



MEDIA RELEASE

10 June 2008

JUDGES' SENTENCING REMARKS AVAILABLE ONLINE

Sentencing remarks by Western Australian Supreme Court judges are now easily available on the Internet for members of the public to read in full.

Chief Justice Wayne Martin has announced that the complete explanation of reasons given by Judges during sentencing will be published on the Supreme Court's website at www.supremecourt.wa.gov.au from today.

"Public access to proceedings in our courts is a fundamental element of open justice," the Chief Justice said.

"The public has a very real and legitimate interest in knowing exactly what happens inside our courtrooms. Open justice provides a mechanism by which the courts can be held accountable to the community which they serve.

"In the past, the Courts and judicial officers have been the subject of attacks over the perceived inadequacy of sentencing in particular cases. It is my view that much of that criticism comes from a lack of information concerning the pertinent facts.

"We believe that by providing the full details on sentencing, people will gain a better appreciation of how that sentence was reached.

"People with an interest in a sentence can access information which is complete and accurate rather than be confined to a necessarily brief media report."

Sentencing remarks will be edited to take account of suppression orders, statutory prohibitions on the identification of victims of certain offences and the identification of young offenders.

The decision will usually be posted on the Supreme Court website within 48 hours of delivery in court and will remain online for 28 days.

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