



MAGISTRATES COURT of TASMANIA

CORONIAL DIVISION

Record of Investigation into Death (Without Inquest)

*Coroners Act 1995
Coroners Rules 2006
Rule 11*

I, Simon Cooper, Coroner, having investigated the death of Carter Jim Taylor

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

- a) The identity of the deceased is Carter Jim Taylor;
- b) Mr Taylor died as a result of fall from height;
- c) The cause of Mr Taylor's death was blunt traumatic injuries; and
- d) Mr Taylor died on 2 April 2022 at Clifton Beach, Tasmania.

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

- Police Report of Death for the Coroner;
- Affidavits establishing identity;
- Report – Dr Donald Ritchey, Forensic Pathologist;
- Report – Forensic Science Service Tasmania;
- Medical Record – Eastern Shore Doctors;
- Records – Ambulance Tasmania (Aero medical retrieval);
- Affidavit – Ms Robyn Taylor, sworn 28 April 2022;
- Statutory Declaration – Mr Dylan Dobson, made 2 April 2022;
- Affidavit – Mr Dylan Dobson, sworn 18 May 2023;
- Affidavit – Mr Harley Richardson, sworn 10 May 2023;
- Affidavit – Mr Charlie Whelan, sworn 18 August 2022;
- Affidavit – Dr Paul Scott, sworn 31 August 2022;
- Affidavit – Ms Caitlin Little, Intensive Care Flight Paramedic, sworn 24 July 2022;
- Affidavit – Mr Christopher Mullen, Intensive Care Flight Paramedic, sworn 21 July 2022;
- Affidavit – Senior Constable Jake Sansom, sworn 18 May 2023;
- Affidavit – Senior Constable Benjamin Gough, sworn 5 April 2022;

- Affidavit – Trainee Constable Adam Hall, sworn 20 June 2022;
- Affidavit – Constable Gemma Harris, sworn 26 June 2022;
- Affidavit – Constable James Heron, sworn 27 June 2022;
- Affidavit – Senior Constable Emma Wiggins, sworn 1 July 2022;
- Affidavit – Sergeant Rodney Stacey APM, sworn 27 May 2022;
- Affidavit – Senior Constable Matthew Smith, sworn 15 May 2022 (with drone footage and photographs);
- Affidavit – First Class Constable Oliver Mundy-Castle, Forensic Services; sworn 28 June 2022 (and photographs); and
- Police body worn camera footage and mobile phone download evidence.

Background

Carter Jim Taylor was the only son of Robyn and Paul Taylor. He had two older sisters – Ebony and Nellie.

He was born in Hobart, Tasmania on 23 August 2001.

Mr Taylor was an apprentice builder at the time of his death. He lived at the family home in Sandford. It is evident he was popular with his colleagues and had a number of friends, particularly Harley Richardson, Dylan Dobson and Charlie Whelan. The group of young men were especially interested in four wheel driving and associated outdoor activities.

He had no known health issues. In fact it is evident that Mr Taylor was in robust good health.

Circumstances of death

During the afternoon of Saturday 2 April 2022, Mr Taylor was walking in the vicinity of Cape Deslacs, at the eastern end of Clifton Beach. The area is notable for high sea cliffs. He was in the company of Mr Richardson and Mr Dobson.

The young men were walking, in single file, approximately 20 metres from the edge of the cliffs. They made their way closer to the edge of the cliff. At a distance of 4-5 metres from the cliff edge, Mr Taylor lost his footing, landed on his stomach and started to slide, feet first towards the top of the cliff. Despite grabbing at vegetation he was unable to stop himself and slid off the edge, falling approximately 30 metres before landing on rocks at the base of the cliff.

Mr Dobson and Mr Richardson called out to him but Mr Taylor did not respond. Mr Dobson immediately called 000 (the call was made at 3.19 pm). He also called Mr Whelan, who made his way to the scene as well.

Emergency services responded quickly. The rescue helicopter with Emergency Medicine Specialist Dr Paul Scott and Intensive Care Flight Paramedic Caitlin Little landed on rocks close to where Mr Taylor lay at 3.49 pm. They went straight to Mr Taylor. He was unconscious but breathing, although terribly injured. Efforts were made to stabilise Mr Taylor, before, with the assistance of extra crew (the helicopter had returned to Cambridge to collect Sergeant Stacey and Paramedic Mullen), he was placed on a spinal board and winched clear from the scene.

Uniform police and Tasmania Fire Service personnel also made their way to the scene to assist.

The helicopter landed in a safe place nearby. Urgent treatment continued, but Mr Taylor could not be saved and he was declared deceased at 5.33 pm.

Investigation

Mr Taylor's body was taken by mortuary ambulance to the Royal Hobart Hospital.

His body was formally identified by his parents and admitted to the hospital mortuary. At the mortuary Mr Taylor's body was examined by experienced Forensic Pathologist, Dr Donald Ritchey.

Respectful of the wishes of Mr and Mrs Taylor, Dr Ritchey did not perform an autopsy. A CT scan and an external examination of the body amply demonstrated the extent of his injuries. The injuries included significant blunt trauma to the head and neck (including skull and facial fractures, a transverse fracture of the base of the skull and traumatic subarachnoid haemorrhage) and blunt trauma to the thorax, abdomen and pelvis.

The injuries combined to cause Mr Taylor's death.

Toxicological analysis of samples showed no apparent significant toxicology.

Conclusion

I am satisfied as a result of the evidence obtained in relation to Mr Taylor's death there are no suspicious circumstances.

I am satisfied to the requisite legal standard that his death was a tragic accident.

Comments and Recommendations

I express my admiration for the response of emergency services to Mr Taylor's fall. Nothing more could have been done to save his life.

Similarly, I do not consider that Mr Taylor's friends, Mr Dobson and Mr Richardson could have done anything to have prevented the tragic accident. They, along with Mr Whelan, did everything they possibly could to help.

The circumstances of Mr Taylor's tragic young 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 Taylor.

Dated: 18 August 2023 at Hobart, in the State of Tasmania.

Simon Cooper

Coroner