

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF NEW ZEALAND
NELSON REGISTRY**

**I TE KŌTI MATUA O AOTEAROA
WHAKATŪ ROHE**

**CRI-2025-042-2
[2026] NZHC 2140**

THE KING

v

HAYDEN DONALD JASON TASKER

Hearing: 24 July 2026

Appearances: J M Webber and M A O'Donoghue for Crown
M Zintl, J D Lucas and S-J Jessop for Defendant

Date: 24 July 2026

SENTENCING REMARKS OF MANDER J

[1] Hayden Tasker, you are for sentence this morning for the murder of Senior Sergeant Lynley Fleming;¹ intentionally causing grievous bodily harm to Senior Sergeant Adam Ramsay;² and for other offences, including dangerous driving causing injury to Constable Jemma Radcliffe and to Tasman Cook.³

[2] The sentence for murder that will be imposed upon you will be life imprisonment. The only issue that arises is the length of the minimum period of

¹ Crimes Act 1961, ss 167 and 172—maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

² Section 188(1)—maximum sentence of 14 years' imprisonment.

³ Land Transport Act 1998, s 35(1)(b) and (2)—maximum sentence of three months' imprisonment or a fine not exceeding \$4,500; s 36(1)(b) and (2)—maximum sentence of five years' imprisonment or a fine not exceeding \$20,000; s 56(2) and (3)—maximum sentence of three months' imprisonment or a fine not exceeding \$4,500; and s 32(1)(a) and (3)—maximum sentence of three months' imprisonment or a fine not exceeding \$4,500.

imprisonment (what is called the MPI) that should be imposed to accompany that sentence.

[3] Before proceeding with my sentencing remarks, I wish to acknowledge the family, friends and colleagues of Senior Sergeant Fleming and Senior Sergeant Ramsay who are present today or watching this sentencing from another location. I extend my gratitude to those who have addressed me this morning and to all who have prepared statements for the care and courage that has gone into expressing the pain and intense grief you have been forced to bear.

[4] Lyn Fleming's death is an irreparable loss that cannot be mitigated by any sentence that I impose today. The Court's task this morning is to determine, on behalf of the community, the appropriate sentence to impose in accordance with the law in response to Mr Tasker's crimes. There is no sentence that I can impose which would be commensurate with the value of Lyn Fleming's life, nor could it be.

[5] It is necessary that I set out the factual narrative upon which I proceed to sentence you, Mr Tasker.

The facts

[6] In the early hours of New Year's Day 2025, you parked your vehicle in the Buxton Square car park in central Nelson. You were drinking wine that you had purchased earlier, having spent New Year's Eve driving around by yourself, ruminating about your unhappy personal circumstances and the loss of a relationship. As you subsequently admitted at interview, you were also harbouring feelings of anger towards the police.

[7] Because it was New Year's Eve there were numerous members of the public moving on foot in and around the car park and a toilet block in the centre of the square. There were also a number of police officers present, some of whom were attending a minor incident at the toilet block where a police vehicle was parked nearby.

[8] Being New Year's Eve, it had been a busy night for police, who had been out in force. Two of the most senior uniformed officers responsible for policing central

Nelson that night, Senior Sergeants Fleming and Ramsay, had been patrolling on foot supervising their officers. They were standing on a raised pedestrian crossing close to where another police car was positioned. Senior Sergeant Ramsay was talking through an open window to a constable sitting in the driver's seat. Senior Sergeant Fleming was standing next to him.

[9] In your parked position, you saw those two unknown officers standing and talking beside the patrol car. You decided to attack those officers with your vehicle. You started your car and, having deliberately left your headlights off, you manoeuvred your vehicle in order to be in a position where you could drive directly at them. As you admitted and the evidence proved, you then "planted it", pressing the car's accelerator flat to the floor, and sped as fast as you could at them. Neither officer had an opportunity to react and you made no attempt to brake or swerve, nor did you do so after striking them.

