

Mr Causon pleaded guilty in the Magistrates Court to a charge of recklessly discharging a firearm and was committed to this Court for sentence. In this Court he has also pleaded guilty to five summary offences which I am dealing with under s 385A of the *Criminal Code*.

The charges relate to an incident on 1 July 2023. The complainant in this matter was Mr Causon's partner. They had been in an on-and-off relationship for about four years. They have a child, and the complainant is pregnant with their second child.

At about 10pm on 1 July the complainant's mother drove Mr Causon to the complainant's home. There was a police family violence order in place, and it prohibited him from going there. It was a 12-month order, and was due to expire three days later.

Mr Causon was drunk. He began crying while discussing their relationship. He and the complainant were in the lounge room. Their daughter was having a bath. Mr Causon became aggressive. The complainant phoned her mother to ask her to return and take Mr Causon away. She walked into the bathroom to check on the child while Mr Causon stayed in the lounge room. Mr Causon became more aggressive and threatened to shoot himself. As the complainant returned towards the lounge room she heard a very loud bang and saw a spark. She did not see a firearm, but she saw holes and debris in the ceiling above Mr Causon. The mother returned with her partner. A scuffle broke out between Mr Causon and the partner. The police were called. They arrested Mr Causon in a nearby street but did not recover a firearm at that stage.

Mr Causon has been in custody ever since. He was interviewed in the early hours of 2 July. He cooperated with the police and admitted that he had fired a 12 gauge shotgun through the roof, and that he was intoxicated. He said that he took the firearm with him when he left. He said that it had been in the backyard of the house and that he did not know who it belonged to. The police subsequently located the weapon, wrapped in a jumper, in a backyard near the complainant's home. It was found to be a 12 gauge sawn-off shotgun.

The summary charges to which Mr Causon has pleaded guilty are as follows:

- Possessing a firearm for which a firearms licence may not be issued.
- Possessing a shortened firearm.
- Breaching the police family violence order by entering the complainant's home.
- Breaching the police family violence order by damaging the ceiling of that property.
- Breaching the police family violence order by having possession of a firearm.

I have not been provided with a victim impact statement. However it is significant that the events in question occurred when there was a child in the house. She was then aged two years five months. She may or may not have heard raised voices. However she certainly would have heard the gun go off, and that must have been very frightening for her.

Mr Causon is 23 years old. He has numerous prior convictions, but none involving firearms or family violence. He has not been to prison before, but has been the recipient of some suspended sentences and has been ordered to perform community service a couple of times. On the day in question there was a suspended sentence in force in relation to him. On 1 July 2021 a judge

sentenced him to 8 months' imprisonment, wholly suspended on conditions which, amongst other things, required him not to commit any offence punishable by imprisonment for a period of 30 months. That suspended sentence related to charges of attempting to unlawfully set fire to property, unlawfully setting fire to property, burglary, stealing, computer related fraud, motor vehicle stealing, and attempted computer related fraud.

He had a difficult adolescence. He was brought up by his grandparents. He suffered from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. He was educated only to Grade 8. He offended a lot during his teens. His mother died when he was 17 and an older brother died as a result of a motor vehicle accident less than a year later. However he has had stable employment. There is no suggestion that he breached the police family violence order on any other occasion.

Mr Causon has had a problem with drug use, as well as mental health problems. There is no suggestion that he took the firearm to the property. I understand that he took possession of the firearm because he was thinking of shooting himself. I accept that he did not intend to discharge it, and therefore did not intend to frighten anybody or cause any damage.

Since this incident he has been the subject of a full non-contact family violence order. He is not able to speak to the complainant or their child. In the months that he has been in custody there have been a lot of lockdowns, but he has managed to undertake a drug and alcohol course.

He regrets what he did. He acknowledged to the police that he did the wrong thing. It counts in his favour that he pleaded guilty on his second appearance before a magistrate. He is keen to re-establish contact with the complainant. He will have the support of his family. He is willing to undertake appropriate courses in relation to his rehabilitation.

A probation officer has reported that he is considered unsuitable for court-ordered community service, but that he is suitable for a community correction order with conditions requiring a period of supervision and attendance at the EQUIPS Addiction Program. In the circumstances, I think the most appropriate course is to impose a partly suspended sentence of imprisonment, and to make the recommended order. I will backdate the sentence to commence on the date that Mr Causon was arrested.

Jordan Michael Causon, I convict you on all charges and sentence you to 10 months' imprisonment with effect from 1 July 2023. I suspend 5 months of this sentence on condition that you commit no offence punishable by imprisonment within 2 years after your release from prison. I make a community correction order, to operate for 12 months from your release from prison, with special conditions that (a) you must during that period submit to the supervision of a probation officer as required by the probation officer; and (b) you must attend, participate in, and complete the EQUIPS Addiction Program as directed by a probation officer. I order that these convictions be recorded on your criminal record as family violence matters. I order that the firearm seized by Tasmania Police be forfeited to the State of Tasmania.