



## **Media Information**

### **RYDE POLICE AREA COMMAND**

**Tuesday 4 August 2020**

#### **Man charged with drug supply – Pennant Hills**

Approximately 6:15am on Wednesday 29 July 2020, police executed a search warrant at a unit complex in City View Road at Pennant Hills.

At the time of execution, police knocked on the front door and announced their office, police observed a 27-year-old man run out onto the balcony of the unit, throwing several items off the balcony. Police seized these items, being, a clear resealable sandwich bag containing a quantity of white powder and numerous empty small clear resealable bags.

The man was placed under arrest and commenced the search warrant. Police located a sum of cash, two clear resealable bags containing a quantity of brown powder, believed to be MDMA, Nine boxes of Primoteston Depot Testosterone Enantate, a quantity of Cocaine in seven separate clear resealable sandwich bags, several mobile phones and laptops.

The man was taken to Ryde Police Station where he was charged with Supply prohibited drug, Possess prohibited drug, Deal with property proceeds of crime and Possess/attempt to, anabolic or androgenic steroidal agent.

The man was bail refused and will now appear in Burwood Local Court on 7 August 2020.

#### **Shoplifter -Macquarie Park**

About 12.45pm on Friday 31 July 2020, a 75-year-old woman from Eastwood entered a department store in Macquarie Park.

The woman was seen to place two items of clothing into a green canvas bag before leaving the store without making payment for the items.

The woman was stopped by the stores Loss Prevention Officer and escorted to the security office to await the arrival of police.

The woman was spoken to before being issued a Criminal Infringement Notice for shoplifting.

### **Man charged with Driving with Middle Range PCA - Epping**

At 12:52am on Sunday 26 July 2020, Police attended Pearl Avenue at Epping regarding an accident that had occurred at the location.

Upon arrival at the location, a 19-year-old man from Thornleigh was observed to be standing on the passenger side of his vehicle. The vehicle was half on the nature strip and slightly impeding upon a parked vehicle causing only minor damage.

Police spoke with the man before he produced his P2 drivers' licence to police. The man was submitted to a breath test which returned a positive reading.

The man was arrested and taken to Ryde Police Station where he underwent a breath analysis.

The man returned a reading of 0.082 and was issued with a Court Attendance Notice for Drive with Middle Range PCA.

He will now appear in Burwood Local Court on 17 August 2020.

### **Woman charged with Goods in Custody – West Ryde**

At 11.50am on Wednesday 29 July 2020 police observed a 46-year-old woman from Hunters Hill walking in an Easterly direction along Anthony Road West Ryde with a shopping trolley containing her belongings. At the time she was walking with a male friend.

Police stopped and spoke with the pair. On speaking with them the woman appeared to be under the influence of a prohibited drug.

Police had cause to search the woman. Police located a small red bag with three small resealable bags inside a black pouch. Inside the pouch police located what they believed to be cannabis and methamphetamine.

The woman was placed under arrest and a further search located a store membership card and a pension card in the name of another person.

The woman was taken to Ryde Police Station where she was charged with Goods in Custody and two counts of Possess Prohibited Drug.

She was granted conditional bail and will now appear in Burwood Local Court on 17 August 2020.

### **Shoplifter – Macquarie Park**

About 12:00pm on Saturday 1 August 2020, a 60-year-old man from Ermington entered a supermarket at Macquarie Park. The man selected a number of items off the shelf and placed them in his trolley. The stores Loss Prevention Officer observed the man to only pay for a small number of items.

The man then left the store without paying for some of the items. The Loss Prevention Officer stopped the man outside the store and escorted him back into the store where they waited for police arrival.

Police arrived a short time later and spoke with the man before issuing him with a Criminal Infringement Notice for shoplifting.

### **Missing persons week 2- 8 August 2020**

This week is National Missing Persons Week. It's a time for us, as a community, to come together and raise awareness of the issue of missing persons. It's an issue that can affect anyone. To find out more, head to [The National Missing Persons Coordination Centre](#) or visit [missingpersons.gov.au](http://missingpersons.gov.au)

- 35,000: is the number of people that go missing in Australia each year.
- 99.5%: is the number of people that are located after being reported missing and 85% of those located are done so in the first week they go missing.
- 50%: of young people account for all missing persons.
- 33%: of missing persons go missing more than once.
- 0: Is the number of hours you have to wait to report someone as missing. Having a loved one go missing can be very distressing and we urge you to contact police as soon as you believe that your loved one is missing.