[10] Senior Sergeant Fleming was dragged by your vehicle and thrown forwards before coming to rest some 20 metres from the point of impact. She had sustained catastrophic, unsurvivable head injuries and later died in Nelson Hospital after her family had no choice but to cease life support.

[11] Senior Sergeant Ramsay was thrown high in the air and propelled a distance of about eight metres before landing beside the police car parked near the toilet block. He suffered serious injuries, including a dislocated shoulder, a deep gash to his head and very severe and painful abrasions. Miraculously, his injuries were not fatal.

[12] Despite side-swiping the police car next to which the two Senior Sergeants were standing, you continued driving your vehicle at speed towards the far end of the car park, where, after finally turning your headlights on, you circled around some parked cars and turned your vehicle back towards the toilet block. You deliberately rammed your car straight into the rear of the other patrol vehicle, around which there were a number of people who had gone to the assistance of Senior Sergeant Ramsay.

[13] Constable Radcliffe, who was sitting in the police car, was thrown forwards by the impact and was concussed as a result of striking her head. One of the members of

the public who had rushed to assist Senior Sergeant Ramsay as he lay beside the police car was Tasman Cook. As a result of you ramming the rear of the police vehicle, it was shunted forward with such force that she was struck by it and sustained multiple fractures of her forearm.

[14] You were apprehended at the scene and taken back to the Nelson Police Station. There you admitted, at least initially, that you had seen the two police officers; that you were angry; and that you were “aiming for the police”. Subsequently, you vaguely claimed your intention was “more to hit the car” and that you were intending to commit suicide by having the police chase you.

[15] At the beginning of your trial you pleaded guilty to dangerous driving and to the charges of dangerous driving causing injury to Constable Radcliffe and to Ms Cook.

[16] The Crown presented its case of murder on the basis that you either held the murderous intention of causing Senior Sergeant Fleming bodily injury which you knew was likely to cause death and were reckless as to whether death ensued or not.⁴ Alternatively, that you had driven dangerously for the purpose of an unlawful object which you knew was likely to cause death.⁵

[17] That approach to the issue of murderous intent was mirrored in the charges laid in respect of Senior Sergeant Ramsay, being a charge of intentionally causing him grievous bodily harm or,⁶ in the alternative, of causing him that type of harm with reckless disregard for the safety of others.⁷

[18] The jury found you guilty of intentionally causing Senior Sergeant Ramsay grievous bodily harm. That is telling because it demonstrates the jury was satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that your intention was to deliberately cause the officers grievous bodily harm, and that they were not struck as a byproduct of some unlawful

⁴ Crimes Act, s 167(b).

⁵ Section 167(d).

⁶ Section 188(1).

⁷ Section 188(2).

plan to crash into a police vehicle in order to initiate a suicidal police chase. They were your target.

[19] The jury's verdicts, which I consider to have been inevitable on the evidence called at trial, accord with my own assessment of the facts. You targeted both officers with the intention of striking them with your vehicle. Your actions in doing so were irrational and senseless, but they were, by design, motivated by anger at the police. Your unfathomable actions were grossly disproportionate to the source of your grievance, but that anger motivated a series of conscious decisions that involved you manoeuvring your vehicle from a parked position, turning it around, leaving your headlights off, and accelerating with great speed straight at the officers.

[20] The Crown did not present its case on the basis that you intended to take Senior Sergeant Fleming's life, nor did it need to do so to prove murder. You will be sentenced on the basis that you intended to cause Senior Sergeant Fleming (as you did Senior Sergeant Ramsay) grievous bodily harm, that you knew at the time you drove at the officers that death was likely to be caused, and that you were reckless as to whether that occurred or not—you did not care.

[21] Because of the murder of Senior Sergeant Fleming, the focus of the sentencing exercise is on the sentence to be imposed for murder. However, I do not overlook the significance of your offending against Constable Radcliffe and Ms Cook, nor, importantly, against Senior Sergeant Ramsay. That offending also bears on the sentence the Court must impose.

