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Man accused of police dog attack wrote graffiti in cell, court told Article from: **Herald Sun**

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Elissa Hunt

June 09, 2009 06:09pm

A TEEN who allegedly tagged a cell and faces charges of kicking a police dog wept uncontrollably when freed on bail tonight.

Zar Hunt, 18, kicked police dog Salem and a co-offender allegedly struck the animal with a baseball bat after youths were seen defacing trains at Newport rail yard yesterday.

Melbourne Magistrates' Court heard Mr Hunt laughed when he was arrested, disrespected the bail justice hearing his case and tagged the inside of his police cell using a stone.

Constable Emma De Bruyn told the court Mr Hunt texted three friends to join him in painting trains and used bolt cutters to enter the rail yard, causing \$1500 damage.

The teens spent 20 minutes spraying graffiti on a train carriage while one took photos, the court heard.

Police were called and the teens started running, pursued by the 10-year-old German Shepherd.

The dog, who was recently awarded a Victoria Police service medal, latched onto the ankle of one teen who allegedly struck him with a baseball bat.

Constable De Bruyn said Salem let go but chased another youth and grabbed his leg, bringing him down and causing injuries needing hospitalisation.



Police dog Salem. Picture: Victoria Police



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The court heard Mr Hunt and another youth surrounded the animal and Mr Hunt allegedly kicked him.

Salem suffered severe bruising as a result of the attack and needed painkillers after a visit to the vet.

The dog will have a few days off but is expected to make a full recovery.

Mr Hunt was later seen on cameras in his cell picking up a stone and scratching his tag into the double-glazed window and interior of the cell, Constable De Bruyn said.

The court heard Mr Hunt will plead guilty over the incident and was vulnerable in custody due to his age and a possible drug-induced psychosis.

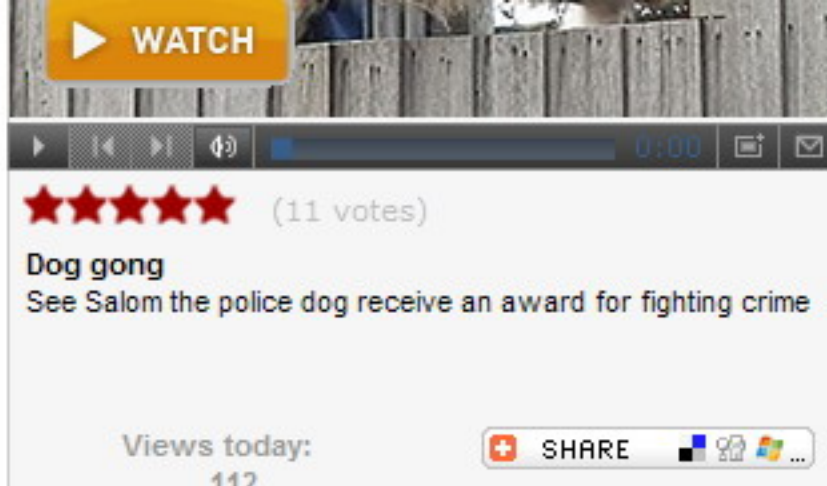
Magistrate Amanda Chambers said she was concerned about the attack on Salem and Mr Hunt's actions while in the police cells.

"Your behaviour in many respects is simply out of control," she said.

But supervision by Youth Justice, mental health assessment and strict conditions including a curfew would reduce the risk of reoffending on bail, she said.

Mr Hunt, of Tullamarine, is charged with criminal damage, beating an animal, possessing a controlled weapon, possessing graffiti implements and trespass.

He was bailed to face a plea hearing next month.



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