It is not a crime to be a missing person, and it is the aim of the NSW Police to confirm the welfare and safety of Missing Persons. If you are a missing person, we urge you to make contact with Police. Your request for privacy will be respected.

If you have information about a missing person you can contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.



## **Media Information**

### **RYDE POLICE AREA COMMAND**

**Tuesday 21 July 2020**

#### **Two men charged with drug supply after police conduct proactive patrols at West Ryde**

About 8:45pm on Friday 17 July 2020, police were conducting a proactive patrol of Victoria Road in West Ryde when they stopped a 24-year-old man from Castle Hill for the purpose of a random breath test.

The driver was asked to produce his licence which he did. Further checks were conducted by police. The driver returned a negative breath test.

Police had cause to search the vehicle and its occupants. The 24-year-old man and his 24-year-old passenger from Ermington were asked to exit the vehicle.

Police searched the 24-year-old man from Ermington and located a clear resealable bag containing what is believed to be Cannabis. Police also located a pair of brass knuckles to be inside a pouch the man had on him.

Police located 2 resealable bags containing what is believed to be Cannabis in the centre console of the vehicle. Police located a small clear plastic bag containing Cannabis on the passenger floor. 8 small clear resealable bags and 1 small plastic bag containing Cannabis were located inside a shopping bag inside the vehicle

The two men were also found to be in possession of large sums of cash.

Both men were arrested, and a further search took place of the men. The 24-year-old Ermington man was found to be in possession of 4 small resealable bags containing what is believed to be Cocaine. These were concealed in his underwear.

The 24-year-old from Castle Hill also had a number of resealable bags containing cannabis in his underwear.

Both men were taken to Ryde Police Station where the man from Castle Hill was charged with Possess Prohibited Drug and Supply prohibited Drug and Deal with property proceeds of crime. The man was bail refused and is now due to appear in Parramatta Local Court on 27 July 2020.

The man from Ermington was charged with Deal with property proceeds of crime, Possess prohibited drug, supply prohibited drug and Possess or use a prohibited weapon without permit. He was given conditional bail and will now appear in Parramatta Local Court on 27 July 2020.

## **Two charged with police pursuit/stolen vehicle**

About 9.15 pm on Thursday 16 July 2020, a 16-year-old teenager from Canada Bay was seen to be driving a Lexus at an excessive speed upon Spurway Street, Ermington.

Police activated their warning lights and sirens to stop the vehicle. On doing this, the driver has immediately accelerated trying to overtake the vehicle in front of it on the inside of the roadway. The driver continued driving at an excessive speed to avoid police.

This continued through several suburbs with further police and Police air wing in attendance.

Police lost sight of the vehicle in the streets of Carlingford. The teen came to a stop at the end of Captain Strom Street where he has exited the driver's seat and has started to run north upon Captain Strom Street before turning around and running back in a southerly direction through some bushland that leads to McKillop Place. A 23-year-old woman has exited the front passenger seat and has ran through the same bushland onto McKillop Place, Carlingford

About 9.20 pm on the same date the two were picked up by an Uber driver. This was monitored by Polair and the vehicle was stopped by Police at the intersection of Rippon Road and Kissing Point Road, Dundas.

The two were arrested and taken to Ryde Police Station and the 17-year-old was charged with Take & drive conveyance without consent of owner, Police pursuit - not stop - drive recklessly and Never licensed person drive vehicle on road. He was bail refused and will appear in Surry Hills Children's Court on 20 July 2020.

The 23-year-old woman from Ermington was charged with Be carried in conveyance taken without consent of the owner. She was given conditional bail and will now appear in Burwood Local Court on 3 August 2020.

## **Two teens issued Youth Cautions for Shoplifting – Macquarie Park**

About 3pm on Wednesday 15 July 2020, a 14-year-old girl and a 15-year-old girl, both from Castle Hill have entered a number of departments store within a shopping complex at Macquarie Park.

