



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 names of, family, friends and others by direction of the Coroner pursuant to s57(1)(c) of the Coroners Act 1995)

I, Olivia McTaggart, Coroner, having investigated the death of Adrian Steven Lacroix

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

- a) The identity of the deceased is Adrian Steven Lacroix;
- b) Mr Lacroix was born as Adrian Dale in Hobart on 5 February 1978. He was born to HR and TR, and he had two siblings. He changed his name to Adrian Steven Lacroix in 2000. At the time of his death, he was aged 43 years and was living with his father in Derwent Park. He married YL in 2000 and the marriage bore two children: XY in 2002 and VE in 2003. The relationship broke down in about 2014, although there were ongoing disputes concerning the children until the time of his death. Mr Lacroix had various forms of employment during his life, including managing hotels. At the time of his death, he operated a small business named 'Lacroix Poultry' and sold poultry and eggs around Tasmania.

Mr Lacroix had a long history of significant mental health problems, commencing in his teenage years, and he had been receiving treatment since that time. In 2010, he was suspected of involvement in the drowning death of his mother-in-law, which led to the breakdown of family relationships. His mental health further deteriorated in subsequent years and he became involved in numerous sets of legal proceedings. He also consumed alcohol excessively. He had a lengthy record of offending, consisting mainly of drink driving convictions, breaching bail, police offences, family violence and traffic offences. More recently, he suffered additional stress as a result of his children's issues with mental health, alcohol and drugs, as well as being in financial difficulties himself because of a large debt. It appears that Mr Lacroix first expressed suicidal thoughts in 2013.

At 6.10pm on 6 March 2021, two police officers attended Mr Lacroix's residential address as he was reported to be "ranting and raving" outside his house. It was also reported that he had a cleaver and knife in the vehicle, a BMW X5. He became abusive towards the officers and returned inside his house. Not long after the police left, he took his father's BMW X5 and drove away from the residence, travelling alone. He had a number of chickens in the vehicle and was intending to drive to Avoca and then to Sheffield, where he would deliver the chickens.

Between 6.30pm and 7.30 pm, Mr Lacroix was seen driving on the Midland Highway northbound lane towards Launceston.

About 7.18pm, he left a telephone voice message for his lawyer expressing irrational views and indicating that he would "indict" particular people and put them in prison.

About 8.30pm Mr Lacroix was seen by witnesses driving in a manner described as highly erratic and aggressive. At Epping Forest he alighted from his vehicle and interacted with a parked motorist in an intimidating manner. It was apparent that he was highly intoxicated. According to the witnesses, he was stumbling, slurring his words and smelled strongly of alcohol.

Mr Lacroix then attempted suicide by standing in the middle of the highway with arms raised above his head. The driver managed to stop a few metres in front of him. He told the driver who managed to avoid hitting him: *"I'm ok but you didn't do what I wanted"*.

Immediately after that incident, Mr Lacroix returned to his vehicle and commenced driving erratically, the vehicle impacting with the centre wire barrier of the highway. Mr Lacroix again left the car, waving his hands and stumbling towards an oncoming vehicle, attempting to have that vehicle hit him. That did not occur. He then returned to his vehicle and drove off at speed, after reversing into another vehicle behind him occupied by a family with two young children. He then parked the vehicle on the grass verge on the left side of the road two kilometres further on.

At 9.18pm another motorist was driving a Holden Colorado on the highway at the location of the parked BMW. He was driving under the speed limit of 110km/h. He

had not consumed alcohol or drugs. He was driving carefully as he had seen the incident that had happened moments previously. The lights of the Holden Colorado were on low beam as he had turned off the high-beam lights when he stopped by the previous incident site. He noticed the BMW parked at the roadside with its interior lights activated. At that time, and unbeknownst to the motorist or his front seat passenger, Mr Lacroix had been present in the area of the centre cable barrier separating the north and south bound traffic lanes. He may have concealed himself behind the cable barrier. Without the motorist having any opportunity to avoid him, Mr Lacroix stepped directly into the path of the Holden Colorado, facing that vehicle. He impacted with the driver's side headlight area of the vehicle, which was travelling at 86km/h at the time of impact. Mr Lacroix died instantly.

- c) Mr Lacroix died due to head, chest and abdominal injuries. He caused the injuries to himself with the specific intention of ending his life. He was intent upon this course and no other person could have prevented his death. Although he had formed the intention to end his life, it may not have been the product of a rational mind. He was highly intoxicated there appeared to be elements of delusional thinking caused by his mental illness. His blood alcohol content taken from a sample at autopsy was 0.276 g/100mL. I note that before his death Mr Lacroix had inflicted a knife wound upon himself to the abdomen but it was superficial and did not contribute to the death.
- d) Mr Lacroix died on 6 March 2021 at Epping Forest, Tasmania.

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

- The Police Report of Death for the Coroner;
- An opinion of the pathologist who conducted the autopsy;
- Affidavits of life extinct and identification;
- Affidavit of NY
- Affidavit of the previous legal practitioner of Mr Lacroix;
- Affidavits of seven motorists who saw or engaged with Mr Lacroix prior to the crash;

- Interview of the driver of the vehicle that collided with Mr Lacroix;
- Affidavit of the passenger in the vehicle that collided with Mr Lacroix;
- Affidavits of Transport Inspector, Barry Spencer;
- Affidavit and crash analysis report of Senior Constable Michael Rybka of Crash Investigation Services;
- Affidavits of attending and investigating police officers;
- Records of Ambulance Tasmania;
- Records of Tasmania Health Service;
- Records of Lenah Valley Medical Centre; and
- Forensic and photographic evidence;

Comments and Recommendations

I am appreciative of the most thorough and timely investigation by crash investigator, Senior Constable Michal Rybka, peer-reviewed by crash investigator, First Class Constable Nigel Housego.

The motorists observing and interacting with Mr Lacroix before his death acted responsibly and with a view to helping him, despite his aggression and threatening demeanour. They also alerted police to the manner of his driving.

Many motorists were placed at risk by the actions of Mr Lacroix and it is fortunate that they were not physically injured.

The circumstances of Mr Lacroix'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 Adrian Steven Lacroix.

Dated: 15 October 2021 at Hobart Coroners Court in the State of Tasmania.

Olivia McTaggart
Coroner