



**CORONERS COURT
OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

Inquest:	Inquest into the death of LAILA PHILIP SAMSON LADO
Hearing dates	6 May 2026
Date of findings:	6 May 2026
Place of findings:	Coroners Court of NSW, Lidcombe
Findings of:	Deputy State Coroner Carmel Forbes
Catchwords:	CORONIAL LAW – unascertained manner and cause of death
File number:	2023/00420676
Representation:	Ms. G Marsden, Counsel Assisting, instructed by Ms A Shrestha, NSW Crown Solicitor's Office
Non-publication order:	Orders have been made pursuant to ss 65 and 74(1)(b) of the <i>Coroners Act 2009</i> prohibiting the publication of certain material contained in the brief of evidence and providing that if any application is made for access to Corrective Services New South Wales (CSNSW) documents, that material shall not be provided until the Commissioner of CSNSW has had an opportunity to make submissions in respect of that application. A copy of this order is available from the Registry.

Findings:	Identity The person who died was Mr. Laila Philip Samson LADO Date of death Mr. Lado died on 10 November 2023 Place of death Mr. Lado died at 15/8 Petunia Street, Marayong NSW Cause of death The cause of Mr. Lado's death is unascertained Manner of death The manner of Mr. Lado's death is unascertained

Contents

REASONS FOR DECISION.....	4
INTRODUCTION.....	4
LAILA PHILIP SAMSON LADO	4
Employment.....	11
Physical health and drug use	11
THE EVENTS OF EARLY NOVEMBER AND LAILA’S LAST CONFIRMED MOVEMENTS	13
<i>Interactions with family and friends in early November 2023</i>	13
<i>Interactions with police</i>	16
<i>Attendance at work</i>	20
<i>Last confirmed movements</i>	21
<i>Last phone activity</i>	22
EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE DISCOVERY OF MR LADO’S BODY.....	23
POLICE INVESTIGATION	25
<i>Attendance of police and emergency services</i>	25
<i>Initial police investigation</i>	27
POST MORTEM EXAMINATIONS.....	37
<i>Coronial investigation</i>	37
CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	39
SECTION 81 CORONERS ACT (2009) FINDINGS:.....	39

IN THE STATE CORONERS COURT NSW

LIDCOMBE

SECTION 81 *CORONERS ACT 2009*

REASONS FOR DECISION

INTRODUCTION

1. This is an inquest into the death of Laila Philip Samson Lado. At the opening of the inquest Mr Lado's family requested that I refer to him as Laila. For this reason, throughout these findings, I will refer to him by that name.
2. Laila was only 30 years of age when he was discovered deceased by his family and friends on 20 November 2023 at his home at unit 15/8 Petunia Street, Marayong.
3. Laila's last confirmed movements were on 9 November 2023. Due to the state of decomposition of his body at autopsy the cause of Laila's death could not be ascertained.¹ Police have conducted an extensive investigation and are of the opinion that there are no suspicious circumstances surrounding his death.
4. Section 27(1)(d) *Coroners Act. 2009* requires a coroner to hold an inquest as the manner and cause of Laila's death remain unascertained.

LAILA PHILIP SAMSON LADO

5. Laila was born on 15 January 1993 in Khartoum, Sudan.² He was the eldest of four sons born to his parents, Philip Lado and Elizabeth Taban. His brothers are Lado, Wani and Logo.³ They describe him as a caring person who was loved by his friends and family. They have all been left bereft by his death.

¹ V1/5 – Post-Mortem Examination Report dated 13 May 2024.

² V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.2023 at [3]-[4].

³ V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.2023 at [3]-[4].

6. Laila lived with his family in Sudan until 1998 when they moved to Egypt. They remained in Egypt until 2004 when they immigrated to Australia and settled in Blacktown.⁴ Laila became an Australian citizen on 29 March 2007.⁵
7. Laila's parents separated in 2012. Following his parents' separation, Laila and his brothers moved in with their mother and continued to live in the Blacktown area.⁶ Laila then spent a period living in Alice Springs, before moving to Queensland to live with his mother and brothers, who had relocated there.⁷
8. Between 2016 and 2017, Laila and his mother and brothers returned to New South Wales and lived at St Marys. They remained there until around 2018, when Laila's mother remarried and moved to Adelaide with his youngest brother, Logo. Following this, Laila spent several months living with his father at Marayong, before moving into shared accommodation with friends at various locations in Western Sydney.⁸
9. Laila was generally described by his friends and family as a hard worker, working in various manual labouring roles five or six days per week.⁹
10. Outside work, Laila was described as "*very healthy*" and was "*into his health and fitness*". His friends said he loved going to the gym, was often posting videos of himself at the gym, and exercised daily.¹⁰
11. Laila owned an American staffie cross dog, known both as "Emilio" and "48". He got this dog in around March 2023 when it was about 12 weeks old.¹¹
12. In around June or July 2020, Laila met Mekdes Muche through mutual friends. They commenced a relationship a couple of months later. In around March or April 2021,

⁴ V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.2023 at [4].

⁵ V2/63 – 22 x photos from Investigative Search at pg 42.

⁶ V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.2023 at [5].

⁷ V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.2023 at [7].

⁸ V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.20233 at [8].

⁹ V1/16 – Statement of Godwil Anthony Zakria dated 20 November 2023 (**G. Zakria 20.11.2023**) at [14].

¹⁰ V1/16 – G. Zakria 20.11.2023 at [15]; V1/25 – Statement of Yassin Kouko dated 22 November 2023 at [12]; V1/26 – Statement of Rivaldo Madeni dated 23 November 2023 at [9].

¹¹ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [18]; V1/26 – Statement of Rivaldo Madeni dated 23 November 2023 at [6].

