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## Paroled Offender in Brick Assault Case Faces New Domestic Violence Charges

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Roderick Holohan, a 55-year-old man from New South Wales' south coast, has pleaded guilty to domestic violence charges just months after his parole release for a 2009 brick attack on a police officer. At Nowra Local Court, Holohan admitted to two counts of stalking and intimidation with intent to cause physical or mental harm, raising concerns about the effectiveness of parole policies for high-risk offenders. His actions, including threats to harm a woman and her children, have reignited debate over the state's parole system, which critics argue fails to adequately protect the public.

In May 2025, Holohan, who was released on parole in November 2024 after serving 15 years of a 20-year sentence, entered an intimate relationship with a woman in Bomaderry. Court documents reveal he threatened her, saying, “I’m going to do to you like I did to someone else,” and “I am going to cut you open,” while also threatening to burn her house down with her two children inside, armed with a concrete paver. Police arrested Holohan at the Bomaderry address on May 11, 2025, after he allegedly attempted to flee by jumping a fence. He was found hiding in bushes and charged with two counts of stalking and intimidation. The State Parole Authority (SPA) immediately began proceedings to revoke his parole, and Holohan remains in custody pending further court appearances, with a sentencing assessment due from the Nowra Community Corrections District Office on September 17, 2025. His original sentence for the 2009 crime expires on February 13, 2029.

Holohan’s criminal history spans over four decades, beginning at age 13 with a 1982 appearance at Port Kembla Children’s Court for breaking into homes and stealing. Since then, he has faced dozens of charges, including attempted murder, serious assault, arson, robbery, and multiple breaches of Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs). In 1997, he pleaded guilty to wounding with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm and breaching an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO). In 2004, he was imprisoned for five years for malicious intent to cause grievous bodily harm. Court documents also note Holohan’s use of over 11 aliases, including Rod Cruikshank, often paired with false birthdates, complicating his criminal record. His 2009 attack on then-Sergeant Samantha Barlow involved a brutal assault with a brick in Kings Cross, leaving her with severe injuries and robbing her of \$200 to buy heroin.

The decision to grant Holohan parole in 2024 sparked significant controversy. The SPA, citing the need for supervised reintegration, argued that monitoring Holohan in the community was safer than releasing him unsupervised at the end of his sentence in 2029. Despite evidence of his high risk of reoffending and poor prison behavior, the SPA, supported by Corrective Services NSW, prioritized parole to facilitate rehabilitation programs. Critics, including Barlow and her husband Laurence, warned of his propensity to reoffend, with Laurence calling the SPA’s decision akin to “playing Russian roulette with the community.” The couple’s pleas to keep Holohan incarcerated were overlooked, and flaws in the opt-in Victims Register left them uninformed of his parole hearing until days before.

This case has intensified scrutiny of New South Wales' parole system, particularly for violent offenders. The SPA's rationale, that supervised parole reduces reoffending risks, clashes with Holohan's rapid return to crime. Legislative changes introduced in 2025 aim to improve victim notifications, mandating that eligible victims receive information about their right to opt into the Victims Register. However, critics argue this falls short of an opt-out system that would better protect victims like Barlow. Holohan's reoffending underscores the challenges of balancing rehabilitation with public safety, fueling calls for stricter parole criteria and more robust oversight to prevent high-risk offenders from causing further harm.