

Ryan Penton, you plead guilty to trafficking in cocaine. You were jointly charged with Javed Dixon who also pleaded guilty. Not long before midnight on 12 May 2022 you were the only passenger in a car being driven by Mr Dixon when it was pulled over by the police near Longford. You had a small snap lock bag in your wallet which contained 1.08 grams of cocaine. In the centre console were five bags of cocaine. Three of the bags contained about an ounce, one bag contained half an ounce and the other bag contained 1.2 grams. In all there was a total of 97.3 grams. Sold in 1.0 gram deals the cocaine had a potential value which might have approached \$50,000. Sold in larger amounts the value was still between \$21,000 and \$27,000.

You were interviewed. At the time you were a cocaine user. You admitted using cocaine and possessing cocaine. You did not admit however that you and Mr Dixon had the larger bags for another purpose. Your plea of guilty to trafficking is accepted by the State on the basis that you did not sell or intend to sell the drug yourself. However, you knowingly assisted Mr Dixon, at the request of another person, to transport the drug from the south to the north of the State, knowing that it was to be handed over to someone else who intended to sell it. In return, you were going to be paid \$500.

You are now aged 34. Until you were apprehended on this occasion you had been a long term drug user. Your counsel informs me that you are now no longer using illicit drugs. You formed a new relationship with a person who has been a good influence on you and will not tolerate drug use or alcohol abuse. You have assumed a parenting role for her young child and, for reasons related to care of the child as between her and her former partner it is important that you behave well. You have full time employment in the mining industry for which you are subject, and will continue to be subject to frequent random drug tests. You have used this as an opportunity to make a clean start concerning illicit drug use and you recognise the personal and financial benefits which have resulted.

All the same, you were, at the time of this crime, of sufficient intelligence and insight to understand that those who become involved with the trade in illicit drugs should expect to be punished, for reasons which have been stated many times. That applies to couriers just as much as it does to those further up the chain because all play an important part in the criminal trade. Sentences must not only punish the offender but seek to deter others from becoming involved. For that reason a sentence of imprisonment is usually required. Although the nature and extent of the trafficking is not such as to be a serious example of the crime, a term of imprisonment is the appropriate sentence. However I will wholly suspend it. It is in your favour that you pleaded guilty. You have no prior convictions for trafficking or other drug related offending. I accept that you have taken steps to address the factors which put you in this situation. You should understand however that offenders generally only get one chance. It will be a condition of the sentence that you do not commit another offence punishable by imprisonment. If you breach that condition then the suspended sentence must be activated unless that is unjust.

Ryan Penton, you are convicted on the indictment. I make an order that you pay the costs of analysis of the illicit drug in the sum of \$492.50 and order that you pay that sum as part of the costs of the prosecutor. I order that the snaplock bags seized by the police on 12 May 2022 be forfeited to the State. You are sentenced to a term of imprisonment of six months. I wholly suspend that term for 18 months from today.