

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 31 AUGUST 2015**

**RE: SENTENCING IN RUGBY DEATH MATTER**

A 25 year-old Blayne Shepard was sentenced to three years imprisonment in the Durban Regional Court on Friday after being convicted of culpable homicide in June 2015.

The matter relates to the death of Brett Williams in March 2013 near the Kings Park rugby stadium. Williams, an ex-South African citizen was in the country for work and had gone to watch a rugby match at the stadium. The incident occurred after the match when an argument arose between the deceased and a group of which the accused was a part of. The deceased was kicked to death in a fight that ensued.

While initially four other accused were also charged, Shepard was the only person to be convicted. The charges against three of the accused were withdrawn and the fourth accused turned state witness.

In aggravation of sentence, regional court prosecutor Krishen Shah argued that the attack on the deceased was brutal and unnecessary. He described it as a 'deplorable and despicable act.' Shah told the court that after the argument between the men, the deceased had apologised for what he had said and that his death was unwarranted.

In handing down sentence, the presiding officer told the accused that while his behaviour was not pre-meditated, it was negligent.

Shepard was granted an application for leave to appeal his conviction and sentence. His bail of R5000 was extended pending the appeal.

The Director of Public Prosecutions in KZN, Adv Moipone Noko welcomes the sentence. She said, "We are satisfied with the court's finding. This sentence shows that the rights

of all people in South Africa (whether locals or foreign nationals) are protected by the courts and the constitution.”

Kind Regards,

**Natasha Kara**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN**

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