

Warren Leigh Farrow, you have pleaded guilty receiving stolen property. The unusual thing about this case is that you committed this crime a bit over 17 years ago, when you were 28. You are now 45. This all started when you went fishing on a day in September 2002. Near the fishing spot there was a very large quantity of aluminium items that had been stolen from a power station at Wayatinah. There is no suggestion that you had any involvement in the theft. You and your fishing companion found this stolen property. There were three things you could have done. You could have reported it to the police. That would have been the best thing to do, but you were under no obligation to do that. You could have left it there, but you took the third option, and you decided to try to make some money by selling some of it for scrap. So, you and your mate loaded some into the boot of a vehicle and onto a trailer. Now, technically speaking, that means that you took possession of all of the stolen property that was there, not just the stuff that you took in the boot and the trailer. So that means that, as far as the law is concerned, you had possession of stolen property that was worth something like \$137,000. I am not going to impose a serious penalty by any means. I have just mentioned that technicality.

You and your friend took some of the aluminium to one recycling centre, and then a second, but, at both places, the staff refused to take it because it seemed to have been stolen. So, you and your friend took it back, and left all the aluminium that you had transported back near your fishing spot. One of the people from one of the recycling centres had taken the registration number of your friend's car. The police paid him a visit. You heard about it, and, at that point, you did the right thing. You went and saw the police, when you did not have to. You confessed to what had happened, and you took them to all the stolen property. As a result, the Hydro Electric Commission got back everything that you had found. If you had not done that, they might not have got back \$137,000 worth of stolen property. In the end, there was only about \$3,000 worth missing.

As I said, when you did this, you were 28. The only significant prior conviction that you had was for something that you did when you were 18. You had been sentenced to community service for motor vehicle stealing. If this case had come before me in 2002, I would not have sent you to prison then. I would have made a community service order, and possibly placed you on probation, because you had been out of trouble for 10 years, and what you did was opportunistic, and in the end you did the right thing and were positively helpful.

You were charged in 2002. On the day that you were first meant to go to court, you failed to appear and a warrant was issued for your arrest. The police did not arrest you for over 17 years. Now, in that time, you have lived in Queensland and in Victoria. It is interesting to see your convictions in Queensland. You have mental health problems, and have had them, I think, all your adult life. You have had a drug problem, apparently for all your adult life, and that got you into trouble in Queensland and you spent three months in prison there in 2010. But that was 10 years ago, and you have not been in any significant trouble since then.

This is a stale charge. It is partly your fault that it is a stale charge. As I say, in 2002, I would have convicted you and ordered you to perform some community service. Because it is a stale charge, I am simply going to record a conviction. This should be on your record. It has taken over 17 years to get onto your record. I record a conviction. You are free to go.