



MAGISTRATES COURT *of* TASMANIA

CORONIAL DIVISION

Record of Investigation into Death (Without Inquest)

Coroners Act 1995
Coroners Rules 2006
Rule 11

(These findings have been de-identified in relation to the name of the deceased, family, friends and others by direction of the Coroner pursuant to s57(1)(c) of the Coroners Act 1995)

I, Simon Cooper, Coroner, having investigated the death of EJ

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

- a) The identity of the deceased is EJ;
- b) EJ died as a result of multiple injuries sustained in a witnessed fall from height. Her death was the result of misadventure and there are no suspicious circumstances associated with it. No person caused or contributed to her death. Rescue and resuscitation efforts were appropriate;
- c) The cause of EJ's death was head, neck and abdominal injuries; and
- d) EJ died on 8 January 2021 at the Sand River Conservation Area, Buckland, Tasmania.

In making the above findings I have had regard to the evidence gained in the comprehensive investigation into EJ's death. The evidence includes:

- Police Report of Death for the Coroner;
- Affidavits establishing identity and life extinct;
- Report – Dr Christopher Lawrence, Forensic Pathologist;
- Report – Forensic Science Service Tasmania;
- Records – Ambulance Tasmania;
- Affidavits (8) – From family and witnesses;
- Affidavit – Constable Richard Cunliffe, sworn 5 March 2021;
- Affidavit – Senior Constable Alistair King, sworn 10 February 2021 (and associated photographs);
- Affidavit – Sergeant Matthew Drumm, sworn 8 February 2021;
- Affidavit – Intensive Flight Care Paramedic James Sims, sworn 14 January 2021;

- Affidavit – Senior Constable Lauren McMahon, sworn 25 January 2021 (and associated photographs); and
- Affidavit – Sergeant Adam Archer, sworn 4 March 2021 (and associated drone footage, diagrams and photographs).

EJ, aged just 11, died when she fell approximately 16 metres down a cliff at the Sand River Conservation Area, near Buckland. She was present at the Conservation Area with members of her family who were engaged in the pursuit of rock climbing.

She suffered unsurvivable head and neck and abdominal injuries and was unable to be resuscitated. The autopsy showed she suffered significant injury to her brain and the base of her skull as well as lacerations of her liver and right kidney, both of which caused significant haemorrhage. Both her arms and her lower right leg were also fractured.

Toxicological analysis of samples taken at autopsy indicated that neither drugs nor alcohol played any role in her fall and subsequent death.

The results of the comprehensive investigation carried out by Constable Cunliffe satisfy me to the requisite legal degree that EJ's death was a tragic accident.

Comments and recommendations

The circumstances of EJ's 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 EJ.

Dated: 20 August 2021 at Hobart in the State of Tasmania.

Simon Cooper
Coroner