

MEDIA RELEASE

CALL FOR STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN LIGHT OF TRAGIC INCIDENT

Bankstown, Sydney 5 October 2023. The case of Troy Safranko, a Sydney man who allegedly took the life of his own mother within a day of being released on bail, raises serious concerns. Justice Support Centre urgently calls on legislators to reconsider bail laws to ensure both the safety of victims of domestic and family violence and that perpetrators with mental health concerns are given the support they need.

Troy Safranko was refused bail repeatedly - by police on Thursday and by a Magistrate on Friday of last week. It was only on appeal to the Bail Court on Saturday that he was granted bail with no fixed address, on the condition that Troy provided an address to Police within 72 hours. This meant that when Troy took drastic actions against his mother, resulting in her death, the Police did not know his whereabouts. This incident occurred despite an apprehended domestic violence order (ADVO) in place that required Safranko to remain at least 100 metres away from his mother and not engage in any threatening behaviours towards her.

Melanie Noden, CEO of Justice Support Centre said, *"We need to look at this tragic event from two angles. Given we know that an attempted strangulation and assault are a strong indicator that the victim is at risk of a homicide¹, we should protect victims by holding the accused in custody. On the other hand, we also know that an accused with mental health vulnerabilities, who has no established residential address, deserves support from the system."*

We hold in great esteem the difficult job of Magistrates and Judges presiding over bail decisions – how do they balance the multitude of public interests that pull against each other? We question whether this incident was preventable and if so, whose responsibility it was to ensure its prevention. We question the sufficiency of our systems – our health system, our housing system, our justice system. We wonder about the prevalence of mental health conditions among inmates who are released on bail and then go on to perpetrate further crimes. These are not our questions alone and we call on our State and Federal governments to conduct an inquiry to answer these

¹ The NSW Domestic Violence Death Review Team's report (2015-2017) highlights a disturbing link between strangulation and domestic homicides, indicating that over a quarter of intimate partner homicides involve prior strangulation by the perpetrator.

questions to ensure that our health, housing, and justice systems work together for the safety of the community and of the perpetrators.

For now, we mourn the loss of a mother at the hands of her son. *"Our thoughts are with Ms. Safranko's loved ones during this unimaginably painful time"* says Melanie Noden. *"Incidents like this are a stark reminder and motivation for why we need to keep victims of domestic and family violence safe and at the same time support people with mental health concerns."*

About Justice Support Centre:

Justice Support Centre is a community organisation that for 35 years has provided free domestic violence services to keep women and children safe and legal services to achieve justice for people who could not otherwise afford it. In the last year we supported over 10,000 people across South Western Sydney, the Inner West, the City of Sydney and Waverley.

To find out more about what we do see <https://justicesupportcentre.org.au>.

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