Mekdes found out she was pregnant. She then moved in with Laila and his second cousin, Godwil Zakria, at 59 Arnott Road, Marayong.¹²

13. Mekdes said her relationship with Laila at around this time was characterised by fighting and involved them breaking up and getting back together. Because of this, Mekdes moved into her own unit in Blacktown in around October 2021. Laila then moved in with Mekdes a short time later. On 30 November 2021, Mekdes gave birth to a daughter, Loyalty Lado.¹³
14. On 2 January 2022, Mekdes reported an assault by Laila to NSW Police. This resulted in Laila being arrested and charged, and an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order being taken out for Mekdes' protection. Mekdes said after this, Laila stopped abusing her and their relationship improved.¹⁴
15. In around March 2022, Mekdes moved out of the unit she was sharing with Laila and went to stay with a friend in Merrylands. Mekdes said after she had moved, Laila would visit Loyalty a few times a week at her new address with her consent.¹⁵
16. In around late January or early February 2023, Mekdes and Laila "*decided to give [their] relationship another try*" and moved into the unit at 15/8 Petunia Street, Marayong.
17. In around July 2023, Laila and Mekdes recommenced having regular fights.¹⁶ This prompted Mekdes to relocate to Melbourne with Loyalty. Mekdes said the move was precipitated by a huge fight in which Laila verbally abused her and threatened to harm her, causing her to worry for her own and Loyalty's safety. Following the fight, Mekdes packed a bag and travelled to Melbourne to live with her mother.¹⁷ She did not tell Laila that she was moving to Melbourne with Loyalty prior to the move.¹⁸

¹² V1/12 – Statement of Mekdes Muche dated 21 November 2023 (**M. Muche 21.11.2023**) at [3]-[4].

¹³ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [5]-[6].

¹⁴ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [6]-[7].

¹⁵ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [8].

¹⁶ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [9].

¹⁷ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [10].

¹⁸ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [10].

18. While Laila had no known history of receiving treatment for his mental health,¹⁹ there is some evidence which suggests the breakdown of his relationship with Mekdes in July 2023 impacted his mental health in the months leading up to his death.
19. Mekdes maintained contact with Laila upon relocating to Melbourne. She said some of her conversations with Laila in this period were fine and others were “*pretty bad and he would abuse me or just flip over little things over the phone*”.²⁰
20. Mekdes said that in the two weeks prior to her last contact with Laila, he would tell her he was sad or depressed and said, “*I’m going through it, I’m having panic attacks and anxiety*”. She said he would say this to her every couple of days and would tell her that he had been crying. She said she did not think too much of this as Laila would often say things like this to her and behave in this manner in what she believed was an attempt to get her to move back to Sydney with Loyalty.²¹
21. Mekdes said that on around 3 November 2023, Laila contacted her and asked if she was involved in drug supply in the past. She said when she denied any involvement in drug supply, Laila continued to question her and said that if she had been involved in anything, people could come after her. Mekdes said that in response to Laila’s persistent questioning, she texted him on 3 November 2023 saying, “*why do you have a hit on you, did you do something?*”. She said she sent this message because she knew she had not done anything and so was asking if he had done something and had not told her. She said they later spoke over the phone and Laila told her that he was being paranoid, “*because he had overheard something*”. She said he never told her where he had heard the accusation but was “*prone to making things up about [her] to get [her] to engage in conversation with him*”.²²
22. Mekdes said she last spoke to Laila on 10 November 2023. She said they spoke on the phone early in the day and ended up having a fight when Laila accused her of

¹⁹ V3/77 – PACER Check for Mental Health Incidents in NSW Health; V3/78 – Various Medical Records; V3/79 – Medicare Report; V3/80 – PBS Information.

²⁰ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [11].

²¹ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [12].

²² V1/13 – Statement of Mekdes Muche dated 4 December 2023 at [4]-[6].

moving on with someone else. She told Laila this was not the case, and she could not deal with his “*drama and issues*” anymore. She also told him she would be there for him, but “*that was it*”. She then sent Laila some text messages, but he did not reply.²³ Mekdes said of this, “*I think that in the end Laila’s mental health and his loneliness were getting to him. I think that he was struggling with his thoughts and things were just getting to be too hard for him*”.²⁴

23. I note here that a review of the Cellebrite Report for Mekdes’ mobile telephone indicates that she was likely mistaken in her recollection that she last spoke to Laila on 10 November 2023, with the report indicating that the last answered call between Mekdes and Laila was at about 7:20pm on 9 November 2023.²⁵ The report confirms that the last message Mekdes received from Laila was at about 7:28pm on 9 November 2023, following which Mekdes sent a number of further messages to which she did not receive a reply.²⁶
24. In turn, Mr Lado’s father Phillip described receiving an unusual call from him on 8 November 2023 at around midnight. Phillip said it was the first time Laila had called him crying and Laila wanted to discuss his grandmother (who had died before Laila was born) and her resemblance to Loyalty. Phillip said Laila wanted to keep talking, but he told Laila that it was too late and he wanted to go to sleep. Phillip then received a further call from Laila about 10 minutes after the first call, with Laila asking him not to tell anyone that he had been crying.²⁷
25. Some of Laila’s friends also observed changes in his mood in the period leading up to his death. It is of interest that for the most part, it appears Laila did not tell his friends that he and Mekdes had separated and instead explained their absence by saying that Mekdes and Loyalty were visiting family in Melbourne.
26. Laila’s second cousin, Godwil Zakria, said that in the period prior to his death, Laila told him Mekdes and Loyalty had gone to Melbourne to visit Mekdes’ mother

²³ V1/12 – M. Mucho 21.11.2023 at [13].

²⁴ V1/12 – M. Mucho 21.11.2023 at [16].

²⁵ Electronic Material Tab 17, pg 1989.

²⁶ Electronic Material Tab 17, pg 2505.

²⁷ V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.2023 at [14]-[15].

because she was sick and only later told him Mekdes and Loyalty had moved to Melbourne. Mr Zakria said, *“I know he has been a bit down because of this, and we would talk about it and try to get him to keep his head up”*.²⁸

27. Another close friend, Daniel Kot, said that in the weeks prior to Laila’s death, he *“seemed to be a little bit stressed”*. Mr Kot said he assumed Laila was stressing because he did not like being alone in the house and was missing Mekdes and Loyalty. He was not aware that Laila and Mekdes had separated until after Laila’s death and instead thought Mekdes had taken Loyalty to Melbourne to visit family.²⁹
28. Other family members and friends described Laila’s mood in more positive terms in the period leading up to his death.
29. Mr Lado’s youngest brother Logo last saw him on 5 November 2023. He said Laila seemed completely normal and said he was planning to move to Melbourne early the following year to be closer to Loyalty. Logo also said Laila asked him for money later that day, and he transferred him \$100.³⁰ In Logo’s opinion, Laila did not have any mental health issues. Logo said his brother *“was always solid, going to the gym and motivating other persons to try and be better”*.³¹
30. A friend, Yassin Kouko, described Mr Lado as *“doing good”* in the year prior to his death and said having Loyalty seemed to change his life. He described Laila as *“very happy and positive”* when he last saw him on 24 October 2023 and further said, *“Laila did not have any mental health issues. He would never try to hurt himself. Every time I saw Laila he would seem normal. He would laugh, talk and make jokes as he usually did.”*³² Mr Kouko was not aware that Laila and Mekdes had separated until after Laila’s death; he said that in the last few months he would ask Laila how Loyalty was and Laila would respond that Loyalty and Mekdes were in Melbourne visiting her family.³³

²⁸ V1/16 – G. Zakria 20.11.2023 at [17].