The two were seen by security to take a number of items of the shelves and place them into the handbags they were carrying with them.

They were stopped by security and escorted to the security office to await the arrival of police.

A number of items were seized from the two girls.

They are now eligible to receive a Youth Caution under the Young Offenders Act.

This will take with the Ryde Youth Officer at a later date.

## **Beware of COVID-19 scams**

Scamwatch has received over 3400 scam reports mentioning the coronavirus with over \$1790 000 in reported losses since the outbreak of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Common scams include phishing for personal information, online shopping, and superannuation scams.

If you have been scammed or have seen a scam, you can [make a report](#) on the Scamwatch website, and find more information about [where to get help](#).

Scamwatch urges everyone to be cautious and remain alert to coronavirus-related scams. Scammers are hoping that you have let your guard down. Do not provide your personal, banking or superannuation details to strangers who have approached you.

Scammers may pretend to have a connection with you. So it's important to stop and check, even when you are approached by what you think is a trusted organisation.

Visit the [Scamwatch news](#) webpage for general warnings and media releases on COVID-19 scams.



### **Media Information**

#### **RYDE POLICE AREA COMMAND**

**Wednesday 29 July 2020**

### **Driver critical after car crashes into house - Cheltenham**

A man has been taken to hospital in a critical condition after crashing into a home in Sydney's north west.

Just after 3.30am on Sunday 26 July 2020, emergency services were called to Beecroft Road, Cheltenham, after reports a Toyota Hilux had crashed into a house.

The driver and sole occupant of the vehicle, a 26-year-old man, reportedly lost control of the Hilux at the intersection of Beecroft and Cheltenham Roads, before crashing through a fence and into the home, trapping him in the vehicle.

He was freed by emergency services and treated by paramedics before being taken to Royal North Shore Hospital in a critical condition.

The home will be assessed for structural damage.

A crime scene was established, and officers attached to Ryde Police Area Command have commenced an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the crash.

Inquiries continue.

Anyone with information about this incident is urged to contact Crime Stoppers: 1800 333 000 or <https://nsw.crimestoppers.com.au>. Information is treated in strict confidence. The public is reminded not to report crime via NSW Police social media pages.

### **Shoplifter - Ryde**

About 4:30 pm on Wednesday 22 July 2020, a 69-year-old woman from Ermington has entered a supermarket in Ryde.

The woman was seen by the Stores Loss Prevention Officer to place a number of items within two shopping bags she had on her. The woman has then walked out of the store past the self-service checkouts without making any attempts to pay for the items.

Once outside the store, the Loss Prevention Officer has stopped the woman and escorted her to the security office to await the arrival of police. Police arrived a short time later and spoke with the woman before issuing her with a Criminal Infringement Notice for shoplifting. She was also issued with a banning notice from the supermarket.

### **Cannabis Caution -Eastwood**

About 12:30am on Thursday 23 July 2020, police were patrolling the Glen Street Car Park at Eastwood when they observed a vehicle with its engine running at the rear end of the carpark. A second vehicle was parked next to it.

Police stopped and spoke with the occupants of the car. After a brief conversation police had cause to search the vehicle and its occupants.

Police located a small amount of what is believed to be cannabis leaf concealed in a tissue within the centre console. Police also located a grinder containing a small quantity of cannabis in the rear passenger side seat.

Police searched the second vehicle and located a small clear resealable bag containing what is believed to be Cannabis inside the vehicle.

Police issued a Cannabis Caution to two 20-year-old men from Marsfield for being in possession of the prohibited drug.

### **Driver collided with shopfront – Eastwood**

At approximately 12:15pm on Tuesday 28 July 2020, Police and emergency services were called to an out of control vehicle on Rowe Street Eastwood.

An 83-year-old man has attempted to reverse park his motor vehicle, outside a bank in Rowe Street at Eastwood.

Whilst attempting to park the vehicle it has become lodged on a pedestrian island. The man used an increased amount of acceleration to remove the vehicle from the island. The force of the acceleration was maintained, and he continued to reverse under harsh acceleration losing control of the vehicle before colliding with a Seafood Restaurant and the Bank shop fronts.

