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MEDIA RELEASE

FURTHER JUSTIFICATION FOR SENTENCING AND BAIL REVIEW

The AFPA and its membership pay respect to the families and friends of Claire Sankey and Susi Kpoyisiewicz

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) is dismayed that the young man convicted of killing Claire Sankey, aged 15 and Susi Kpoyisiewicz, aged 14, will only spend two years in jail.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said the sentence was further evidence that an in-depth independent review of the ACT sentencing and bail regime is urgently required.

"The young driver was a recidivist offender, already on bail for violent offences. He cruelly and callously took the life of two young teenagers, leaving them to die on the roadside. This is the same young person granted bail after he carjacked a taxi at knifepoint and failed to steal another car.

"The question that the judiciary and Attorney-General must answer is this: would these two young teenagers be alive today if the judiciary had previously refused this young man bail?

"This sentence implies that a teenager's life is now only worth a year in jail — an outrageous precedent. If the Attorney-General actually believes this sentence is aligned with community expectations in the ACT, he's sadly mistaken," Mr Caruana said.

The AFPA will continue to lobby for an in-depth independent review of bail and sentencing — outside of the scope of the long-awaited and delayed ACT Law and Sentencing Council.

Mr Caruana said that the evidence of alleged and convicted offenders being prioritised over victims was mounting.

"If you're a victim in Canberra, don't expect much justice. That is the sad reality of the system in the ACT.

"Only yesterday, an offender convicted of a 'coward punch' had his sentence suspended, despite the Special Magistrate saying the attack was appalling to watch and wholly inexcusable.

"This same Special Magistrate is also on the record saying that there needs to be significant deterrence of violent conduct by young men occurring in or near licensed drinking establishments. The inference from his statement is that court determinations should be the central part of this deterrence.

"How exactly is a suspended sentence a deterrent to others?

"The judiciary's statements in court spruik a tough stance on recidivist offending, but the outcomes they are facilitating are weak. The most important part of sentencing and bail is to ensure the community is safe **without qualification**," Mr Caruana said.

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