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Police Association of NSW

**Media
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Gosford Magistrate's stance commended by Police Association

The Police Association of New South Wales has commended a strong message sent by a Magistrate in the Gosford Local Court this week of the seriousness of assaults on police officers.

"The strong statement made by Magistrate Alan Railton in denouncing such assaults is a stance that we don't hear enough of from the judiciary," says PANSW Vice-President Kevin Morton.

"The particular assault case this relates to saw police officers who attended a disturbance at the Boathouse Hotel, Patonga, set upon by a group of men, including a father and son.

"In the agreed facts of this case 29-year-old Joshua Bovis repeatedly punched an officer and pled guilty to sparking a brawl.

"In sentencing Bovis we note that the judge's remarks were that rather than imposing a non-custodial intensive corrections order (ICO) the severity of the offence warranted a custodial sentence of 12 months jail with a non-parole period of nine months.

"While we would argue that the offender is still getting off lightly, we welcome a move from defaulting to an even more light-handed ICO - as is seen all too often in such serious matters.

"For this judge to signal that it was the assault on police that steered him away from an ICO gives some hope that sentencing guidelines – which at the higher end of actual bodily harm on a police officer are meant to carry a minimum three years behind bars – are worth more than the paper they're written on.

"This gives us hope that more judges will also recognise that the undermining of respect for the police uniform will continue as long as light-handed sentencing continues".

Mr Morton said it was time to put an end to light-handed sentencing for assaults on police.

"In June for instance 21-year-old Jordan Khattar left court with a good behaviour bond after savagely biting a Police officer while being kicked out of a Bathurst pub. How is that just?"

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