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Police attackers should face appropriate consequences

PRESS RELEASE

The Police Association of NSW (PANSW) today expressed frustration at the soft sentence given to a gang of four after they walked free last week.

The two men and two women were released on bonds and supervised orders after attacking police in Glen Innes in 2014, despite an Armidale District Court judge describing it as “utterly appalling behaviour towards police”.

The President of the Police Association, Scott Weber, said, “It was galling to learn these four were hugging and high-fiving one another outside Armidale Court.

“Two senior constables who were doing their job were set upon by this group, the female officer was punched up to ten times, her jumper ripped, and she had to have X-rays after her eye was swollen shut.

“She suffered from blurred vision for close to three weeks, her male colleague was also injured in the violent struggle. This was a sustained, violent attack, the male officer was kicked in the head as one of the offenders attempted to remove his gun.

“Once again violence against police has been treated in too light a manner.

“Police officers never know what they are going to face on a daily basis, however extremely serious attacks and assaults on officers are never justified.

“Assaults against officers are perpetrated when a minority fail to respect police and it is increasingly an unfortunate part of policing.

“Such offenders show no respect for themselves or anyone else and need to consider how they’re going to live their life because a lot of them are young.

“All police will get assaulted at some time, but it shouldn’t be accepted. Police are regular people, just doing a job and trying to get home safely to their families. They don’t look for conflict and don’t want to deal with it with actions that could hurt offenders or officers, but it’s the person’s behaviour that dictates how the matter is resolved.

“Police aren’t there as punching bags or spittoons – Can you imagine what it’s like for an officer to be spat on, or sprayed with blood, not knowing what infectious diseases an offender or drug addict may be carrying? They have to wait months to learn how their life, long-term health and families may be impacted.

“The very least that should occur is convicted offenders should expect to receive appropriate sentences in keeping with common sense and community expectations.”

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