

28/04/15

Commissioners,

My name is Graeme Hallett and I work as a Salvation Army Chaplain at the Moorabbin Magistrates Court. I am writing this submission for your consideration concerning an incident that I was involved with.

As court chaplain I am often asked to support victims of family violence when they come to court. On a recent occasion the victim was too scared to be in the courtroom and so I was requested to support her from the remote witness facility. The victim had already lived through this traumatic experience once, and then a second time as she gave her statement to police. As per our system she was then required to re-live it a third time as she gave her evidence in court.

The accused was found guilty and given a custodial sentence. He then made the decision to appeal his sentence to the County Court. I was then requested by the victim to again support her at the appeal hearing. Again, she was too traumatised to be in the court room and so presented her evidence from the remote facility. This is now the fourth time she had been required to experience this trauma.

My question therefore is;

Is there a better way that we can hear evidence without making the victim re-live the trauma over and over again?

I thank you for consideration and I am available for further discussion. I can be contacted at the Moorabbin Court or on my mobile phone [REDACTED].

Thank You,

Graeme Hallett

Chaplain

Moorabbin Court.