



The Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices ('RVAHJ') would like to add their most sincere sympathy to all of the victims and their families regarding the tragic and most terrible crimes perpetrated on Friday, 20 January, 2017.

The RVAHJ is a not for profit association and is the peak membership body for Victoria's Honorary Justices (Justices of the Peace and Bail Justices).

It has been widely reported that the alleged perpetrator was out on bail at the time of the incident, due to having been bailed, which has resulted in many negative statements being made about Bail Justices.

The RVAHJ would now like to address some of those statements. It is true that a Bail Justice has to be over the age of 18 years, but they also have to demonstrate that they are of outstanding character, with the maturity and intelligence to make the decisions they are tasked with. All Bail Justices, both men and women, have to be prepared to undertake rigorous scrutiny, appropriate training, sit examinations and be prepared to work voluntarily, in a sometimes hostile environment, and always out of normal working hours. They are also required to undertake ongoing training when required.

Bail Justices are appointed by the government and, in all, there are currently 230 Bail Justices in the State of Victoria who last year attended approximately 11,000 out of hour bail hearings.

A Bail Justice is only called when Police oppose bail, as the Police themselves have the authority to release an accused on bail.

During any hearing, a Bail Justice will make their decision based on the facts as presented without fear or favour with their honest, fairest and best intention to all involved. Bail Justices are honourable volunteers of outstanding character, who undertake a great community service.

Our concerns, thoughts and prayers therefore, should be with all of the victim's families and all those people who may be affected, by this most heinous crime, for their entire lifetime.

President RVAHJ