

Jack Sadler is to be sentenced after having been found guilty by a jury of the murder of Jake Anderson-Brettner. It is my responsibility as the trial judge to make findings of fact for sentencing purposes but, in light of the issues at trial, the facts of which the jury was satisfied beyond reasonable doubt, are revealed by the verdict. Subject to the verdict, I may only make findings adverse to Mr Sadler if satisfied beyond reasonable doubt they have been proved.

The crime was committed on 15 August 2018 at the home in Dion Crescent, Riverside in which Mr Sadler then lived with his partner Gemma Clark. Mr Anderson-Brettner was aged 24. He arranged with Mr Sadler to meet at the house and arrived at around 7.30 pm. Soon afterwards he was taken into one of the smaller rooms of the house. It was the type of room usually used as a small bedroom or study, but before that day was used only to store Mr Sadler's shoes. For that reason it was referred to at trial as the shoe room. Once inside that room Mr Anderson-Brettner was shot at least three times with the 9mm Smith and Wesson self-loading pistol which belonged to Mr Sadler and which he kept at the house with a silencer attachment. Each of the three shots entered Mr Anderson-Brettner's upper torso. One shot entered through his back and, I am satisfied, was fired when Mr Anderson-Brettner was standing. Two of the shots caused damage to his heart which was rapidly fatal. One of the shots was fired when Mr Anderson-Brettner was lying on the ground. Taking account that he was shot from within the room, the number and location of the bullet wounds, and the evidence that one of the shots was fired when he was on the ground, there is no room for any doubt that Mr Anderson-Brettner was shot by someone who intended to kill him. For reasons which will become obvious it could not be determined whether he was also shot in the head.

The only substantial issue at trial was whether the jury was satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that Mr Anderson-Brettner was shot by Mr Sadler. The jury rejected Mr Sadler's claim that Mr Anderson-Brettner was shot by one of three Victorian drug dealers he did not identify, who he said had come to his home to meet with Mr Anderson-Brettner about a very large drug debt, but then left without trace.

I am satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that this was a planned, intentional, execution style killing. Mr Sadler arranged for Mr Anderson-Brettner to come to his home. In preparation for his arrival, Mr Sadler emptied the shoe room and lined the walls and floor with builders' plastic which Ms Clark had purchased at his request the day before. During the day before, and the day of, the murder Mr Sadler also had Ms Clark purchase bleach, firelighters, disposable gloves, disposable overalls, safety glasses, a saw, more gloves, cling wrap, vinegar, reusable bags, cayenne pepper and chilli powder. After the last shopping trip, around 6.45 pm, Mr Sadler asked Ms Clark to park away from the house so her presence would not be apparent to Mr Anderson-Brettner. Mr Sadler asked Ms Clark to wait in the main bedroom, with her dog, out of sight. That room was next to the shoe room. From that room she heard Mr Anderson-Brettner arrive. Not long afterwards she heard the two men enter the shoe room. She heard Mr Anderson-Brettner say words like "please man, don't", which I find were a plea for his life, and the sound of gunshots.

After Mr Anderson-Brettner was shot and killed, Mr Sadler dismembered and disposed of his body. I am satisfied that the plan for dismemberment and disposal of the body was part of Mr Sadler's plan to kill Mr Anderson-Brettner. After shooting Mr Anderson-Brettner, Mr Sadler involved Ms Clark in the events which followed, although no-one suggested that

she was part of the plan to kill him. Most of the items which she had purchased were used. I reject Mr Sadler's evidence that the purchase of plastic, gloves and disposable overalls, and the lining of the room with the plastic, were co-incidental events in readiness for the manufacture of MDMA tablets. The only evidence of the proposed manufacture came from Mr Sadler. There was no other evidence of the presence in the house of all of the materials and multiple items of equipment, including the very heavy pill press, and other paraphernalia he claimed were necessary. I believe Ms Clark when she said that she saw no such items in the house before the murder, and there was no plausible explanation of how they might have been removed afterwards. I also find that the other materials were purchased, on this occasion, in contemplation of the murder and disposal of evidence, although on other occasions such items had been used for different purposes.