The impact of the offending

[22] It is trite to record that the effect of your offending has been enormous. The shattering consequences of Lyn Fleming's murder on her family, who have been left distraught and heartbroken by her sudden and arbitrary killing, cannot be adequately captured in my sentencing remarks, they only acknowledged. They have been left entirely bereft. Their loss is permanent. Their pain is enduring.

[23] The statements presented this morning and those that I have read speak of an experienced and decorated officer who was not just a respected colleague but an

admired leader and mentor. Moreover, Lyn Fleming was a deeply loved wife, mother, daughter, sister, aunt and soon-to-be grandmother whose family has been devastated by their loss and the circumstances of her death. Each of them continues to struggle with her absence. Nelson, too, mourns a person who gave so much to her community.

[24] Senior Sergeant Ramsay has deservedly been recognised for his resilience, but the trauma he has experienced and the distress caused to his family and colleagues cannot be ignored, nor the longer term physical and mental effects your offending has caused.

[25] Constable Radcliffe has spoken this morning not only of the physical injuries she sustained but the enduring psychological effects with which both she and her fellow officers must cope as a result of your offending.

[26] An unusual aspect of your offending is that it was both targeted and random. Targeted because the Senior Sergeants were the subject of your attack only because they were police officers who happened to attract your attention and for no other reason. Neither of them had any previous involvement with you, nor did you know them. You drove your vehicle at them because they were wearing a blue uniform and a police cap. That illustrates the randomness of them being your victims—they could have been any police officers going about their duties. I do not underestimate the anxiety and stress that fact causes other members of the New Zealand Police and their families—not just those who knew Senior Sergeant Fleming and were her Nelson colleagues, but all members of police throughout the country.

[27] Wider members of the community and other members of the police who were in Buxton Square were placed in jeopardy by your dangerous driving. In particular, the safety of those who had sought to assist the fallen officers was imperilled by your deliberate ramming of the second police vehicle. Tasman Cook did not hesitate to run forward to assist Senior Sergeant Ramsay. She suffered severe damage to her arm which required metal plates and screws to be inserted, and multiple surgeries. There have also been mental health consequences for her as a result of what she experienced which remain ongoing.

[28] I do not underestimate the traumatic effects on members of police and civilians alike who were present at the scene and sought to assist. The distress caused to those officers who were present was evident at the trial when they were required to recount what they had witnessed. I am sure Senior Sergeant Fleming would have been proud of the way they reacted at the time. In an endeavour to find some glimmer of light in this harrowing event, it was heartening how a number of young civilians, on their own initiative, stepped forward to assist, including Ms Cook.

Principles and purposes of sentencing

[29] As with the imposition of any sentence, I am required to have regard to the principles and purposes of the Sentencing Act [2002] (the Act). The sentence must seek to hold you accountable for your actions and to acknowledge the ongoing harm and loss you have caused to the victims of your offending, their families and the wider community.

[30] The sentence must also denounce your conduct and seek to achieve deterrence. The law attempts to provide some protection to members of police and thereby to the community by recognising that offending against a constable acting in the course of their duty is a grave aggravating factor. Attacks against police officers will carry severe consequences and will not be tolerated.

[31] As has been recognised by this Court previously, police men and women work for all members of society. Each day they undertake difficult, demanding and dangerous work. They stand in harm's way on behalf of others. When a police officer is killed, all of society is affected.⁸

Approach to sentence

[32] An offender who is convicted of murder must be sentenced to life imprisonment unless the circumstances of the offence and the offender would render such a sentence manifestly unjust.⁹ There is no suggestion that would be the case in

⁸ *R v Luff* HC Palmerson North S4/02, 18 September 2002, at [24]; and *R v Epiha* [2021] NZHC 3394 at [30].

