



MAGISTRATES COURT of TASMANIA

CORONIAL DIVISION



Record of Investigation into Death (Without Inquest)

*Coroners Act 1995
Coroners Rules 2006
Rule 11*

I, Stephen Raymond Carey, Coroner, having investigated the death of Leanne Maree Stacey

Find, pursuant to Section 28(1) of the Coroners Act 1995, that:

- a) The identity of the deceased is Leanne Maree Stacey;
- b) Ms Stacey died in the circumstances described in this finding;
- c) Ms Stacey died as a result of the combined effects of ischaemic and valvular heart disease and combined drug (dothiepin, morphine and benzodiazepine) intoxication;
- d) Ms Stacey died on 25 November 2014 at 1/4 William St Latrobe;
- e) Ms Stacey was born in Launceston, Tasmania on 27 April 1963 and was aged 51 years;
- f) Ms Stacey was single and was unemployed at the date of death; and
- g) No other person contributed to the death of Ms Stacey.

In making the above findings I have had regard to the evidence gained in the investigation into death. The evidence comprises the police report of death; an opinion of the forensic pathologist as to cause of death; relevant police and witness affidavits and medical records.

Background:

Ms Stacey was born in Tasmania and never married or had children. Her mother, Mrs Gwendoline Goold, confirms that her daughter had previously lived in Melbourne and that drug usage had played a significant role in her daughter's life. Ms Stacey had previously undergone rehabilitation for this drug usage, however, it continued on until her death. For the past 15 years Ms Stacey lived with her mother at 1/4 William St, Latrobe.

Circumstances Surrounding the Death:

At about 6:00pm on the evening of 24 November 2014, Mrs Goold observed Ms Stacey sitting in the lounge area sweating profusely. Mrs Goold has asked if she had used marijuana, which she was told "no". She has then asked if she has had 'a needle' to which Ms Stacey stated "I'm not going to apologise".

At approximately 8:30pm Mrs Goold went to bed leaving her daughter sitting in the lounge area. About 1:30am on 25 November Mrs Goold had reason to get out of bed and spoke to the deceased who was lying on the floor in front of the heater. The heater was not going at the time.

Later that morning, about 8:30am Mrs Goold had risen and found her daughter lying in the same position as she had been when she had last seen her. Mrs Goold could not wake her and called another daughter, Lyn Dolega, who arrived at the residence approximately ten minutes later.

Ms Dolega has contacted Tasmania Ambulance Service and rolled Ms Stacey from a foetal type position on her left side, over on to her back and, having been given directions over the phone to attempt CPR, she carried this out until ambulance services arrived. Ambulance personnel arrived at the scene and determined that Ms Stacey could not be revived. She had blood around her nose and there were tissues with blood beside her. There was a needle track type mark on her left arm near the inside of her elbow.

Officers from Tasmania Police attended the scene and were advised of the death. There was nothing suspicious about the death of Ms Stacey and there was evidence of drug usage in her room. Police contacted the deceased's doctor who advised that Ms Stacey was suffering from diabetes and Hepatitis C.

Post-mortem examination, which included blood toxicology testing, identified that Ms Stacey suffered ischaemic and valvular heart disease and this, combined with a number of drugs found in her blood, caused her death. The levels of drugs found in her system were not particularly high but there was evidence to suggest she had injected oral medications.

Comments and Recommendations:

The circumstances of death are not such as to require me to make any comments or recommendations pursuant to Section 28 of the *Coroners Act 1995*.

I convey my sincere condolences to the family and loved ones of Ms Stacey.

Dated: 25 April 2016 at Hobart in the state of Tasmania.

Stephen Raymond Carey
Coroner