

STATE OF TASMANIA v JORDAN JOHN LAWRIE
COMMENTS ON PASSING SENTENCE

2 JULY 2021
PEARCE J

Jordan Lawrie, you plead guilty to robbery. At about 8 pm on 5 March 2021 you walked into a bottle shop adjacent to the TRC hotel in Launceston. You picked up a one litre bottle of Jim Beam and walked out without paying for it. When the shop attendant confronted you outside the store, you turned and began to attempt to punch him to his head. He managed to block most of the punches with his arms but was struck on his left shoulder. In the course of this the bottle was dropped and smashed on the ground. You and a person with you then walked off.

You were quickly identified as the offender from CCTV and arrested at your home a couple of hours later. You have been in custody since then although you have been serving a sentence for other crimes I will refer to shortly.

You are now aged almost 20. Your parents separated when you were young. You have the benefit of a loving and supportive mother and step-father with whom you live when not in custody. Not so with your father. You claim to have been exposed to his violence to both you and others. You are eligible for a disability support pension based on serious mental health difficulties and low intellectual functioning. Your education was disrupted by absences and you disengaged entirely in 2018. You have a history of problematic use of cannabis and then methylamphetamine which led to drug induced psychosis. You are diagnosed with schizophrenia with prominent paranoid symptoms but it is managed by anti-psychotic medication. In the community you have the support of the Community Forensic Mental Health Service, NDIS and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre.

You already have a troubling record for violent offending. You were sentenced to detention for a knifepoint robbery of a supermarket committed in March 2019. A separate detention order was made by a magistrate for offences committed during 2018 and 2019 including one count of wounding by stabbing a taxi driver in the neck, stealing, and other dishonesty, drug and firearm offences. Following your release you were fined for drug offences involving methylamphetamine committed at the end of 2019 and early 2020. You were fined for stealing alcohol from a retail outlet in July 2020. Perhaps most significantly, on 18 March 2020, while you were in custody at Risdon Prison, you assaulted and wounded another inmate. They were serious crimes. You attacked him in his cell by repeatedly punching him and stabbing him twice in the eye with a shiv. On 3 June 2021 you were sentenced by Marshall AJ to imprisonment for three years from November 2020. Six months was suspended for two years from your release. The result is that you are not eligible for parole until having served 15 months of that term. That is not a prior conviction for sentencing purposes, but you must have been on bail for those crimes when this crime was committed.

Although the crime committed in prison was related to your paranoid schizophrenia, this robbery was not. Rather, it was a violent and spontaneous reaction to being confronted about the stealing. The violence was not planned, but robberies like this are serious because of the potential effect on victims. Bottle shops are the type of business which are vulnerable to crimes involving dishonesty and violence and those employed in such businesses, and customers, are entitled to the protection of the law. In this case the victim declined to make a statement about any impact on him, and it is not suggested that he suffered any lasting physical injury, but that does not mean that he did not suffer an impact, or that in another case the impact may not have been profound.

It is in your favour that you quickly pleaded guilty. I must take into account that you are already subject to a lengthy term of imprisonment and that the total combined effect of the sentences must be considered while ensuring that the head sentence is an adequate reflection of the seriousness of this crime.

Jordan Lawrie, you are convicted. I make a compensation order in favour of Cellarbrations at the TRC Hotel in the sum of \$58.00. You are sentenced to imprisonment for nine months. I order that six months of that term be served concurrently with the term you are presently serving and that the balance of the term is to be cumulative. I do not intend to allow for parole and thus order that you are not eligible for parole in respect to the sentence. The intended result is that you serve an additional three months.