⁹ Sentencing Act 2002, s 102(1).

the present circumstances. I must, therefore, consider the minimum period of imprisonment you should serve before being eligible to be considered for parole as a result of the imposition of that indeterminate sentence.¹⁰

[33] Section 104 of the Act is engaged. You murdered Senior Sergeant Fleming while she was acting in the course of her duty.¹¹ It follows that I must impose an MPI of at least 17 years unless it would be manifestly unjust to do so.¹²

Sentencings for the murder of police officers

[34] There have been a number of cases in which MPIs have been imposed in response to the murder of police officers. Prior to the introduction of s 104, the Court of Appeal in *R v Namana* upheld an MPI starting point of 18 years' imprisonment for an offender who stomped a police officer to death when he was attempting to apprehend him for a theft.¹³ That MPI was reduced by the Court of Appeal to one of 16 years, but only on account of the offender's early guilty plea that had not been recognised by the sentencing Judge. The 18-year MPI was otherwise acknowledged as being within range. In reaching that conclusion, the Court of Appeal emphasised the need to protect police officers in the discharge of their duties and that such offending required the sternest denunciation and the imposition of significant deterrent sentences.¹⁴

[35] *R v Luff*, which involved the fatal shooting of one police officer and the attempted murder of another by a 17-year-old offender, fell for consideration under s 104.¹⁵ The context of that offending involved the police intervening in a situation that developed into a siege. Primarily because of the offender's young age, his early guilty pleas, absence of previous convictions, remorse, and neglectful upbringing, an overall MPI of 20 years, which the sentencing Judge considered could otherwise be justified, was adjusted to one of 17 years.¹⁶

¹⁰ Section 103(1)(a).

¹¹ Section 104(1A)(g).

¹² Section 104(1).

¹³ *R v Namana* [2001] 2 NZLR 448 (CA).

¹⁴ At [30]–[31].

¹⁵ *R v Luff*, above n 8.

¹⁶ At [26]–[27].

[36] The most recent relevant case is *Epiha v R*, where the Court of Appeal upheld an adjusted MPI starting point of 29 and a half years' imprisonment in circumstances where the offender murdered a police officer by shooting him several times with a semi-automatic rifle and attempted to murder another officer by shooting him with the same weapon.¹⁷ The offender was being pursued by the constables. After he lost control of his vehicle and crashed, he got out of the car and fired repeated shots at the officers, one of whom was killed and the other struck by bullets while retreating.

[37] The sentencing Judge, after concluding that the appellant's intention was to kill the officers, adopted an MPI starting point of 24 years for the murder of the deceased constable which he uplifted by a further five years to reflect the attempt to murder the other officer and the injuring of a member of the public as a result of his dangerous driving. An additional six-month uplift was added to account for the offender's previous offending involving a firearm and the fact he was on parole at the time.¹⁸

[38] Notably, in upholding the MPI, the Court of Appeal commented upon the approach taken in *Luff*. It observed, as Mr Webber has alluded to this morning, that at the time that sentencing took place the Sentencing Act had only come into force some two and a half months earlier and was in all likelihood the first to engage s 104.¹⁹ The Court opined that modern sentencing practices and policies for murder were still evolving and that the length of sentence imposed on those convicted for murder had steadily increased since the commencement of the Act.²⁰

[39] In another case referred to by Mr Zintl, *R v Sila*, which did not involve the murder of a police officer but two young women fatally struck down by a car, s 104 was also engaged. The sentence of life imprisonment was accompanied by an MPI of 17 years.²¹ However, in dismissing an appeal against that sentence, the Court of Appeal, after remarking that the MPI was within range, commented that "if anything, it was at the low end of the range".²² That case was some 18 years ago now and well over two decades have passed since *Luff* and *Namana*.

¹⁷ *Epiha v R* [2022] NZCA 508.

¹⁸ *R v Epiha*, above n 8, at [43].

¹⁹ *Epiha v R*, above n 17, at [41].

²⁰ At [41].

²¹ *R v Sila* HC Christchurch CRI-2007-009-6120, 26 June 2008.

²² *R v Sila* [2009] NZCA 233 at [87].