The dismemberment of Mr Anderson-Brettner's body was a particularly gruesome exercise. Both arms were removed at the mid or upper section between the elbow and the shoulder. The right leg was removed at the upper thigh. The left leg was cut off at the knee. His head was removed at the junction of the neck and the shoulder but in such a manner that his lower jaw remained attached to the torso. Mr Sadler used, for the most part, a chopping implement, like an axe, and a knife. The nature of the injuries to Mr Anderson-Brettner's body discloses that the removal of his head and arms and legs was achieved in a most crude and violent manner, with ragged wounds and signs of chopping with the axe.

In the course of this terrible process, Mr Sadler wore gloves and one of the disposable suits. He asked Ms Clark to wait outside the door of the shoe room with large plastic garbage bags, one inside the other, as he handed out parts of Mr Anderson-Brettner's body into the bags she held open. How many pieces or bags there were cannot be determined. A mixture of the vinegar, baby oil, pepper and chilli powder was added for the purpose of disguising odour. Mr Anderson-Brettner's torso was wrapped in sheets and a mattress protector and loaded into the back of a four wheel drive vehicle which had been lined with plastic bags. With Ms Clark driving and Mr Sadler as passenger, the torso was driven to a location on a steep forested section of the Tasman Highway about 40 kilometres from Launceston. On the way they stopped to buy petrol and drinks and more garbage bags. Once at the site they removed the torso from the car and from its wrapping. Mr Sadler somehow propelled it down the steep bank to a point below the road where it was abandoned. After returning to Launceston Mr Sadler and Ms Clark looked on the internet to discover where roadside household rubbish disposal bins were to be removed the following morning. They then drove to places in and around Launceston to place the bags containing body parts into bins. By the time they arrived back at the Riverside house in the early hours of the following morning, Mr Anderson-Brettner's partner was there looking for him. Mr Sadler lied to her, saying that Mr Anderson-Brettner had not turned up at the house, and that he had also been out looking for him.

After removing and discarding Mr Anderson-Brettner's body, Mr Sadler and Ms Clark then set about destroying evidence of the murder. The process took at least the rest of that day. The materials in which the torso had been wrapped, clothing, the plastic and pieces of carpet, all of which must have carried a considerable amount of blood, were burned in the wood heater. The house was cleaned with bleach. The curtains and the rest of the carpet were removed from the shoe room, and either burned or put into garbage bags which were, over the course of the following evening, also driven around to be put in roadside rubbish removal bins. The pistol was vacuum packed and concealed in the garden close to the back of the house. Ammunition and the pistol silencer were taped into a piece of PVC pipe and hidden over the fence. Fired cartridge cases were put in a bag and into a drain at the front of the house, and the

key to Mr Anderson-Brettner's car was put into a different drain near one of the locations in which bags were put into roadside bins. As all of this was occurring, Mr Sadler spoke to police officers and others who were looking for Mr Anderson-Brettner and told more lies about his presence at the house the previous evening.

That Mr Anderson-Brettner had likely been harmed quickly became apparent to the investigating police. Ms Clark was interviewed and eventually told the police about what occurred. She took them to the location where the torso had been dumped, without which it would not likely have been found. Most regrettably, the delay meant that the parts of Mr Anderson-Brettner's body which were removed and disposed of were not discovered, despite the very extensive searches by the police, emergency services volunteers and Council staff. They were permanently lost.

I have taken time to summarise the events which followed the murder because they substantially aggravate what is already a crime in a most serious category of murder. Mr Anderson-Brettner was not only intentionally killed in a calculating and cruel way, but his body was then subjected to gross indignity. The way in which Mr Sadler mutilated and disposed of his body, especially given that his head and limbs were not recovered, greatly added to the emotional and psychological distress caused to Mr Anderson-Brettner's family and friends. The traumatic effect will likely last for the rest of their lives. I have heard and read statements from Mr Anderson-Brettner's partner, mother, father, sister and brother describing the terrible impact of his death. They are to be read with the required circumspection. However they describe the type of feelings which may be expected to follow the murder of a close family member. The overwhelming sentencing consideration is the Court's duty to uphold the law, and to reinforce the sanctity with which life is regarded in our society.

