

Case Summary
Office of the Judge Advocate General

DEFENDANT: BDR Lane

TYPE OF PROCEEDING: General Court Martial

DATE OF TRIAL: 10-15 June 2026

VENUE: Robertson Barracks, NT

Charges and plea

	Statement of Offence	Plea
Charge 1	<i>Defence Force Discipline Act 1982</i> , subsection 61(3) and <i>Crimes Act 1900</i> (ACT), section 24 Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	Guilty

Pre-Trial: Closed hearing and non-publication orders

Application made:	No
Determination:	Not applicable

Trial: Facts and legal principles

Nil, as the case proceeded by way of a guilty plea.

Findings

	Finding
Charge 1	Guilty

Sentencing: Facts and legal principles

On 25 Apr 25, around 1700, the defendant was socialising with others at a bar in Darwin. The victim and his partner were also in attendance. Whilst the defendant was waiting in line near the bar he felt the victim hit the back of his head. When the defendant did not respond to this, the victim and his partner moved in front of the defendant and his friend. This led to an argument between the defendant and his friend and the victim and his partner over who had been in line first. The argument then escalated and the victim poked the defendant's friend in the chest with a badge pin. The victim then attempted to poke the defendant in the chest with the pin. In response, the defendant grabbed the victim's hand and then felt the victim's partner hit him in the head. The defendant then delivered a head butt to the victim that resulted in the victim receiving a fractured tooth and nerve damage.

In respect of the charge, the Prosecuting Officer conceded that the punishments of Imprisonment or Dismissal were inappropriate. The Prosecuting Officer also conceded that the defendant and his friend had been subject to some provocative behaviour from the victim and his partner.

In mitigation of penalty, the Defending Officer called the defendant to give some evidence in respect of his service history, remorse and steps taken to ensure no repetition of such behaviour. A number of references touching upon his otherwise good character were tendered. Emphasis was also placed on the utilitarian value of the plea, genuine remorse, prospects for rehabilitation and the

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provocative conduct of others. Ultimately, the Defending Officer submitted to the panel that the offending conduct fell somewhere towards the middle of the spectrum and urged them to consider combining the punishments of forfeiture of seniority, a fine and a severe reprimand. The Defending Officer also did not oppose an order for reparation being made. The order would account for the sum total of dental work done for the victim.

By imposing the respective punishments, the General Court Martial panel concluded that they were the minimum required to satisfy the principles of general deterrence and need to maintain good order and discipline in the Defence Force.

Punishments and orders

Charge 1	Forfeiture of seniority, new seniority to date from 01 January 2025; Fined the sum of \$2000 (\$2000 suspended); Reparation to the Commonwealth of \$3505.92 payable in fortnightly instalments of \$100.00.
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Outcome on automatic review

The Reviewing Authority's decision on automatic review was handed down on 01 August 2026.

	Conviction	Punishments / Orders
Charge 1	Upheld	Upheld

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