²⁹ V1/28 – Statement of Daniel Kot dated 2 December 2023 at [4]-[5].

³⁰ V1/11 – Statement of Logo Lado dated 20 November 2023 (**L. Lado 20.11.2023**) at [5].

³¹ V1/11 – L. Lado 20.11.2023 at [6].

³² V1/25 – Statement of Yassin Kouko dated 22 November 2023 at [4]-[11].

³³ V1/25 – Statement of Yassin Kouko dated 22 November 2023 at [5].

31. Another friend, Nadir Adam, said Laila was a *“laidback guy, who made a lot of funny jokes”* and did not appear to have any mental health issues. He said he thought he last saw Laila between around 6 and 10 November 2023 and that Laila appeared to be his normal self.³⁴
32. In the period leading up to his death (and after Mekdes relocated to Melbourne with Loyalty), Laila remained living at 15/8 Petunia Street with his dog.³⁵
33. Mekdes said Laila always made sure that the house was clean, and while he was not a *“clean freak”*, he liked things to be clean.³⁶ She also said the dog was allowed to come into the house for a little while but was mainly kept outside. She said it would sometimes sleep outside or would be allowed to sleep in the storage area under the stairs if it was a cold night.³⁷
34. These sentiments were generally shared by Laila’s family and friends. His brother Logo said the dog was never allowed to be inside the house.³⁸ In turn, Mr Zakria, said Laila’s dog was an outside dog and very rarely went inside the house, *“only when Laila lets it inside for a short time before letting it back out”*. Mr Zakria described Laila as *“usually very neat”* and said, *“I think he has bi-polar because he is always cleaning and putting things in place”*.³⁹ Another friend, Mr Kouko, said *“Laila was a clean freak. He always wanted the house to be clean. He would always have his windows open to let fresh air into the house”*. Mr Kouko said Mr Lado would allow his dog inside the house when he was home but would otherwise keep the dog in the backyard.⁴⁰

³⁴ V1/23 – Statement of Nadir Adam dated 21 November 2023 at [4]-[6]. See, also, V1/26 – Statement of Rivaldo Madeno dated 23 November 2023 at [9].

³⁵ V1/9 – Statement of Detective Sergeant David Lawler dated 21 February 2024 (**DS Lawler 21.02.2024**) at [2].

³⁶ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [22].

³⁷ V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [18].

³⁸ V1/11 – L. Lado 20.11.2023 at [6].

³⁹ V1/16 – G. Zakria 20.11.2023 at [10] and [18].

⁴⁰ V1/25 – Statement of Yassin Kouko dated 22 November 2023 at [13]. See, also, V1/23 – Statement of Nadir Adam dated 21 November 2023 at [13].

Employment

35. In the period leading up to his death, Laila worked as a machine operator. Between 2 December 2022 and 24 October 2023, Laila was casually employed by AusReo through a recruitment agency called National Workforce. He worked from Monday to Friday between the hours of 2pm and 10pm. He had good attendance and was regarded as a good machine operator with a positive attitude towards work. His employment was terminated on 24 October 2023 when it was determined that he was no longer required.⁴¹

36. Laila's supervisor at AusReo described him as follows:⁴²

Whilst Laila was working with AusReo, he appeared to be happy and normal. Laila would say hello to me, and he sat together with other workers on his lunch break. Laila would only report work related issues to me, for example if a machine was broken. He has never reported personal related issues to me. There were no complaints by his team leader...about his behaviour.

37. On 26 October 2023, Laila commenced work with a new employer, Australian Reinforcing Company. He also obtained this role through National Workforce.⁴³

38. Laila attended work between 26 October 2023 and 9 November 2023. He worked from Monday to Friday between the hours of 1pm and 9pm. Laila's last shift at Australian Reinforcing Company was Thursday, 9 November 2023, following which he failed to attend work for his rostered shifts.⁴⁴

Physical health and drug use

39. Laila's medical history appears to have been relatively unremarkable.⁴⁵

40. In the period leading up to his death, Laila presented to General Practitioners on 12 and 18 July 2023 (for shoulder pain), 21 August 2023 (for mild flu symptoms), and

⁴¹ V1/41 – Statement of Herve Mata dated 23 November 2023 at [4]-[6].

⁴² V1/41 – Statement of Herve Mata dated 23 November 2023 at [7].

⁴³ V1/42 – Statement of Robert Bugeja dated 22 November 2023 at [5]-[6].

⁴⁴ V1/42 – Statement of Robert Bugeja dated 22 November 2023 at [4]-[12].

⁴⁵ V3/77 – PACER Check for Mental Health Incidents in NSW Health; V3/78 – Various Medical Records; V3/79 – Medicare Report; V3/80 – PBS Information.

7 and 9 November 2023 (for blood tests, which indicated that he had low Vitamin D, resulting in him being prescribed a Vitamin D supplement). At Laila's follow up appointment on 9 November 2023, swabs were taken and it was recommended that he return in two to three days.⁴⁶ While he did not return for a further appointment, the results of the swabs did not detect any issues.⁴⁷

41. Laila was otherwise described by his friends as *"very healthy"* and as someone who *"loved going to the gym"* and was *"into his health and fitness"*. While there is some evidence that Laila used cannabis, the weight of the evidence suggests that he did not have any significant issues with drugs or alcohol.

42. Mr Zakria said the following of Mr Lado's consumption of drugs and alcohol:⁴⁸

When Laila was younger, he didn't smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs, but as he got older, I know he was smoking weed and sometimes drinking alcohol. He didn't drink very often, but when he did drink, they would be normal beers. Laila started smoking weed on and off around 19 or 20 years old, smoking weed every time I am around him. I don't know if he smokes weed once a day or not though. The last time I saw Laila smoking weed was three or four months ago.