Mr Sadler was 26 when this crime was committed. He is now aged 29. He has no relevant prior convictions but he has no claim to be otherwise of good character. He gave evidence that he had been manufacturing and selling MDMA in large quantities since 2014. The evidence of the extent of his manufacturing and trafficking came only from him, although his involvement in the illicit drug trade is corroborated to some extent by Ms Clark's evidence of her observations since having been in a relationship with him, and the substantial quantity of drugs and money found in his car after the crime. His possession of a firearm of the type used to kill Mr Anderson-Brettner is at least partly linked to drug trafficking and for its use or threatened use in the course of that trade. I am not able to determine with certainty what motivated the crime. The evidence established that during the period leading up to the murder Mr Sadler was angry with Mr Anderson-Brettner despite them having previously been friends. I think it very likely that the disagreement arose from mutual dealings with illicit drugs. Mr Sadler claimed that Mr Anderson-Brettner had purchased MDMA from him for sale. He also claimed that Mr Anderson-Brettner owed a great deal of money to other men for the large scale supply of cocaine. I am satisfied that Mr Anderson-Brettner was involved in the sale of illicit drugs to some extent, but the nature and extent of his dealings cannot be determined. There was some evidence of him living beyond his otherwise modest income. Again, the description of the scale of Mr Anderson-Brettner's involvement came only from Mr Sadler, and is likely to have been fabricated or exaggerated to fit the fictional account he gave to the jury attributing the murder to drug dealers from interstate. There was also evidence of antagonism about a different and very small debt he owed to an associate of Mr Sadler, likely also to do with drugs. A planned killing motivated by financial or commercial reasons, especially a drug debt, is a serious murder whether the debt is big or small.

The murder is not accompanied by any mitigating circumstance. Mr Sadler is an intelligent and articulate man. His crime cannot be attributed to rage, passion or sudden impulse or other human frailty or deficit. Nothing has been advanced which suggests that fear, stress or pressure led him to act in a way which was out of character or an aberration. There was evidence that he was heavily using cocaine at the time but that does not mitigate the crime. The sentence is not to be increased because Mr Sadler exercised his right to trial, but he is not entitled to the mitigation a plea of guilty would have attracted because a lengthy and traumatic trial would have been avoided, and as an indication of the acceptance of responsibility and remorse. There is a singular absence of any expression or demonstration of remorse, and his conduct after the murder is a strong indication of the absence of remorse.

The maximum penalty for this crime is life imprisonment. Eligibility for parole is closely associated with the gravity of a sentence, and must be addressed even if a life sentence is imposed. The gravest penalty that could be imposed for murder is life imprisonment without eligibility for parole. In deciding whether to impose a life sentence, both the objective circumstances of the crime, and the circumstances of the offender are to be considered. For the reasons I have already stated, I regard the objective circumstances of this crime as involving a very high degree of seriousness. It was an intentional cold-blooded killing committed after pre-planning and preparation. Mr Anderson-Brettner realised, at least for a short time, his fate, and he was shot despite his pleas for mercy. Although his death would have been rapid, it was not immediate. The crime is very significantly aggravated by the mutilation and disposal of the body, all of which is to be regarded by members of a civilised society as abhorrent. It could only have been to hide the crime although, I can think of no reason why it was considered necessary at all. It was suggested at trial that the idea came from the lyrics of a rap song, but it matters not. The fact that Mr Sadler was capable of such conduct, wherever the influence or idea came from, suggests that he presents a future risk.

Despite the gravity of the crime I have decided to not impose a life sentence. Mr Sadler was and still is a relatively young man. He has no relevant prior convictions. Although for a crime of this gravity that consideration carries limited weight, there is no other evidence or indication suggesting a general demonstrated propensity for violence, or that he presents the type of broad ranging and long term societal risk which requires a life sentence. Nor do I consider that he is incapable of rehabilitation or that he does not have the capacity to lead a productive and responsible life. However a very long term of imprisonment must be imposed. The sentence must serve to administer the punishment which Mr Sadler deserves, and protect the community from the risk he may pose. It must also vindicate the victim and sufficiently represent public condemnation of the intentional taking of a life and the factors which seriously aggravate this crime. The sentence must also serve to deter others from such heinous conduct. Eligibility for parole should only be permitted after Mr Sadler has served the minimum term of imprisonment required, taking into account all of the circumstances of the crime and the need for punishment, condemnation, prevention and deterrence. I take account of his age when he will become eligible to apply for parole. Whether he is released on parole at the expiration of the non-parole period will be a matter for the Parole Board. Parole may be refused or revoked. He has been in custody since his arrest on 18 August 2018.

Jack Harrison Vincent Sadler, you are convicted of murder. You are sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 32 years from 18 August 2018. I order that you not be eligible for parole until you have served 20 years of that sentence.