



# MAGISTRATES COURT *of* TASMANIA

## CORONIAL DIVISION



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### **Record of Investigation into Death (Without Inquest)**

*Coroners Act 1995  
Coroners Rules 2006  
Rule 11*

I, Olivia McTaggart, Coroner, having investigated the death of Peter John Nunn,

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

- a) The identity of the deceased is Peter John Nunn;
- b) Mr Nunn died as a result of injuries sustained in a motor vehicle crash;
- c) The cause of death was haemothorax (acute blood loss in thoracic cavity) and blunt force trauma to the left chest; and
- d) Mr Nunn died on 30 November 2018 near Lilydale, Tasmania.

In making the above findings I have had regard to the evidence gained in the comprehensive investigation into Mr Nunn's death. The evidence comprises the police report of death; an opinion of the pathologist who conducted the autopsy; police and witness affidavits; expert crash investigation evidence and vehicle inspection evidence; medical records and reports; and forensic evidence.

I make the following further findings.

Peter John Nunn was born in Guildford, England on 29 April 1953 and was aged 65 years at his death. He was married, had two children from a previous marriage, and worked as a co-manager of a bed and breakfast facility and as a casual novice motorcycle instructor with AJL Training. He lived with his wife, Janice Nunn, at Lalla (adjacent to the town of Lilydale).

At around 5.15am on Friday 30 November 2018, Mr Nunn was the driver of a red Suzuki Swift hatchback vehicle that was travelling south on Lilydale Road, 150 metres west of the rural property of 903 Lilydale Road. The crash investigation evidence before me allows me to find that the vehicle was exiting a sweeping left bend at very high speed when it lost control and suffered two significant impacts to its rear and front

areas. The impact force collapsed the driver's seat, ejecting Mr Nunn from his seat belt. He died at the scene as a result of his injuries.

Mr Nunn held a full driver's licence and had a good driving record. I am satisfied on the evidence that he was a very competent driver. At the time of the crash, he suffered no medical issues. Toxicological evidence showed that no alcohol or illicit drugs were in his body. His vehicle was roadworthy and registered.

On the evening before the crash, Mr Nunn had gone to bed earlier than normal as he intended to rise early and attend a hot yoga class in Launceston, due to commence at 6.00am. According to his wife, Mr Nunn was in the habit of attending by 5.30am to allow time to park his car and relax before the class. Analysis of the evidence reflects that, at the time of the crash, he was running late for his 5.30am arrival. A witness, being an experienced driver who observed Mr Nunn's vehicle prior to the crash from the junction of Lilydale and Station Roads, estimated his speed at 140km/h just before the point of the loss of control. The speed analysis based upon the crash investigator's observations of the markings at the scene and application of relevant formulae, showed that the speed of the vehicle was 154km/h prior to Mr Nunn losing control. This result corresponds with the eyewitness evidence.

Mr Nunn had travelled upon the roadway for a period of 20 years, was familiar with it and was an experienced driver. The road surface was good and the weather was fine. Crash analysis shows overt driver input at the time of the loss of control and I find that the crash was not intentional on the part of Mr Nunn.

The crash investigator, First Class Constable Nigel Housego, speculated in his report that Mr Nunn may have swerved to avoid hitting an animal on the roadway. Mrs Nunn stated in her affidavit that Mr Nunn would have tried to avoid an animal if there had been one in his path. She also stated that, upon her subsequent attendance at the crash scene, she found Mr Nunn's drink bottle with the lid off, suggesting to her that he may have been distracted by drinking at the time. I cannot make a finding as to the reason why Mr Nunn lost control of his vehicle resulting in his death, although his very high speed was obviously the most significant contributing factor in his inability to regain control of his vehicle.

### **Comments and Recommendations**

The circumstances of Mr Nunn's death demonstrate clearly the dangers of driving at very high speeds, including the small margin of error in the event of unforeseen circumstances and the limited ability to regain control of a vehicle.

I extend my appreciation to investigating officer, First Class Constable Nigel Housego, for his most helpful investigation and report.

The circumstances of Mr Nunn's death are not such as to require me to make any recommendations pursuant to Section 28 of the *Coroners Act 1995*.

I convey my sincere condolences to the family and loved ones of Peter John Nunn.

**Dated:** 12 November 2019 at Hobart Coroners Court in the State of Tasmania.

**Olivia McTaggart**  
**Coroner**