43. Another cousin, Rivaldo Madeni, said *"I know he occasionally [smoked] weed but had recently cut down smoking... Other than smoking a little bit of weed he did not use any other drugs that I am aware of"*.⁴⁹

44. Mr Kouko said, *"[o]ccasionally he would smoke weed. He did not smoke every day. He did not use any other drugs. He would occasionally drink if we went out on the weekend, but he would not drink at home"*.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ V3/78 – Various Medical Records, pgs 3-5.

⁴⁷ V3/78 – Various Medical Records, pgs 25-26.

⁴⁸ V1/16 – G. Zakria 20.11.2023 at [8].

⁴⁹ V1/26 – Statement of Rivaldo Madeno dated 23 November 2023 at [9].

⁵⁰ V1/25 – Statement of Yassin Kouko dated 22 November 2023 at [5].

45. In turn, Mr Kot said, *“Laila did not use drugs, but occasionally he would smoke a little bit of pot. We are regularly drug tested at work. It would only be in a blue moon that he would drink alcohol”*.⁵¹
46. Laila’s friend and neighbour, Obed Karwhin, thought that his last communication with Laila was on 3 November 2023, when Laila messaged him and asked for *“spin”*, which Mr Karwhin explained is commonly used to refer to tobacco mixed with cannabis. He said that in the past eight months, he had been at Laila’s house twice and they had consumed cannabis together.⁵²
47. Another neighbour, Jaysen Kersten, said he smoked cannabis with Laila upon Laila’s return from work at nighttime. He said he thought Laila smoked cannabis most nights, but *“wouldn’t have much, just a couple of cones”* and said he thought Laila reacted in a *“normal”* way to cannabis, in that it put him in a good mood.⁵³

THE EVENTS OF EARLY NOVEMBER AND LAILA’S LAST CONFIRMED MOVEMENTS

48. Laila’s body was discovered by his family and friends on 20 November 2023. It was immediately apparent that he had been deceased for some time (which was later confirmed at autopsy). Prior to the discovery of his body, Laila had not attended work or contacted family or friends for a period of approximately 10 days. His last confirmed movements were on 9 November 2023.

Interactions with family and friends in early November 2023

49. Statements obtained from Laila’s family and friends largely suggest he was communicating with them in his usual manner and frequency in the days leading up to 9 November 2023.

⁵¹ V1/28 – Statement of Daniel Kot dated 2 December 2023 at [5].

⁵² V1/22 – Statement of Obed Karwhin dated 21 November 2023 at [11]-[12].

⁵³ V1/17B – Transcript of ERISP with Jaysen Kersten dated 20 November 2023 (**Kersten ERISP 20.11.2023**), pgs 35-37.

50. Laila's last interactions with his family and friends between 3 November and 9 November were as follows:

a. **3 November 2023:**

i. Mekdes communicated with Laila on 3 November 2023, when Laila contacted her and asked if she was ever involved in drug supply. Mekdes said that when she denied any such involvement, Laila continued to question her. She later spoke to Laila by telephone, and he told her he was being paranoid "*because he had overheard something*".⁵⁴

ii. Laila's neighbour, Obed Karwhin, thought he last communicated with Laila at around 10:01pm on 3 November 2023, when Laila messaged him and asked for "*spin*" (that is, tobacco mixed with cannabis). He told Laila there was "*spin*" at his house and Laila could collect it from his brother when he was ready.⁵⁵ This was an ordinary exchange between Laila and Mr Karwhin, who occasionally smoked cannabis together.⁵⁶

b. **5 November 2023:** Laila's brother, Logo, last saw him on 5 November 2023. Logo was at Laila's house for about 30 minutes before Laila went to work. Logo said that Laila seemed completely normal and told him he was planning to move to Melbourne early the following year to be closer to Loyalty. Logo said Laila asked him for money and he transferred him \$100 that afternoon.⁵⁷

c. **8 November 2023:** Mr Lado's father Phillip received a call from Laila at around midnight on 8 November 2023 and Laila was crying. Phillip said Laila wanted to discuss his grandmother and her resemblance to Loyalty. Phillip told Laila it was too late and he wanted to go to sleep. He then received a further call from Laila about ten minutes after the first call, in which Laila asked his father not to tell anyone he had been crying.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ V1/13 – Statement of Mekdes Muche dated 4 December 2023 at [4]-[6].

⁵⁵ V1/22 – Statement of Obed Karwhin dated 21 November 2023 at [11]-[12].

⁵⁶ V1/22 – Statement of Obed Karwhin dated 21 November 2023 at [12].

⁵⁷ V1/11 – L. Lado 20.11.2023 at [5].

⁵⁸ V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.2023 at [14]-[15].

d. **9 November 2023:**

- i. Mekdes last spoke to Laila at about 7:20pm on 9 November 2023.⁵⁹ The last message she received from Laila was sent at about 7:28pm on 9 November 2023, following which Mekdes sent a number of further messages to which she did not receive a reply.⁶⁰
- ii. Daniel Kot said that he called Laila and spoke to her between 10:00pm and 11:00pm on 9 November 2023. Mr Kot said they spoke for about five minutes and “*just had a normal chat*”, asking each other about their days.⁶¹ Reverse Call Charge Records for Mr Kot’s phone confirm that he and Laila had a brief telephone conversation at around that time.⁶²

51. Laila also spoke to Mr Zakria in the days before his death. It appears likely that this conversation took place on either Wednesday 8 November, Thursday 9 November, or Friday 10 November.⁶³ Mr Zakria gave the following summary of this conversation:⁶⁴

On that particular day, Laila started telling me that he felt like someone had been breaking into the house and trying to steal the white Holden Commodore. He didn’t tell me about anything happening to him, but he did say he had a feeling some people had been inside the house. I told him not to worry, and we discussed moving the Holden Commodore from his house to my brother’s house. He discussed moving to Melbourne to be closer to his daughter, and I told him that’s a good thing. I explained to him that I am at work, and I told him to call me after he finished work that night around 11:00pm. This conversation was about five or six minutes. I didn’t hear from him that night.

⁵⁹ Electronic Material Tab 17, Cellebrite – Mekdes Muche, pg 1989.

⁶⁰ Electronic Material Tab 17, Cellebrite – Mekdes Muche, pg 2505. As stated above, it appears Mekdes was mistaken in her recollection that she last spoke to Laila on 10 November 2023: V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [16].

⁶¹ V1/28 – Statement of Daniel Kot dated 2 December 2023 at [6].

