



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, Simon Cooper, Coroner, having investigated the death of Corey Benjamin Maverick Blazely

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

- a) The identity of the deceased is Corey Benjamin Maverick Blazely;
- b) Mr Blazely died as a result of injuries sustained when as a pedestrian he was hit by a motor vehicle;
- c) The cause of Mr Blazely's death was blunt trauma of the head; and
- d) Mr Blazely died on 13 November 2016 on the Southern Outlet, Dynnyrne, Tasmania.

In making the above findings I have had regard to the evidence gained in the comprehensive investigation into Mr Blazely's death. The evidence comprises an opinion of the forensic pathologist who conducted the autopsy, relevant police and witness affidavits, medical records and reports, and forensic and photographic evidence.

The evidence enables me to make the following additional factual findings. Mr Blazely was born at Hobart in Tasmania on 11 December 1990, the son of Susan and Neville Blazely. He had a younger sister. Raised and educated in Hobart, Mr Blazely completed an apprenticeship as a glazier. He was working as a glazier at the time of his death.

Mr Blazely's interests included cars, drag racing and horse racing.

After spending the early part of Saturday 12 November 2016 at home and shopping with his mother, Mr Blazely headed to a friend's residence at Rosetta for a barbecue and drinks. He arrived at the gathering between 2.00pm and 3.00pm to help celebrate a friend's birthday. During the course of the afternoon, Mr Blazely, along with others at the party, socialised, played some music and relaxed. The evidence is that Mr Blazely drank approximately six or seven cans of pre-mix Jack Daniels whiskey cans.

At approximately 8.00pm, a group of which Mr Blazely was part, travelled into Hobart by taxi to a bar in Liverpool Street, Hobart. While there, all members of the group including Mr Blazely continued drinking alcohol.

Mr Blazely left the bar (and his friends) sometime between 1.00am and 1.30am. It was by then of course 13 November 2016. He met up with a female friend, Ms Michelle Lucas, with whom he had been in a relationship since April. The pair met at a bar in Salamanca Place at approximately 1.45am. The couple talked outside of the bar for approximately 30 minutes regarding the future of their relationship.

Because the music was loud outside of the bar, Ms Lucas and Mr Blazely decided to get a taxi to Ms Lucas' home in Kingston. The pair continued to talk about their relationship and began bickering towards the top of Davey Street. Ms Lucas asked the taxi to pull over and suggested that Mr Blazely get out. He did. Ms Lucas continued in the taxi to Kingston. As she did so she continued to exchange text messages with Mr Blazely. The last message she received was at 3.01am.

At approximately 3.05am, Ms Emma Lahey was driving a 2003 silver Nissan X-Trail south on the Southern Outlet in the easternmost lane. Ms Lahey had three passengers. At the time it was raining, the road was wet, it was dark and there was no street lighting.

At the same time Mr Blazely was walking south on the road surface in the easternmost lane of the Southern Outlet.

Ms Lahey later told investigators that as she drove on the Southern Outlet, approximately 500 metres from Davey Street, she saw:

*"...an arm from about the elbow forward, holding what looked like a glass bottle like a Corona Beer Stubby. This arm and then the outline of a person when I noticed them would have been ahead of my car about 2 to 3 meters and I would say this person's hand was in line with the left (passenger side) of my car".*

Almost immediately, the left passenger side of her vehicle collided with Mr Blazely. He mounted the left passenger side of the vehicle with his head striking the left side of the windscreen and was thrown in the air coming to rest against an Armco railing, which was approximately 2.5 metres east of the bitumen road edge.

It is implicit in Ms Lahey's account that she only noticed Mr Blazely at a time when it was impossible to avoid hitting him.

Ms Lahey's vehicle continued south before she pulled over and parked on the left hand side gravel road edge, approximately 157 metres from where Mr Blazely's body had landed.

It is clear from Ms Lahey's own account, the evidence of her passengers, and from physical evidence at the scene, that Ms Lahey took no evasive action at all prior to hitting Mr Blazely.

Police, Ambulance and Fire Service were all quickly on the scene but sadly Mr Blazely was dead and nothing could be done for him.

Mr Blazely's body was removed from the scene and transported to the mortuary at the Royal Hobart Hospital. At the Royal Hobart Hospital an autopsy was carried out by experienced forensic pathologist Dr Donald Ritchey. Dr Ritchey found that Mr Blazely had suffered significant blunt trauma to his head, neck, chest, abdomen, arms and legs. He expressed the opinion that the cause of his death was a fatal head injury. I accept his opinion. Samples were taken from Mr Blazely's body at autopsy and subsequently analysed at the laboratory of Forensic Science Service Tasmania. A blood alcohol level in Mr Blazely's body of 0.23 g per 100 mL of blood was detected.

Ms Lahey was subject to the usual post-crash testing. No alcohol or drugs were identified as having been present in her body at the time of the crash. Her vehicle was impounded and later inspected by a Transport Inspector. Nothing about the mechanical condition of the vehicle was identified which could have caused or contributed to the happening of the crash.

The circumstances of Mr Blazely's death were comprehensively examined by an officer from Tasmania Police Southern District Crash Investigation Services. That officer, Senior Constable Hall, provided a detailed report to me as part of the investigation. He observed that a speed analysis was not able to be conducted due to limited available evidence in the vicinity of the crash because of poor weather (rain). He expressed the view that there was no evidence to indicate exactly where on the road surface Mr Blazely had been at the time he was struck, although it was clear that he was on the road surface.

Senior Constable Hall noted there was no evidence to suggest that Ms Lahey took any form of evasive action prior to the happening of the collision. In particular, he found no evidence to suggest that her vehicle was at any stage under maximum braking.

As part of the investigation, a witness, Ms Allison Grundy, was located and spoken to by investigators. Ms Grundy described picking up her partner from a bar in the Salamanca area at approximately 2.50am and leaving the Caltex service station at the intersection of Davey

and Regent Streets just after 3.00am. She described driving south in light drizzle on the Southern Outlet. Ms Grundy said there were no street lights on the section of road and that night was dark. She said as she got onto the Outlet, roughly only 300 to 400 metres from Davey Street, that “all of a sudden there was a man on the road”. However, she was able to swerve into the other lane and avoid hitting him.

In the circumstances it can only be that the “man on the road” was Mr Blazely. Ms Grundy described him as wearing dark clothing and Mr Blazely’s body was subsequently found to be clad in dark clothing.

On all of the evidence I am satisfied that Mr Blazely died as a result of injuries sustained when he was struck by a vehicle driven by Ms Lahey in the eastern southbound lane of the Southern Outlet. He was struck roughly 400 metres south of the intersection of the Outlet with Davey Street. At the time he was struck Mr Blazely was on the road surface of the Southern Outlet.

**Comments and Recommendations:**

I extend my appreciation to investigating officer Senior Constable Adam Hall for his investigation and report.

The circumstances of Mr Blazely’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 Mr Blazely on their loss.

**Dated** 5 November 2018 at Hobart, Tasmania.

**Simon Cooper**  
**Coroner**