

FIGHT FOR JUSTICE



Scene from a riot: An unidentified woman and police clash at the G20 protest.

G20 mob ruined my life, says injured cop

'I want them to know what they've done'

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FIONA HUDSON

A POLICE officer says her career and personal life are in tatters as a result of injuries she received in the G20 riots.

Sen-Constable Kim Dixon is considering civil action against protesters who hurled a plastic barricade at her, seriously damaging her elbow.

Four demonstrators who threw the barrier were convicted this week over the incident. They avoided jail, but a magistrate imposed fines ranging from \$2000 to \$4000.

Career police officer Sen-Constable Dixon, 41, wants her attackers to know the depth of her personal suffering, and how it has affected her husband and sons, aged 5 and 2.

Torn tendons in her left elbow have left her unable to perform routine tasks, such as pushing her youngest son's pram or hanging out washing, without suffering pain.

"You think to yourself, 'Do these people really know what they've done?'," Sen-Constable Dixon said.

"The protesters can't see me out there with my family. We are not just police. We do take our uniform off and we are human.

"I was only doing my job. This has affected my life dramatically . . . and the protesters need to know that."

The dedicated officer of 22 years faces the prospect of being pensioned off because she can no longer drive a manual patrol car or type up incident reports.

"I may not have a job in the

AFTER SENTENCING, RIOTER



Julia Dehm

A G20 rioter is receiving a \$35,500 taxpayer-funded salary as a trainee legal aid lawyer despite a conviction for attacking police.

Julia Dehm, 25, of Brunswick West, helped hurl a barricade at policewoman Sen-Constable Kim Dixon.

On Tuesday, the would-be lawyer, familiar with both sides of the dock, received a seven-month suspended jail sentence and \$3000 fine.

She has been convicted of two counts of riot, one of recklessly causing injury and one of intentionally damaging property for her actions in the riot.

Dehm was involved in pushing barricades at police during the attack on an unmanned police brawler van.

But Dehm was back at her Victoria Legal Aid office on Friday.

long term because of this injury," she said.

She is receiving WorkCover payments, but the loss of penalty rates while she is on restricted duties has left Sen-Constable Dixon and her husband struggling to pay their mortgage.

IT is a struggle. I don't get shift allowances or overtime. They were the extras that helped with the basketball fees or the birthday party or the interest rate rises," she said.

The strain on her marriage is evident.

"My husband has got to do more work to make up for the shortfall. The children don't

see as much of him. It just all adds up. Hopefully it's not all going to come crashing down," she said.

Son Ben, 5, asks every day if she will get better — a question to which she doesn't know the answer.

"I feel this injury has not only taken its toll on me, but, most importantly, my children," Sen-Constable Dixon said.

"I have been unable to enjoy the most simple of activities with them without being in some type of pain."

Sen-Constable Dixon wishes she were on frontline duties instead of being confined to a desk handling

FIGHT FOR JUSTICE



Strain: Kim Dixon with children Ben and Thomas. **Right:** Kim (front) during the protest. Main picture: DARREN TINDALE

GOES BACK TO HER TAXPAYER-FUNDED JOB

LIAM HOULIHAN

"I don't feel I can comment on this at this stage thank you," she said.

Victoria Legal Aid managing director Tony Parsons said the government body knew Dehm was facing charges when she was hired.

He said a decision would soon be made on her future now she had been sentenced.

But Mr Parsons would not say whether Dehm would be retained or sacked.

"We're reviewing her position... we haven't finalised that review," he said. "She's been here on an articulated clerk's program for a month. She got here by an extremely competitive process. About 200 people apply for five or six positions here every year. She was one of the successful candidates.

"She did everything we asked of her in terms of disclosing her problems. We knew precisely that she had charges. But she, like all people, are presumed innocent," Mr Parsons said.

"We said to her when she was offered the job of articles a year ago we would support her. And we would retain the right to review her position at the end of the proceedings.

"Now I've got a full brief of what happened in the case, what her position was, what the penalty of sentence was. I'm just going through a process of consideration about what I do with her in light of the outcome of the case."

The legal aid chief would not say if G20 protesters had received legal aid funding for their court hearings.

"I can't disclose that. The

legislation requires confidentiality," he said.

Defence lawyer Rob Stary, who represented 11 of the G20 protesters, but not Dehm, also refused on confidentiality grounds to say if the public had paid for their defence.

He said he believed one of Dehm's Legal Aid co-workers had provided her with a reference for court, but didn't know whether it was tendered.

Dehm was supporting a friend on G20 charges in the Melbourne Magistrates' Court when police realised she was also one of the G20 rioters and arrested her.

Dehm, a Melbourne University law graduate, was described by the sentencing magistrate as one of four rioters with the most serious charges.

basic inquiries and paperwork. She is reduced to two six-hour shifts a week, and has missed at least one pay rise through being unable to complete more training.

A police medical officer recently declared her injury "chronic".

Sen-Constable Dixon fears her file will soon be stamped "ill-health retired".

"I love being in the (patrol) car and working the street. I don't want to be stuck behind a desk," she said.

She does as much paperwork as she can, but feels guilty at her restricted duties.

In a Victim Impact

Statement sworn on January 27 this year, she admits to feeling as if she is "letting the team down and not pulling my weight".

She fears that being pensioned off could put her at long-term financial disadvantage.

THE chronic pain means Sen-Constable Dixon must take painkillers every day. She may yet require surgery.

One of about 20 uniformed police behind a barricade on Collins St in November 2006, she had no idea her efforts to protect society would attract what the magistrate this

week described as "defiant and aggressive behaviour".

"We copped an absolute quilting," she said of the ugly scenes involving demonstrators opposed to the Group of 20 nations summit.

Sen-Constable Dixon was not offered counselling or debriefing after the attack on her and often re-lives in her mind the chaotic scenes.

"We held the line 28 minutes, which is a long time to be fighting," she said.

Video footage presented in court came as a shock.

"A lot of the footage we hadn't seen. We were astounded as to the violence," she said.

Ben recently saw some images on the TV news.

"He asked, 'Is that what they did to you?'. He's not old enough to realise the impact," she said.

"But he gets frustrated... he would like Mum to do things that I can't do any more, like riding a bike or playing basketball."

Sen-Constable Dixon says her arm aches constantly, with pain radiating to her wrist, even at rest.

She has had to give up her passion, horse riding, because she can no longer handle the animals.

Sen-Constable Dixon has submitted a victims of crime application and expects to get \$2000 or \$3000 at most.

She is considering suing some of the protesters, but worries they do not have enough assets to bother.

She is still seeking legal advice about taking civil action against Victoria Police or Melbourne City Council.

Though she has tried to remain tough since her injury, Sen-Constable Dixon admits to some teary outbursts.

She cried when she heard this week protesters had been given suspended jail terms: "I was really upset."

She also cried for days after the protest.

"I was close to tears in court, very close... but I was not going to let those bastards win," she said.

In the wake of the sentencing of the protesters this week, she notes she is yet to receive an apology.

"Not one (protester) has said sorry to me," she said.

"I don't even know if I expected them to."

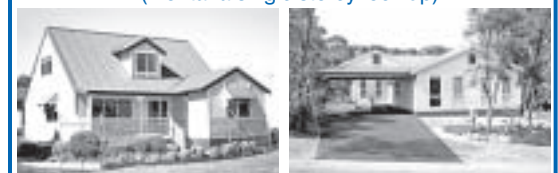
"I want them to know what they've done."

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