

Downing Centre Magistrate Hands Former Police Officer Shane Diehm Jail Sentence

Remember [Shane Diehm](#), the policeman who was facing charges for corruption and drugs?

We published an article about him a while ago, while he was still facing serious charges of lying to the Police Integrity Commission.

The Commission was established in 1996 to detect, investigate and prevent police misconduct.

After extended adjournments and months of the case dragging through the courts, the Presiding Magistrate in Downing Centre Local Court has finally handed down her decision.

Diehm was sentenced to six-month jail after being convicted of lying to the police force watchdog.

This is a significant fall from grace for a police officer who was once one of the most well-respected on the Northern Rivers.

The 49 year old cried when he heard that he was sentenced to a maximum of 12 months in prison, with a minimum of 6 months.

However, Diehm has yet to spend a night in jail – he has appealed the decision and his appeal will be heard in Downing Centre District Court.

In court, Diehm initially denied that he had taken drugs. He later admitted taking drugs but said he had no memory of his friends doing the same.

While acknowledging that he was certainly not the only one

taking drugs, he says he cannot remember exactly who else took them

He pleaded not guilty to the charge of knowingly misleading the Police Integrity Commission in relation to the other officers at a party.

The police officers had enjoyed a wild night of partying complete with alcohol and drugs in a Gold Coast hotel room back in 2010.

Police at the party were unaware that they were being recorded, but surveillance cameras were placed in the lounge rooms and kitchens of two hotel rooms.

According to a phone tap, one of the rooms was paid for by Diehm.

Damning evidence from the bugged hotel clearly records men joking and talking about drugs they were about to take.

But this was not the first time Diehm had been [caught out on drugs](#); he had previously been investigated for cocaine use, which you might think should have had repercussions on his career as a police officer.

According to the Police Handbook, police must not use any kind of prohibited drug and police officers may be subject to random, target and mandatory testing.

While breaching the police Code of Behaviour is not an offence, it can still have repercussions for police who are found to have contravened.

According to the [NSW Police Force Drug and Alcohol Policy](#), any police officer who tests positive to any prohibited drug can be dismissed.

Even if an officer is not dismissed, they will be subject to unscheduled testing for the next five years as well as

mandatory participating in counseling and/or rehabilitation.

This year, Diehm told the court that he was too intoxicated to have a good memory of the weekend and a psychiatrist gave evidence that he was suffering from chronic depression and post-traumatic stress caused by his work as a police officer, and that he often drank large quantities of alcohol until he passed out.

Despite his conditions, The Magistrate had little sympathy for this drug-using policeman.

She treated his selective memory with skepticism and said she believed the weekend to have been very memorable for him.

In sentencing, Her Honour gave him the jail sentence in order to deter other members of the police and politicians – a warning not to lie to watchdogs.

She hopes that the threat of severe penalties will deter any others facing similar investigations from my lying.

Diehm now looks back at regret at the weekend that he says ruined his life.

He left the police force in 2013 and during the hearing in court, admitted that he now has no future career in the police force and that his son wouldn't talk to him.

Do you think that public figures of authority should be held to higher standards than the rest of us?

The Police Integrity Commission began in 2011, and only now has the matter been decided in court.

And since Diehm has lodged an appeal, we may not be hearing the end of this case for some time.

The case raises an interesting question: should the court have given such as harsh penalty to act as a deterrent? Or was it

unfair to send him to prison?

Members of the police force are supposed to be upholders of the law and if even they do not conform, there can be a real lack of public confidence in the justice system.

So should they be held to higher standards than the general citizen?