Aggravating features

[40] As to the circumstances of this murder, I have already referred to the most significant central aggravating feature of your offending—that Senior Sergeant Fleming was a police officer on duty when she was killed. I have emphasised that you only attacked her because she was a police officer. It is notable, particularly in comparison with other cases involving the murder of officers, that Senior Sergeant Fleming was not killed because she was engaged in some type of confrontation with you. She was not attempting to apprehend you, or seeking to intervene to stop what you were doing. Nor were you trying to flee or get away from her. Senior Sergeant Fleming, like the other officers in the car park, was oblivious to your presence. Neither your victims nor you knew each other. Your targeting of persons anonymous to you simply because they were police officers is chilling.

[41] A second significant aggravating feature is that you used your vehicle as a deadly weapon. This was not a case where you became engaged in some form of manual assault or fracas that involved the resort to excessive force. A vehicle accelerating at speed that is directly aimed at a pedestrian cannot be other than described as a deadly weapon. A vehicle is an inherently dangerous thing. You used your motor vehicle as a lethal instrument and resorted to it in the same way a person may use a gun, or a knife, or any other weapon capable of inflicting death. The potential fatal consequences of so doing were just as foreseeable and would have been readily apparent to you.

[42] While to some degree overlapping with the prior aggravating feature, the two Senior Sergeants were in a particularly vulnerable position. You took steps to avoid attention being drawn to your approaching vehicle by initially driving at a slow speed with your headlights off as you got yourself into a position to charge the officers. Because of the way you quickly accelerated and the vehicle rapidly gained speed, they, unlike two pedestrians who fortunately were strolling towards where your car was coming from and were able to react, had no chance. By the time Senior Sergeant Fleming may have become aware of your oncoming vehicle—if, indeed, she did—it was far too late to react. Such was your intention.

[43] I consider there was a level of premeditation in what you did, in the sense you sat in your vehicle, observed the officers, and decided to run them over. It may have been an impulsive decision, but it was not reactionary, nor done in the heat of the moment, as were the situations in other cases. As I have already related, you consciously took a series of preparatory steps in the way you manoeuvred your car for the purposes of executing your plan, albeit one only very recently formulated while consuming alcohol and stewing on your personal difficulties and anger towards the police. To that extent, your actions were premeditated.

[44] There are no mitigating features arising from the circumstances of your commission of the offences.

Assessment

[45] I have compared your offending with other sentencing decisions involving the murder of police officers²³ and separately assessed your culpability taking into account the aggravating features of your offending and the policy that the presence of one of the s 104 factors will, in general, establish that a murder is sufficiently serious to justify an MPI of not less than 17 years. I am satisfied after also having regard to your own personal circumstances (which I will shortly review) that the appropriate MPI must be greater than 17 years.²⁴ No question of manifest injustice arises, nor is it suggested otherwise.

[46] I consider the appropriate starting point for the MPI that is required to accurately reflect your culpability for this murder would, standing by itself, be 20 years.²⁵ I have reached that conclusion by taking into account the requirements of the Act, and in particular the purposes of sentencing to which regard must be had when setting an MPI, namely the need for accountability, denunciation, deterrence, and the protection of the community. That MPI also reflects my assessment of the aggravating features of your murder of Senior Sergeant Fleming, including the targeting of her

²³ *R v Namana*, above n 13; *R v Luff*, above n 15; and *R v Epiha* above n 8.

²⁴ *R v Williams* [2005] 2 NZLR 506 (CA) at [52] and [53].

²⁵ In terms of the uplift from the statutory requirement of an MPI of at least 17 years, the additional three years represents 43 per cent of the seven-year uplift applied and confirmed by the Court of Appeal in *Epiha*.

simply because she was a police officer, the use of your vehicle as a weapon, and the elements of premeditation inherent in your fatal attack.

[47] However, I must take into account all of your offending, which includes the intentional causing of grievous bodily harm to Senior Sergeant Ramsay and the injuring of Constable Radcliffe and Ms Cook as a result of your dangerous driving.