⁶² Electronic Material Tab 16 – Reverse Call Charge Records (RCCR) for 0432247538 – Daniel Kot.

⁶³ This is based on Mr Zakria’s recollection that the conversation took place on either a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday and was before 14 November 2023 (which was a Tuesday): see V1/16 – G. Zakria 20.11.2023 at [24].

⁶⁴ V1/16 – G. Zakria 20.11.2023 at [25].

52. Laila also saw his friend Nadir Adam in the days before his death. Mr Adam said that between around 6 and 10 November 2023, Laila told him his partner was coming home from Melbourne, and he needed the spare keys previously given to Mr Adam back. In response, Mr Adam dropped the keys to Laila and picked up a couple of t-shirts from Laila’s home. He said Laila was walking his dog at the time and appeared to be his normal self.⁶⁵

Interactions with police

53. Laila had a number of interactions with police on 9 November 2023. These interactions were instigated by Laila in response to concerns he had (that he also expressed to Mr Zakria and Mekdes) that someone was breaking into his unit.

54. These interactions can be summarised as follows:

- e. **9 November 2023 at 6:06am:** Laila attended Blacktown Police Station and spoke to Constable Alec Gauci at the front counter for approximately five minutes.⁶⁶ He told Constable Gauci he wanted to report someone breaking into his unit. Constable Gauci provided the following description of his interaction with Laila:⁶⁷

I began to ask questions from LADO about the incident. While interacting with LADO, I noticed that his demeanour was cagey. I would describe LADO as cagey as he was not forthcoming with information about the incident by not providing answers to my questions. LADO seemed like he could not focus on my questions and seemed to be in a rush to make a report. After interacting with LADO for a few minutes, his actions and the way he spoke to me suggested that he was under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. LADO stated that the front door of his unit was open when he returned home. LADO stated that he was unsure if he left it open or if it was forced open by someone else. This was the only question LADO was able to answer in regards to the

⁶⁵ V1/23 – Statement of Nadir Adam dated 21 November 2023 at [6].

⁶⁶ V2/45 – Statement of Constable Alec Gauci dated 27 November 2023 at [4]. See, also, V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [13]-[14], which contain CCTV stills of Laila travelling to and at Blacktown Police Station; V2/47 – CCTV Review of Blacktown Police Station; and Electronic Material Tab 5 – CCTV footage from Blacktown Police Station on 9 November 2023.

⁶⁷ V2/45 – Statement of Constable Alec Gauci dated 27 November 2023. See, also, Constable Gauci’s Police Notebook entry which additionally records “*unsure what time or day, nil items taken*”.

incident.

I asked LADO further details about the incident. I asked him questions about when the incident occurred, who was the last person on premise and what property was taken. LADO was unable to answer these questions and began to repeat to me “just make a report”. I continued to ask LADO further questions, with LADO continuing to repeat to me “just make a report”. I asked LADO if he wanted to provide a statement about the break and enter with him replying “no”.

I told LADO that I would begin to make a report and the police would follow up with him if they had any further questions. LADO did not provide any further information to me and told me that he was going to work. LADO left the police station. LADO stated that he was going to follow up later that day by calling the Police Assistance Line. Due to having limited details about the incident and LADO being unable to provide me any information, I did not personally create a report about the incident. I had no further interaction with LADO and went about unrelated policing duties.

- f. **9 November 2023 at 6:24am:** Laila called Triple Zero from his mobile phone. The call lasted approximately three minutes. Laila requested police, saying he was in Marayong and someone had been entering his house behind his back and had left his door open. After some clarifying questions, the operator transferred Laila to the Police Assistance Line to report a break and enter.⁶⁸ After being transferred to the Police Assistance Line, Laila made a report which can be summarised as follows:⁶⁹

- He just came from Blacktown Police Station and reported that every time he comes home his garage and sliding back door has been opened for a while.
- States he feels like someone has copied his key.

⁶⁸ Electronic Material Tab 10 – 000 Recording prior to Police Assistance Line recording; V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [18].

⁶⁹ Electronic Material Tab 11 – Police Assistance Line Recording from Break and Enter E-95277546 reported 9 November 2023; V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [19].

- Closed his door and went to report it and then he came back and its opened again (front door).
 - States he is pretty sure that someone has been inside but only noticed that his work glasses have been moved (not stolen)
 - Asked if he has any evidence of people being within his house and states that he can smell that someone has been in the house
 - States he left about 12:00pm-12:30pm and got home about 9:15-9:30pm and noticed that it was opened.
- g. **9 November 2023 at around 7am:** Laila received a telephone call from Constable Melissa Ruddock in response to his call to the Police Assistance Line. Laila told Constable Ruddock that he would like her to attend his address to conduct a forensic examination.⁷⁰
- h. **9 November 2023 at 8:30-8:50am:** Constable Ruddock attended 15/8 Petunia Street to conduct a forensic examination. She took a number of photographs and conducted a fingerprint examination but did not locate any fingerprints. Her summary of her encounter with Laila is as follows:⁷¹

At 8:30am I arrived at 15/8 Petunia Street, Marayong. I was greeted at the front door by LADO. He stated that the previous day while he was out, between 12:30pm and 9:15pm, someone had opened his wooden front door. LADO then demonstrated to me how he had found the door. The wooden door had been ajar, and the flyscreen door closed but unlocked as it cannot be locked. I did not observe any damage to the wooden front door. He stated that nothing had been stolen from inside.

LADO also mentioned that the kitchen window did not lock. He said however that the window had still been closed when he returned home the previous day, but he was very concerned that someone would break in via the window. I asked LADO if he had noticed anything else. He showed me the garage roller door. He said that every time he closes the roller door, he makes sure it

⁷⁰ V2/49 – Statement of Constable Melissa Ruddock dated 8 December 2023 at [5].

⁷¹ V2/49 – Statement of Constable Melissa Ruddock dated 8 December 2023 at [6]-[12].

touches the ground and is locked. He demonstrated to me how he does this. LADO stated that over the last few months he had returned home to find the roller door about a centimetre off the ground. He believed that someone had been trying to break into his garage. I did not observe any damage to the roller door.

I asked LADO if he had noticed anything that had been moved inside his house. LADO showed me to the kitchen and pointed at the kitchen counter. He stated that he had had a drinking glass there and thought someone had moved it and he did not know where it was. LADO said he had not noticed if anything else inside the house had been moved.