The vehicle then completed a full rotation still under harsh acceleration before again colliding with the shopfront. The man drove forward and collided with an unattended Taxi before stopping.

Major Damage was sustained to both the vehicles involved. Significant damage was sustained to street infrastructure such as seats and signage and superficial damage to both shopfronts with no structural issues.

The man was breath tested by police returning a negative result. The man was assessed by Ambulance Paramedics at the scene; however, he did not sustain any injuries and he was not conveyed to Hospital.

Police believe the incident was caused by driver error and thankfully no persons were injured.

The mans drivers' licence has been suspended by the medical unit of the Roads and Maritime Services.

### **NSW Police issue warning to Chinese students following rise in 'virtual kidnappings'**

The NSW Police Force, together with Chinese authorities and universities, is warning members of the community about an elaborate phone scam targeting Chinese students, known globally as a 'virtual kidnapping'.

This year, eight known incidents of 'virtual kidnappings' have been reported to the NSW Police Force, with scammers targeting Chinese international students and successfully obtaining \$3.2 million in ransom payments.

Incidents of a similar nature have been reported to international law enforcement agencies and netted millions of dollars from victims around the world.

A 'virtual kidnapping' is a sophisticated extortion scam that involves young victims faking their own kidnappings following phone calls from fraudsters – who then demand ransom payments for their safe release from relatives.

Investigators have been told that initial contact is made through a phone call from someone usually speaking in Mandarin and claiming to be a representative from a Chinese authority, such as the Chinese Embassy, Consulate or Police.

The caller then convinces the victim that they have been implicated in a crime in China, or that their identity has been stolen, and that they must pay a fee to avoid legal action, arrest or deportation.

Using technology to mask their physical locations, scammers encourage victims to continue communications through various encrypted applications such as WeChat and WhatsApp.

The victim is then threatened or coerced into transferring large amounts of money into unknown offshore bank accounts.

In some instances, victims are convinced to fake their own kidnappings – known as a ‘virtual kidnapping’.

Scammers instruct victims to cease contact with their family and friends, rent a hotel room and take photographs or video recordings that depict them bound and blindfolded. These files are then shared with the victim’s relatives overseas.

When the victim’s parents are unable to establish contact with their child in Australia, they send large ransom payments in exchange for their ‘release’.

The caller will continue to make threats and ransom demands until they are unable to obtain any further payments, often resulting in the victim’s family making contact with police.

NSW Police Force State Crime Command Director, Detective Chief Superintendent Darren Bennett, said police have engaged with the Chinese Embassy and Chinese Consulate in Sydney to warn the community of such scams.

“Virtual kidnappings are designed to take advantage of people’s trust in authorities and have developed considerably over the last decade by transnational organised crime syndicates,” Det Ch Supt Bennett said.

“While these phone calls appear to be random in nature, these scammers seem to be targeting vulnerable members of the Chinese-Australian community.

“NSW Police have been assured from the Chinese Consulate-General in Sydney that no person claiming to be from a Chinese authority such as police, procuratorates or the courts will contact a student on their mobile phone and demand monies to be paid or transferred. If this occurs, it is a scam.

“This year alone, NSW Police are aware of eight instances of virtual kidnappings where ransom payments that range between \$20,000 to \$500,000 and in one case – \$2 million – have been paid.

“While we are working with our law enforcement colleagues to investigate the origins of these scams, we are urging the community to heed our warnings not to respond to the caller’s demands,” Det Ch Supt Bennett said.

More than 212,000 international students are enrolled to study in NSW, and with preparations being made to allow those on student visas to return to the state as COVID-19 restrictions are reassessed, police are urging the community to educate themselves about these types of elaborate phone scams.

NSW Police Force Corporate Sponsor for the Safety and Wellbeing of International Students, Assistant Commissioner Peter Thurtell, said the international community are urged to contact police if they suspect they have been a victim of a scam.

“Our officers, together with education and government partner agencies, play a key role in making the overall experience of international students a positive one in New South Wales,” Assistant Commissioner Thurtell said.

