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AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE ASSOCIATION MEDIA RELEASE

ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND JUDICIARY FAILING THE ACT COMMUNITY

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) denounces the ACT Attorney-General for not ordering an independent review into bail and sentencing when there is a clear community expectation for him to do so.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said that the Attorney-General cannot continue to ignore the poor sentencing and bail standards the ACT judiciary is fostering, with evidence mounting daily that he has made a poor decision by ignoring calls for an independent review.

“The Canberra Times published an article titled, *‘Office of ACT Director of Public Prosecutions launches record number of appeals’*. The article states that ACT prosecutors are filing a record number of appeals in a bid to address sentences.

“It seems that the DPP prosecutors are doing their job, ACT Policing is doing their job, yet both are being let down by the Attorney-General and judiciary,” Mr Caruana said.

The AFPA strongly notes that at least half of the Crown appeals were successful; in total, the Crown was successful in 68 percent of all appeals to the ACT Court of Appeal.

Mr Caruana said that if 68 percent of the appeals were successful, then something is going seriously wrong at the front end, pointing at decisions made by the judiciary.

“In any other industry with a record number of original decisions being appealed — with a 68 percent success rate of those appeals — that workforce would and should be put under the microscope.

“Why isn’t the Attorney-General asking these questions as part of an independent review? If bail and judicial outcomes were as shipshape as he asserts, then an independent review would demonstrate that. The AFPA knows that he knows there are issues, and that they are beyond his capability to address.

“If the Attorney-General doesn’t want to be a leader and have the difficult conversations, then he must step aside. The ACT needs an Attorney-General who is accountable and transparent, and willing to put their own ideologies aside for the betterment of the entire ACT community.

“If he can’t put the community above his own ideologies, then he needs to resign. The Chief Minister Andrew Barr has very competent ministers in his own party, any of who would make an excellent Attorney-General.

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“This is just another example where the Attorney-General and the judiciary are putting the rights of offenders and convicted criminals above the right of the entire ACT community to feel safe” Mr Caruana said.

For comments:

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