LADO took me into the back garden to show me the rear wooden garage door. His dog was in the back garden. There was damage to the wood around the lock area. LADO advised me this was from a break and enter that had occurred a few months before. LADO went into the garage and pointed at the inside of the garage roller door. He stated there was damage from someone trying to break in. I did not observe any damage to the garage roller door. We went back into the house and LADO 's dog remained in the back garden .

I took photographs of the front of the house, the garage roller door, the front door, the kitchen window and the rear wooden garage door. I examined the front wooden door and flyscreen door. I did not locate any fingerprints . I did not examine the garage roller door due to contamination as LADO had touched the door multiple times.

While I was at 15/8 Petunia Street, Marayong LADO said multiple times that he was very concerned that someone was trying to break into his house. LADO could not say who or why someone was trying to break in.

- i. **10 November 2023 at about 6:30pm:** Constables Joel Norton and Will Dover attended 15/8 Petunia Street at about 6:30pm in relation to the break and enter reported by Laila. Constable Norton recalled approaching Unit 15 and knocking on the front door multiple times with no answer. He did not recall seeing any lights on inside the house or hearing any noise coming from inside the house while

in attendance. He then returned to his vehicle and called Laila's mobile, with his call going unanswered. He later sent a follow up text message to Laila at 12:11am on 11 November 2023.⁷²

Attendance at work

55. Laila commenced work with a new employer, Australian Reinforcing Company, on 26 October 2023 and attended his rostered shifts between 26 October 2023 and 9 November 2023.⁷³

56. On Monday, 13 November 2023, it came to the attention of Laila's supervisor that he had not attended work on Friday, 10 November 2023. When Laila again failed to attend work on Monday, 13 November 2023, Tuesday, 14 November 2023 and Wednesday, 15 November 2023, his supervisor contacted the recruitment agency and confirmed that the agency had not had any contact from Laila. His supervisor then told the recruitment agency to terminate Laila's casual employment, and no further enquiries were made.⁷⁴

⁷² V1/32 – Statement of Constable Joel Norton dated 23 November 2023 at [10]-[18].

⁷³ V1/42(G) – Timesheets from 6 to 11 November 2023, pg 1.

⁷⁴ V1/42 – Statement of Robert Bugeja dated 22 November 2023 at [12]-[13].

Last confirmed movements

57. As part of the investigation into Laila's death, police compiled the following summary of his last confirmed movements:
- a. **8 November 2023 between 12:42pm and 9:21pm:** Laila attended his shift at Australian Reinforcing Company at 153 Glendenning Road, Glendenning.⁷⁵
 - b. **8 November 2023 between approx. 10:20pm and 12:00am:** Laila attended Anytime Fitness Glendenning.⁷⁶
 - c. **9 November 2023 at 12:14am:** A vehicle resembling Laila's vehicle is captured arriving in the vicinity of 15/8 Petunia Street.⁷⁷
 - d. **9 November 2023 at 5:53am:** A vehicle resembling Laila's vehicle is captured leaving the vicinity of 15/8 Petunia Street and travelling in the direction of Blacktown Police Station.⁷⁸
 - e. **9 November 2023 at 6:06am:** Laila is captured on CCTV footage attending Blacktown Police Station and speaking to Constable Gauci at the front counter. He departed the station a short time later at 6:11am.⁷⁹
 - f. **9 November 2023 at 6:21am:** A vehicle resembling Laila's vehicle is captured arriving in the vicinity of 15/8 Petunia Street.⁸⁰
 - g. **9 November 2023 at around 7am:** Laila spoke to Constable Ruddock shortly after 7am. Laila told Constable Ruddock that he would like her to attend his address to conduct a forensic examination.⁸¹
 - h. **9 November 2023 at 8:30-8:50am:** Constable Ruddock attended 15/8 Petunia Street to conduct a forensic examination. She took a number of photographs and conducted a fingerprint examination but did not locate any fingerprints.
 - i. **9 November 2023 between 9:24am and 11:57am:** A vehicle resembling Laila's appears to be captured in the vicinity of 15/8 Petunia Street on five further

⁷⁵ V1/42(G) – Timesheets from 6 to 11 November 2023.

⁷⁶ Electronic Material Tab 4 – CCTV footage from Anytime Fitness Glendenning of 8 November 2023. See, especially, "C1 External Entry_AF Glendenning NSW_...0231108222213_3772953_MergeFile.mp4" at approx. 22:20 and 22:27 which captures Laila arriving by car and entering the gym; and "C2 Entry_AF Glendenning NSW_AF Glend...230054_20231109001500_3951883.mp4" at approx. 00:00:34 which captures Laila exiting the gym. I note this is also corroborated by V3/87 – Anytime Fitness Usage Details, pg 2, which shows that Laila

occasions between 9:24am and 11:57am. It is not clear what Laila was doing at this time.⁸²

- j. **9 November 2023 at 12:01pm:** Laila is captured in the rear yard of 15/8 Petunia Street.⁸³
- k. **9 November 2023 between 12:55pm and 9:03pm:** Laila attended his rostered shift at Australian Reinforcing Company at 153 Glendenning Road, Glendenning.⁸⁴
- l. **9 November 2023 at 9:51pm:** A vehicle resembling Laila's vehicle is captured arriving at 15/8 Petunia Street.⁸⁵

Last phone activity

- 58. As part of the investigation into Laila's death, police compiled the following summary of his last confirmed phone activity:
 - a. **9 November 2023 at around 9:41pm:** Mr Kot called Laila and spoke to him for around five minutes. Mr Kot said they "*just had a normal chat*", asking each other about their days.⁸⁶
 - b. **9 November 2023 at 10:21pm and 10:25pm:** Laila made two attempts to call Triple Zero. The first call was 3 seconds, and the second call was 6 seconds. Neither call made it through to the Despatch Call Centre.⁸⁷

entered the gym with a key fob swipe at 10:29pm on 8 November 2023.

⁷⁷ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [81]; Electronic Material Tab 9 – CCTV footage from 14 Daffodil Street, Marayong; CCTV Footage Review of 14 Daffodil Street, Marayong at pg 6.

⁷⁸ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [82]; Electronic Material Tab 9 – CCTV footage from 14 Daffodil Street, Marayong; CCTV Footage Review of 14 Daffodil Street, Marayong at pg 7.

⁷⁹ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [14]; V1/47 – CCTV Review of Blacktown Police Station; and Electronic Material Tab 5 – CCTV footage from Blacktown Police Station.

