

Crime Figure Murdered the Day Before Court Hears Audio Recordings

By Blake O'Connor and Ugur Nedim

The southern Sydney suburb of Earlwood was the scene of a public execution earlier this week, when 35-year old crime boss [Pasquale Barbaro](#) was shot dead while leaving an associate's house.

Mr Barbaro was the target of a failed assassination attempt in November 2015, when a gunman fired a barrage of bullets at him on Balmain Road in Leichardt. The attempt occurred a month before he was due to face charges of manufacturing the drug ice on rural properties in NSW.

Monday's execution style hit involved at least one gunman, who is reported to have jumped out of an Audi four-wheel drive and fired up to seven shots.

Three Pasquale Barbaros

The Griffith-based Barbaro crime gang is said to be affiliated with the Calabrian Mafia, a powerful Italian underworld group. Barbaro's Grandfather, also named Pasquale, suffered the same fate in 1990, and another Pasquale Barbaro was shot dead with underworld figure Jason Moran in 2003.

Yet another related Pasquale Barbaro is currently serving thirty years in prison over the largest ever ecstasy bust in Australia, which occurred in 2007 when a shipping container full of tomato tins containing the drug was discovered in 2007.

Timing of the hit

The latest hit was executed one night before a Sydney Court was [due to be played phone recordings of Barbaro](#) speaking with Farhard Quami, the head of street gang Brothers for Life.

No stranger to trouble

Mr Barbaro had a number of run-ins with business partners and the law.

Barbaro and a business associate, Aaron Sabbah, opened a bar and restaurant in Glebe which later collapsed owing almost \$300,000 in rent, causing tensions between the pair and those from which they obtained finance.

Sabbah was recently imprisoned for 12 months after demanding money from a mechanic shop owner whilst wielding a [large black dildo](#) in the company of two stocky men. During the sentencing proceedings in [Downing Centre District Court](#), Judge John North stated:

“... the offender can be seen to be carrying a large black dildo in his right hand, which he is swinging as he walks in”.

Why was Barbaro killed?

There are several theories as to why Mr Barbaro was assassinated, none of them conclusive. Crime Journalist Keith Moor believes other underworld figures suspected [Barbaro of being a police informant](#):

“The suspicion is he was probably killed for breaking the code of Omerta which is the code of silence”.

But given the number and nature of Barbaro’s underworld associations, and the friction caused by some of his dealings, the investigation into his murder could be a long and drawn out process.

Lawyer Gunned Down

Barbaro's execution is certainly not the first time a person suspected of having links to the Calabrian Mafia has been assassinated.

In March of this year, criminal defence lawyer [Joseph Acquaro](#) was gunned down outside his Brunswick restaurant in Melbourne. This was after Acquaro warned by police in June 2015 that his life was in 'grave danger'.

Acquaro represented a number of Calabrian underworld figures, including convicted drug supplier Francesco Madafferri and crime figure Rocco Arico.

Since the beginning of 2012, nearly two dozen people have died and more than 100 other have been injured in Sydney shootings.

Fairfield in Sydney's west is reported to be the 'most dangerous suburb in Sydney', with the highest number of shootings, including four within a two week period.