

Over-limit death driver jailed

Classification: CRIME ACCIDENTS TRAFFIC FATAL WA

Subhead:

Text: Ten drinks down, on his P-plates, and wanting to carry on his big night out, **Lawrence Evans** did not want to leave his new baby — a poison-ivy green 2008 Holden V8 VE SS ute — parked in Northbridge overnight.

So he rolled the dice, and drove it to the front of Metro City in Northbridge to chat up some girls before cruising to the Crown casino.

Included in the line of traffic the ute was temporarily holding up at 1.30am on January 16 last year was a police car. The officers flashed their vehicle's lights and sounded the siren to try to get the cars to move on.

But **Evans**, then 20, thought the lights and sirens were for him and, fearing for his licence and the powerful car he had been driving for just two weeks, he took off.

In the 700m of Roe Street which **Evans** covered in seconds, he reached 156 km/h. And despite his cousin in the passenger seat urging him to relax and slow down, **Evans** refused.

Approaching a slower car at the lights near the Horseshoe Bridge, **Evans** veered to the wrong side of the road, hit the median strip and lost control.

“Driving at that speed in that area at that time made that vehicle a weapon,” prosecutor Les Hobson told the Supreme Court.

The victim was 48-year-old Peter Cullen, who was standing on the driver's side of his City of Perth garbage truck when he was struck by the flash of green metal.

Mr Cullen had horrific injuries — fractures to both thighs and shins, as well as massive internal bleeding — but **Evans** left the scene, returning minutes later as bystanders, police and a nearby ambulance tried to save Mr Cullen.

They could not and he died in hospital three days later.

Yesterday, **Evans** wept in the dock as he was sentenced to five years and nine months jail after admitting charges of manslaughter, failing to render aid and drink-driving on a provisional licence.

The parents, brother and sister of Mr Cullen also wiped away tears as the impact of his death on their family was relayed.

“Peter's life was taken by the unnecessary and reckless actions of another as he was going about his job of serving the community,” they said in a

statement. “We should all demand our basic right to live our lives without the threat of mortal harm by others at any moment.”

Defence lawyer Sam Vandongen described how **Evans** had emerged from a childhood of alcohol and violence in Wyndham to earn himself a scholarship to Christ Church Grammar School, and the admiration of almost everyone he met.

They included teammates and coaches at WAFL club Claremont, where he had played colts and reserves level and was also known by his nickname — Killer.

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