⁸⁰ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [83]; CCTV Footage Review of 14 Daffodil Street, Marayong at pg 8.

⁸¹ V2/49 – Statement of Constable Melissa Ruddock dated 8 December 2023 at [5].

⁸² CCTV Footage Review of 14 Daffodil Street, Marayong, at pgs 11-15; V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [84].

⁸³ Electronic Material Tab 8 – CCTV Footage from 12/8 Petunia Street, Marayong; CCTV Footage Review of 12/8 Petunia Street, Marayong at pg 7; V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [92].

⁸⁴ V1/42(G) – Timesheets from 6 to 11 November 2023.

⁸⁵ CCTV Footage Review of 14 Daffodil Street, Marayong at pg 16. See, also, V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [85].

⁸⁶ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [35]. V1/28 – Statement of Daniel Kot dated 2 December 2023 at [6]. Electronic Material Tab 16 – Reverse Call Charge Records (RCCR) for 0432247538 – Daniel Kot.

⁸⁷ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [33]; V1/56 – Triple Zero Call Log Request; Electronic Material Tab 15 – Reverse Call Charge Records for 0415 089 811 (Laila Lado).

- c. **9 November 2023 between 10:33pm and 10:40pm:** Laila’s phone accessed the internet.⁸⁸
- d. **9 November 2023 between 10:45pm and 12:17pm:** Laila’s phone accessed the internet.⁸⁹
- e. **10 November 2023 between 12:17am and 12:20am:** Mekdes sent Laila four text messages regarding an unpaid electricity bill for 15/8 Petunia Street. Laila did not respond to these messages.⁹⁰
- f. **10 November 2023 between 12:45am and 1:54am:** Laila’s phone accessed the internet.⁹¹
- g. **10 November 2023 at 9:04am:** A review of Laila’s phone activity indicates that his phone was not used after 9:04am.⁹²

59. Further, at an unknown time on 10 November 2023, Laila uploaded a video to TikTok entitled “My doggggy”.⁹³

EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE DISCOVERY OF MR LADO’S BODY

60. In the week prior to the discovery of Laila’s body, various friends and family members made attempts to contact him without success.⁹⁴

61. Because of this, at approximately 11:34am on 20 November 2023, Logo went to 15/8 Petunia Street to look for his brother. Logo gave the following account:⁹⁵

At 11:34am on Monday the 20th of November 2023 I went to Laila' s house.

⁸⁸ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [34]; Electronic Material Tab 15 – Reverse Call Charge Records for 0415 089 811 (Laila Lado).

⁸⁹ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [39]; Electronic Material Tab 15 – Reverse Call Charge Records for 0415 089 811 (Laila Lado).

⁹⁰ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [40]. Electronic Material Tab 17, Cellebrite – Mekdes Muche, pg 2505.

⁹¹ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [39]; Electronic Material Tab 15 – Reverse Call Charge Records for 0415 089 811 (Laila Lado).

⁹² V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [42]; Electronic Material Tab 15 – Reverse Call Charge Records for 0415 089 811 (Laila Lado).

⁹³ V1/16 – G. Zakria 20.11.2023 at [22].

⁹⁴ See, eg, V1/11 – L. Lado 20.11.2023 at [7]; V1/12 – M. Muche 21.11.2023 at [19]; V1/16 – G. Zakria 20.11.2023 at [28]; V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.2023 at [16]; V1/23 – Statement of Nadir Adam dated 21 November 2023 at [8]-[10]; V1/28 – Statement of Daniel Kot dated 2 December 2023 at [8]-[10].

⁹⁵ V1/11 – L. Lado 20.11.2023 at [8]-[16]. See, also, V1/15 – Statement of Moping Moping dated 20 November 2023 at [7]-[26]; V1/21 – Statement of Shaka Karkoun dated 20 November 2023 at [5]-[17]; V1/23 – Statement of Nadir Adam dated 21 November 2023 at [10]-[20]; V1/24 – Statement of Tong Dimo dated 22 November 2023 at [4]-[11].

Laila's car was parked in front of his garage. It is a silver Toyota Camry. I looked inside the car and saw that all his gym gear was still on the seat. I looked over the fence and into the back yard. I could not see the dog anywhere. I noticed that the lawn was getting a bit long. Laila never let his lawns get too long, he always took care of it.

I tried calling Laila's phone number. The phone rang but there was no answer. I called again, the phone ringing but not being answered. I could not hear the phone ringing inside. I tried to call his girlfriend Mekdes but she did not answer. I thought that Laila may be doing something so I left and went home. I knew that Laila was meant to start work at 1:00pm.

At 12:42pm I had a call from Mekdes. She told me that she last spoke to him a week ago, and that the conversation did not end on good terms.

Around 1:00pm I went back to Laila's house. I saw that his car was still parked in front of the driveway. I was with my friends Monyping and Sharka. I saw that all the windows were closed and the door was locked. We went into the back yard and I heard the dog inside the house. It was making some kind of noise and it did not sound right. I thought it was very strange that the dog was inside the house, but we couldn't raise Laila.

I decided that I needed to get into the house to make sure everything was ok. I took off the mesh from one of the windows at front of his house, which is between the air conditioning unit and the front door. I smashed the window with a rock, hitting the glass until it was smashed. Sharka grabbed a piece of wood from somewhere and started to knock down the pieces of glass.

When we smashed the window I smelt a horrible smell straight away, coming from inside the house. There were heaps of flies inside the house, they all came flying out of the smashed window.

We waited around 15 minutes or so before Monyping jumped in through the window and into the house. He opened the front door for us. The smell kept getting worse, so we stayed outside. My dad Philip came to the house. Another one of my friends, Tong, also arrived. We kept waiting outside. One of my

brother's friends Nada arrived at the house. We all went inside the house together. Nada went in first and I followed straight behind him. I could hear the dog. It was downstairs and in the laundry.

Nada and my dad both walked upstairs and then came straight back down quickly. Nada said, "He's dead". I did not believe him and started walking upstairs. I walked up to the top of the stairs and looked down the hallway. I saw my brother's hand on the floor. I turned around, walked back down the stairs and outside.

I called the Police and Ambulance and told them what was happening. I asked them to come to my brother's house. The Police and Ambulance officers arrived and asked me a lot of questions. I was then asked to come to Riverstone Police Station to provide this statement.

