b) submit to the supervision of a probation officer as required by the probation officer;
- (c) undergo assessment and treatment for drug dependency as directed by a probation officer;
- (d) submit to testing for drug use as directed by a probation officer;
- (e) undergo assessment and treatment for alcohol dependency as directed by a probation officer;
- (f) submit to testing for alcohol use as directed by a probation officer;
- (g) submit to medical, psychological or psychiatric assessment or treatment as directed by a probation officer.

If you breach any of those conditions you may be brought back to court and re-sentenced.