[48] As regards the offending against Senior Sergeant Ramsay, the same aggravating features are present. The physical injuries the officer sustained, while grievous, were not as critical as in some serious cases of this type of offence, but it was only luck the consequences were not fatal. The deliberate targeting of the vulnerable officer and the use of your car as a lethal weapon, which you employed for the purpose of your attack, would in isolation have attracted a starting point in the vicinity of eight or nine years' imprisonment.²⁶

[49] The offences of dangerous driving causing injury involved you deliberately ramming your vehicle at speed into the back of a police car and resulted in significant injuries to two persons in and beside the patrol vehicle. The charges mark the consequences of your continued use of your vehicle as a weapon and the persistence of your attack on police. Members of the public and other police officers had to take evasive action, and it was fortunate not more people were injured.

[50] Senior Sergeant Ramsay was lying beside the patrol vehicle you rammed and could very well have been struck in the same way Ms Cook was hit as a result of the police car being shunted forward by the impact. The fact you were a disqualified driver and were driving with an excess blood alcohol level are further indicators of your dangerous and chaotic state of mind at the time.

[51] In setting the effective MPI, I must stand back and have regard to your overall culpability and the total effect of the sentence to be imposed in response to your crimes. The assessment of the appropriate MPI for the totality of your criminal actions is not an arithmetical exercise. It involves judgement and careful consideration of the

²⁶ *R v Taueki* [2005] 3 NZLR 372 (CA) at [31], [34], [38]–[41] (falling within the upper end of band 2 and the lower end of band 3, on the basis of three to four relevant aggravating factors).

proportionality of the combined effect of the sentence against the gravity of all of your offending.

[52] Taking into account the intentional infliction of grievous bodily harm to Senior Sergeant Ramsay and the nature of your criminal conduct which resulted in the injuring of Constable Radcliffe and Ms Cook, I consider an uplift to the MPI of three years is appropriate to reflect the seriousness of this additional offending. That results in an adjusted starting point for the MPI of 23 years.

Personal factors

Potential aggravating personal factors

[53] In regards to aggravating personal factors, you have previous convictions, although none which have attracted sentences of imprisonment before. Some of that offending has relevance. Firstly, there is your previous conviction for assaulting a person using your vehicle as a weapon, which was admitted as propensity evidence at your trial. That prior offending demonstrates a proclivity, while sitting behind the wheel of a car, to use it as a means to attack others if angered. With the benefit of hindsight, your murder of Senior Sergeant Fleming has demonstrated the catastrophic consequences of your propensity to act in that manner.

[54] The other relevant prior offending relates to your intentional damaging of a police station and police vehicles. That offending also resulted in the imposition of a community-based sentence and, while troubling, pales in comparison to the crime of murder. Another notable feature is that you were subject to a sentence at the time you committed the present offences. Despite all that, I do not impose any additional uplift for this aspect of your background, but the nature of your prior offending reinforces the appropriateness of the three-year extension to the MPI.

Potential mitigating personal factors

[55] You are an unemployed man of 33 years of age. You are described as having a stable, loving upbringing with no reported trauma or adversity. However, you lost your father when you were 16. This event was not outside the sad, unfortunate

vicissitudes of life, but his loss was undoubtedly a distressing and very significant blow to you when you were a teenager. While you did not excel at school, there is no evidence of you having behavioural or cognitive issues during those years. Up until more recently you maintained employment, and have had and maintain the ongoing support of your mother and an older person who you regard as a grandmother.

[56] I acknowledge the presence of Mr Tasker's family members today and the difficult position that you find yourself in. It will be important that you continue to provide support to Mr Tasker over the term of his long sentence.

[57] Over the years, during episodes of heavy alcohol use and depressed mood, you have, Mr Tasker, presented with increased emotional distress and periodically engaged in what are referred to as impulsive suicide behaviours in response to adverse life events. You were described by a forensic psychiatrist as presenting with an enduring pattern of maladaptive emotional responses and behaviours characterised by a pattern of unstable and intense interpersonal relationships, impulsivity and marked mood instability that was described as being consistent with a "mixed severe personality" disorder. However, you have no history of any serious mental illness or intellectual impairment.

