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**Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association
and
Sex Workers Outreach Project of New South Wales (SWOP)**

Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association and Sex Workers Outreach Project of New South Wales (SWOP) extend our sincere condolences to those affected by the random and senseless acts of violence committed in yesterday's Clarence Street attack in Sydney.

We note that media coverage of the attack has placed emphasis on the occupation of one of the victims, identifying her as a sex worker. We urge those reporting on this story to take greater care around this issue, and to avoid or redact sensationalist coverage that fails to portray her as a whole individual.

Michaela Dunn was a woman, a community member, and a whole individual who will be missed and mourned.

Emphasising the occupation of one victim and attributing the attack to sex work, whether explicitly or implicitly, perpetuates stereotypes of sex workers that blames them when they are victims of crime and, in this case, detracts from the tragic fact that a young woman was murdered by a violent man.

There is significant stigma and discrimination experienced by sex workers and too often our identities, lives and experiences are reduced to our occupation. This means we face barriers to accessing justice and reporting crimes against us, because so often the violence is attributed to our work.

Scarlet Alliance and SWOP NSW request that media are respectful to friends and family of Michaela Dunn, and recognise we are mourning the loss of a valued and loved human being.

We offer the victim's family our deepest and most sincere condolences at this time. Our collective hearts are heavy. Members of the sex worker community who would like to connect with other peers are encouraged to contact their local sex worker peer organisation.

For more information visit www.swop.org.au and www.scarletalliance.org.au.

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