“International students who have chosen to study abroad in Australia, are in an unfamiliar environment and often living away from family and friends for the first time.

“For any students who receive calls from someone claiming to be a Chinese official and wish to check on the validity of the caller – we urge them to contact the Chinese Consulate in Sydney for advice.

“We also urge students to seek advice from their university or school, and report the matter to police, who will act in their best interests and welfare.

“The victims of virtual kidnappings we have engaged are traumatised by what has occurred, believing they have placed themselves, and their loved ones, in real danger.

“In these instances, it is often friends and family that encourage victims to come forward and report the crime to police, as victims feel embarrassed or ashamed by what has transpired.

“The community should be reassured that NSW Police will pursue these criminals through every investigative avenue available and that bilingual officers are on hand to assist those who speak English as a second language,” Assistant Commissioner Thurtell said.

Law enforcement officials are also working closely with the NSW Government and universities to provide support and resources to international students who encounter suspected ‘virtual kidnapping’ scams.

Macquarie University Pro Vice-Chancellor International, Ms Nicole Brigg, said universities are aware of the scam calls and are available to provide assistance to any student with concerns.

“We want any student who chooses to study in New South Wales to enjoy their time here and not be fearful of falling victim to scam calls,” Ms Brigg said.

“Students can do two important things to protect themselves against these types of crimes – firstly, be aware they exist and secondly, ask for help early if they think it might be happening to them or someone they know.

“Each university regularly distributes communications to students advising them of scams and would encourage anyone that receives a call of this nature to contact university staff,” Ms Brigg said.

According to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) June 2020 ‘Targeting scams’ report for Australia, the ‘Chinese authority’ scam caused the highest losses of all government impersonation scams for 2019.

Last year, 1172 reports of ‘Chinese authority’ scams were recorded across the country by Scamwatch with a total loss in excess of \$2 million.

The NSW Police Force State Crime Command’s Robbery and Serious Crime Squad provide a specialist response to all reported kidnap-for-ransom offences – both physical and virtual – in New South Wales.

Examples of ‘virtual kidnappings’ reported to police this year include;

- On Wednesday 22 April 2020, officers from Ryde Police Area Command commenced an investigation following contact from a university in Sydney’s north-west, concerned for the welfare of a 20-year-old female student. Police were told family members in China believed the woman had been kidnapped and that \$300,000 had been paid following ransom demands from a caller purporting to be Chinese Police. Following inquiries, the woman was located safe and well at a home at Chatswood about midday on Thursday 23 April 2020.
- Officers from North Shore Police Area Command commenced an investigation following reports a video of a 22-year-old woman, who was bound and blindfolded, had been sent to family in China via WeChat about 12.30pm on Saturday 30 May 2020. Police were told that the family had paid \$20,000 following ransom demands for her safe release. Following inquiries, detectives located the woman at a hotel at North Sydney safe and well about 1am the next day (Sunday 31 May 2020).
- About 12.45am on Wednesday 17 June 2020, officers from St George Police Area Command received a phone call from man in China who reported that he had received a video of his Sydney-based daughter at an unknown location and that she was bound. An investigation was commenced, and the 22-year-old woman was located safe and well at a hotel at Hurstville just after 1am. Police were told that more than \$2 million had been paid following ransom demands by a caller purporting to be Chinese Police.
- About 10am on Tuesday 14 July 2020, officers from Ryde Police Area Command received a report that a 21-year-old woman had been kidnapped. The woman’s housemate contacted police after her parents were sent a video of her pleading for help at an unknown location and were unable to contact her. Following inquiries, officers located the woman safe and well at a hotel at Pyrmont about 10pm the same day. Police were told that \$100,000 had been paid by the woman into an offshore bank account following demands by an unknown caller prior to the ‘virtual kidnapping’.

The advice for anyone who receives a call involving demands for money under the threat of violence is to hang up, contact the Chinese Consulate in Sydney to verify the claims and report the matter to the NSW Police Force.

***Anyone with information relating to incidents of virtual kidnappings should contact Crime Stoppers: 1800 333 000 or <https://nsw.crimestoppers.com.au>. Information is treated in strict confidence. The public is reminded not to report crime via NSW Police social media pages.***