[58] At the time of this offending you were living a transient lifestyle, primarily sleeping in your motor vehicle while parked at friends' addresses. It is apparent that the ending of a long-term relationship with your partner in late October 2024 led to the instability you were experiencing at the time of this offending and your increased abuse of alcohol. This background, including what is described as a persistent resentment held towards police for what you considered to be unfair treatment, gives some insight into your warped motivation and thinking at the time of your offending.

[59] Your counsel, Mr Zintl, has done all he can in putting forward a submission that you are sorry for what has occurred but, to the extent you are remorseful, it is qualified. You do not appear to be willing to take full responsibility for your actions. In the latter interview conducted with police, I acknowledge you demonstrated distress at learning of Senior Sergeant Fleming's death. However, the pre-sentence report writer found it difficult to assess the genuineness of your expressed empathy for your

victims and their families. You continue to maintain you had no intention to harm the police officers and appear to seek to excuse what happened by explaining that had you not encountered your former partner on New Year's Eve, the offending would not have occurred.

[60] Your interpretation of events cannot be reconciled with the overwhelming evidence that shows the deliberateness of your actions. While you may regret the circumstances that led you to take Lyn Fleming's life and the position you now find yourself, it is not apparent you hold or have demonstrated genuine remorse or insight into what you actually did, or have fully accepted responsibility.

[61] Mr Zintl has attempted to place some reliance on your guilty pleas to disqualified driving and driving with excess blood alcohol which were, indeed, entered at an early stage. However, as you were entitled, you defended the most serious charges, and your pleas to those of dangerous driving and of dangerous driving causing injury, in respect of which no conceivable defence was apparent, were not entered until the morning of the trial. I do not consider the timings of your pleas to these charges are of any real significance given you wished to take the essential issue of whether you deliberately drove at the officers to trial. The victims of the offending to which you finally pleaded guilty were always going to have to give evidence and your pleas resulted in no practical benefit, nor do I consider them to be an indicator of true remorse.

[62] Having reviewed all your personal circumstances, I consider there is little that materially bears on the length of the MPI to be taken into account as a mitigating factor in reducing that period. However, I acknowledge there does appear to be some correlation between your offending and your enduring pattern of emotional instability and dysfunction that the forensic psychiatrist links back to your mid to late teenage years. I consider, therefore, that I am obliged to recognise there is some relevant connection between your offending and that aspect of your personal background by reducing the MPI by one year.

Final step

[63] As one last check, I again have regard to the principle of totality as to whether an MPI of 22 years is too much to reflect the seriousness of your offending and the culpability of your actions in the early hours of that New Year's morning. I am satisfied it is not.

Destruction of vehicle

[64] Before formally passing sentence, I make an order under s 142R of the Act for the destruction of the Honda Odyssey vehicle, as sought by the Crown—that vehicle that was used by you as a weapon. It is extensively damaged and beyond economic repair. I accept it is of no legitimate use to anyone and an order for its forfeiture and destruction is made. That does not extend to any of your personal items which were inside the vehicle.

Result

[65] Mr Tasker, will you please now stand.

[66] Mr Tasker, you are sentenced on the charge of murdering Lynley Fleming to life imprisonment with a minimum period of imprisonment of 22 years.

[67] For the intentional causing of grievous bodily harm to Adam Ramsay, you are sentenced to imprisonment for eight years.

[68] For driving dangerously causing injury to Jemma Radcliffe, you are sentenced to imprisonment for two years and disqualified from driving for two years.

[69] For driving dangerously causing injury to Tasman Cook, you are sentenced to imprisonment for two years and disqualified from driving for two years.

[70] On each of the charges of dangerous driving, driving with excess blood alcohol, and disqualified driving, you are sentenced to imprisonment for three months and disqualified from driving for a period of one year.

[71] All sentences of imprisonment and periods of disqualification are to be served concurrently.

[72] You may stand down.

Solicitors:
Crown Solicitor, Nelson

Copy to:
Marcus Zintl Barrister, Blenheim
Joshua Lucas Barrister, Christchurch
Sarah-Jane Jessop, Blenheim