

The defendant Katie Maree Job, born 10 January 1991, has pleaded guilty to one count of causing grievous bodily harm. The complainant is Robert Lance Frederick Ransley, born 3 June 1978. At the time of the offence, the complainant and the defendant were friends and occasionally resided together.

On 13 December 2021, the defendant whilst driving with the complainant in his car, asked the complainant if she could use a mobile phone which she had been lending him. The complainant asked why the defendant wanted to use his phone and she became angry. The defendant picked up one of her high heeled shoes that was sitting in the floor well of the car and struck the complainant to his head with the toe of the shoe. The complainant pulled his vehicle over to the side of the road and attempted to get out of the car. In doing so, he dropped his phone which landed under the car and as he moved forward out of the seat in an attempt to retrieve the phone, the defendant struck him to the head with the heel of her shoe.

The complainant began crying as he wanted the defendant to stop. He looked up at the defendant. The defendant struck him a further three times near his left eye with the heel of her shoe. The second strike with the heel made contact with the complainant's left eye. The complainant heard a popping sound and, as a result, lost sight in his left eye. The complainant grabbed his mobile phone and ran down the street, bleeding from his head at the time. The defendant followed after the complainant and continued to ask him for the phone. Subsequently, the defendant and the complainant got back into the complainant's vehicle and the complainant drove the defendant to Cooley's Hotel, Moonah.

The complainant attended the Royal Hobart Hospital at about 5.30. He reported being assaulted with a stiletto heel. He was diagnosed with the following injuries:

- a) Blindness to the left eye.
- b) A severely comminuted/displaced fracture of the left orbital floor and medial wall of the eye.
- c) Damage to the inferior rectus muscle of the left eye.
- d) A large ocular haematoma of the left eye.
- e) A non-displaced fracture of the left nasal bone.
- f) Two small wounds to his scalp.

The complainant underwent surgery for his left eye, whereby the uveal tissue of the eye was repositioned and the damaged structures of the eye were repaired using sutures.

The wounds to his scalp were washed out and closed with stitches. The fractures to his eye and nose were managed with conservative treatment. He was discharged from hospital on 15 December 2021. He subsequently underwent surgery to remove his left eye and he is currently waiting, or was at the time of the last hearing, to have a prosthetic eye made and inserted.

On 28 February 2022, the complainant attended the Bridgewater Police Station and reported the matter to police. Ultimately, the defendant was charged and bailed to appear at the Hobart Magistrates Court. She has been in custody since 9 January 2023.

She has an extensive history of offending violently as a youth, and as an adult has been convicted of two counts of assaulting a police officer, for which she received a fine. She also received community service for assaulting a police officer and later received, as part of a global sentence with other offending, four months' imprisonment wholly suspended and community service hours on two counts of assaulting a police officer.

On 10 September 2015, she was convicted of one count of assault, and with other offences, received a partially suspended sentence. On 1 July 2016, she was again convicted of one count of assaulting a police officer, and again as part of a global sentence received an actual sentence of imprisonment. She was convicted of another common assault, and was sentenced to four months' imprisonment on that charge alone. After being convicted of two further counts of assaulting a police officer, she received a Drug Treatment Order but was later re-sentenced on the cancellation of that order on 17 August 2017 and received a 10 months' sentence of imprisonment.

I have heard a victim impact statement. The complainant does not sleep properly at night because his eye hurts and stings, and he suffers from depression and anxiety and finds it hard to go out in public because he fears that someone is going to hurt him.

The State notes that this crime had a significant impact on the complainant and has resulted in the complete permanent loss of his left eye. It also notes that the defendant's conduct occurred in a public place and was witnessed by a woman and her child, who became hysterical.

In mitigation it is put on the defendant's behalf that her prior history is indicative of her drug use and that her chaotic lifestyle is as a result of that. It is submitted that whilst it is difficult to make a submission that she is not ordinarily a violent person, she does present ordinarily, I am told, as a kind, polite and quiet woman. She loves animals and on occasions has tried to help young people by providing them with shelter and food. She can however easily become angry and she has intense emotional reactions over which she has little control.

I have a psychologist's report from Mr Damian Minehan who writes:

"Ms Job presents with historical trauma and significant personality dysfunction. Her presentation is suggestive of complex PTSD, a mental health condition that involves symptoms of classic PTSD, as well as difficulty with interpersonal relationships, a negative self-concept, and emotion regulation issues.

There is often a significant cross-over between complex trauma and borderline personality disorder. Ms Job also experiences significant levels of anxiety, describing the physiological and psychological symptoms of an anxiety response, often without a clearly defined trigger."

It is not, however, submitted that any of the Verdins principles are engaged.

It is also submitted that whilst the use of a weapon in such an attack is something that must be considered, it was also an opportunistic weapon. It was a high-heeled shoe that the defendant was wearing that day, and high-heeled shoes are something that she wears almost every day.

Apart from the defendant's plea of guilty and her remorse, there is little that can be said that is of any significance in mitigation. This was a vicious crime and it was continued after the complainant begged the defendant to stop. The complainant lost the sight of an eye. The

defendant is convicted and is sentenced to two years and six months imprisonment back dated to 9 January 2023. The defendant is not to be eligible for parole until she has served half of that sentence.