



# CDPP

Australia's Federal Prosecution Service

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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**Melbourne Man Sentenced to 11 Years Gaol for  
Internet Child Sex Exploitation Offences.**

**Date:** 13 August 2014

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Melbourne resident Brett Le Gassick, 43, was today sentenced to 11 years imprisonment with 8 years to serve for 25 child sex exploitation offences committed over the internet, following prosecution by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP).

Le Gassick was arrested on 30 January 2014 by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) Child Protection Operations Team. On 8 August 2014, Le Gassick pleaded guilty to all 25 charges (listed in detail below) in the County Court of Victoria.

Le Gassick was involved in the sexual abuse of children via online 'pay-per-view' shows out of the Philippines. His offending ranged from accessing, possessing and making of child pornography, which carry maximum penalties of between five and 15 years' imprisonment, to offences involving the procuring over the internet of 54 children for sexual activity, and causing or attempting to cause children to engage in sexual activity over the internet carrying maximum penalties of up to 20 years imprisonment.

In the agreed summary of facts presented to the court by CDPP Senior Federal Prosecutor Morgan Brown, Le Gassick admitted to having used online chat programs to direct children in the Philippines ranging from 4 years old to 15 years old to engage in sexual activity which he viewed in real time. Le Gassick also admitted to taking images and videos during the online chat sessions as well as viewing and downloading other material he retrieved online.

In handing down sentence, Her Honour Judge Gaynor stated that this was "*a serious example of serious offending*" and that the offending involved the "*wholesale exploitation of desperate children*", and the "*damage done [to these children] is incalculable*".

In 2013-2014 the CDPP prosecuted 416 child exploitation charges under the Criminal Code.

The CDPP prosecution of Le Gassick arises from an investigation by the AFP's Child Protection Operations Team. The CDPP continues to work closely with both State and Federal police to address the growing

national and international problem of internet child exploitation. These are challenging cases to investigate and prosecute and involve high levels of co-operation between investigators and the CDPP.

## **Background**

Le Gassick was charged with and pleaded guilty to the following offences:

- One count of procuring 54 children for sexual activity contrary to section 474.26(1) of the *Criminal Code* (Cth)
- One count of production of child pornography contrary to section 68(1) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic)
- Two counts of accessing child pornography using a carriage service contrary to section 474.19(1) of the *Criminal Code* (Cth)
- Five counts of causing child to engage in sexual intercourse in the presence of the defendant contrary to section 272.8(2) of the *Criminal Code* (Cth)
- Eight counts of attempt to cause a child to engage in sexual intercourse in the presence of the defendant contrary to sections 272.8(2) and 11.1(1) of the *Criminal Code* (Cth)
- Five counts of causing a child to engage in sexual activity in the presence of the defendant contrary to section 272.9(2) of the *Criminal Code* (Cth)
- Two counts of attempting to cause child to engage in sexual activity in the presence of the defendant contrary to sections 272.9(2) and 11.1(1) of the *Criminal Code* (Cth)
- One count of knowingly possessing child pornography contrary to section 70(1) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic).

This case represents the latest in a series of cases being prosecuted by the CDPP under amendments made to the Criminal Code in 2010. Last month Melbourne man 68 year old Patrick Goggins was sentenced in the County Court to 11 ½ years' imprisonment with 8 years to serve for similar offences where children in the Philippines were paid by Goggins to engage in sexual activity online. These offences, which are amongst the most serious in the Criminal Code, and carry penalties of between 15 and 20 years imprisonment, criminalise conduct by Australians involving the sexual abuse of children overseas, whether the abuse occurs in person or over the internet.

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