

**BETWEEN:** Public Prosecutor

**AND:** Josephine Meto

*Date:* 26 August 2021  
*By:* Justice G.A. Andrée Wiltens  
*Counsel:* Mr G. Simeon for the Public Prosecutor  
Mr H. Vira for Mr L. Moli for the Defendant

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**SENTENCE**

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A. Introduction

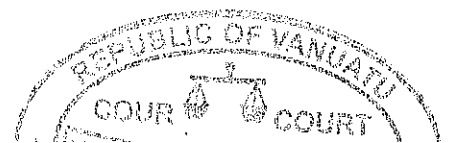
1. Ms Meto pleaded to possession of 818.5 grams of cannabis at the earliest opportunity available to her. She is 22 years of age, now unemployed as a result of this allegation being laid against her. She has no previous convictions.

B. Facts

2. Ms Meto was a courier. She collected the cannabis which was packaged in 10 parcels from a man on Emae Island and carried it to Port Vila where she was to deliver them to another person. Her father seems to have involved in those arrangements, which is quite reprehensible. Ms Meto states she had no knowledge of what was in the packages.
3. The quantity of cannabis clearly demonstrates it was brought to Port Vila for commercial purposes, but there is no evidence that Ms Meto was party to that - she could well have been a mere "drugs mule", carrying the drugs from one place to another.

C. Sentence

4. I consider the appropriate penalty, given Ms Meto's age, her lack of previous convictions, and the role that she played in this matter, is a short suspended sentence, coupled with community work. The suspended sentence is designed to ensure no repetition and to act

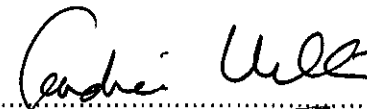


as a deterrent sentence, and the community work is designed for Ms Meto to give back to her community. Her apology and the gift of a mat is insufficient on my view to make good to her family and community for her offending.

5. Ms Meto is sentenced to 6 months imprisonment, suspended for 3 years. She needs to remain offence-free for 3 years to ensure she does not serve the 6 months term.
6. She is also to complete 120 hours community work.
7. The cannabis is to be destroyed.
8. Ms Meto has 14 days to appeal the sentence.

**Dated at Port Vila this 26<sup>th</sup> day of August 2021**

**BY THE COURT**

  
Justice G.A. Andrée Wiltens