62. Mr Lado's father Phillip recalled receiving a call from Mekdes at around 12:42pm on 20 November 2023, saying that it had been a week since she had heard from Laila and she was worried about him. He then went to 15/8 Petunia Street and found Logo and three of Laila's friends outside the house with Laila's car parked in the driveway. Philip entered Laila's house with the others present and went upstairs, where he discovered Laila's body. Triple Zero was then contacted and police and ambulance officers arrived a short time later.⁹⁶

POLICE INVESTIGATION

Attendance of police and emergency services

63. Shortly before 1:38pm on 20 November 2023, Constables Parash Thapa and Daniel Pavlicek arrived on scene at 15/8 Petunia Street. Upon arriving on scene, they were greeted by Laila's family and friends who advised them that Laila's body had been located inside the unit at the top of the staircase.⁹⁷
64. **Constable Thapa** recalled that upon entering the unit, he observed an excessive number of flies and a foul smell. He climbed the staircase and observed the deceased

⁹⁶ V1/20 – P. Lado 20.11.2023 at [16]-[19].

⁹⁷ V1/29 – Statement of Constable Parash Thapa dated 8 December 2023; V1/30 – Statement of Constable Daniel Pavlicek dated 23 January 2024.

lying on the floor, with eyes bulging and the stomach and chest cavity apparently eaten by Laila's dog, with ribs exposed. Constable Thapa then exited the unit and established a crime scene.⁹⁸

65. **Constable Pavlicek** made similar observations to Constable Thapa. He recalled a terrible smell upon entering the unit, with several piles of dog excrement on the floor and a large number of flies. He walked upstairs and observed Laila's hand sticking out through the handrail and then saw Laila's body lying on the floor, with the chest cavity exposed and maggots present. Constable Pavlicek then exited the unit and guarded the crime scene outside the property.⁹⁹
66. **Sergeant Karen Lodge** arrived at 15/8 Petunia Street at about 1:38pm. Upon arriving at the unit, she observed several people present and Laila's vehicle parked in an unusual position across the driveway, blocking entry to the garage door. She received a brief overview from Constables Thapa and Pavlicek and then entered the unit. Upon entering the unit, she instructed Constables Thapa and Pavlicek to let Mr Lado's dog out of laundry and put it into the back yard. She then filled a saucepan with water and observed the dog immediately drink almost the entire saucepan.¹⁰⁰
67. She then re-entered the unit and observed that there did not appear to be any electricity to the house.¹⁰¹ Next, she walked up the staircase and made the following observations:

As I got near the top of the staircase, I saw the deceased lying on his back on the floor. ...His head was located near what appeared to be the bathroom. One leg was half in a bedroom that had children's toys in it and the other was facing another bedroom. He had blue coloured long pants on with a red padlock attached to the waistline of his pants. I noticed a silver-coloured knife lying on the floorboards next to the deceased right leg. The knife was approximately 50cm in length. The knife had what appeared to be blood on

⁹⁸ V1/29 – Statement of Constable Parash Thapa dated 8 December 2023 at [5]-[8]. See, also, Electronic Material Tab 2 – BWV from 20 November 2023.

⁹⁹ V1/30 – Statement of Constable Daniel Pavlicek dated 23 January 2024; Electronic Material Tab 3 – BWV from 20 November 2023.

¹⁰⁰ V1/31 – Statement of Karen Lodge dated 21 November 2023 at [6].

¹⁰¹ V1/31 – Statement of Karen Lodge dated 21 November 2023 at [4]-[6].

the bladed end. I took several photographs on the Police Mobi Pol.¹⁰²

68. She exited the unit and contacted the Duty Officer, Inspector Jacobs, and the detectives. A crime scene was then established, and a crime scene log was commenced. Sergeant Lodge remained on scene until the arrival of Detectives Hannon and McArthur and Inspector Jacobs.¹⁰³

Initial police investigation

Crime scene management

69. On 20 November 2023 at 4:10pm, a Coronial Investigation Scene Order was made by pursuant to s.40 of the *Coroners Act 2009* authorising Detective Senior Constable Adam Galbraith and associated investigating police to enter 15/8 Petunia Street and establish a coronial investigation scene.¹⁰⁴
70. Following the expiration of the Coronial Investigation Scene Order, two Crime Scene Warrants were subsequently issued to investigating police on 20 November 2023 and 21 November 2023 respectively.¹⁰⁵

Crime scene examinations

71. In his statement of 21 February 2024, Detective Sergeant Lawler summarises the crime scene examinations which took place at 15/8 Petunia Street following the discovery of Laila's body. Specifically, he states that the crime scene was managed by officers from the Riverstone Police Area Command and that staff from the West Sydney Crime Scene and Fingerprint Operations attended and obtained several exhibits, swabs and fingerprints.
72. The results of these examinations are summarised by Detective Sergeant Lawler as follows:
73. **House examination:** "Male Profile A" (Mr Lado) was the source of all blood in the unit that resulted in a DNA profile being obtained.¹⁰⁶ The blood located in the unit was not consistent with large blood splatter and was contained near Mr Lado's body.

¹⁰² V1/31 – Statement of Karen Lodge dated 21 November 2023 at [7].

¹⁰³ V1/31 – Statement of Karen Lodge dated 21 November 2023 at [10].

¹⁰⁴ V3/8 – Coronial Investigation Scene Order dated 20 November 2023.

¹⁰⁵ V3/90 – Crime Scene Warrant 9159/2023 dated 20 November 2023; V3/89 – Crime Scene Warrant 239/2023 dated 21 November 2023.

¹⁰⁶ V2/59 – EFIMS – Forensic Result Summary, pg 18.

There were drops of blood down a wall which was consistent with blood dripping from Mr Lado's hand. There were also blood drops on the steps and along the wall down the stairs which was consistent with, and at the same height as, Mr Lado's dog. Detective Sergeant Lawler states that the illumination results did not show evidence of any cleaning up of the blood.¹⁰⁷

74. Detective Sergeant Lawler states that the knife that was located next to Laila's body appeared to have been removed from a knife block containing similar knives which was located in the walk-through wardrobe in Laila's bedroom.¹⁰⁸ Blood and fingerprints were located on the knife which had a profile matching Laila and no other fingerprints or DNA were located on the knife.¹⁰⁹
75. Consistently with other witnesses, Detective Sergeant Lawler states that the house was extremely messy with numerous items strewn throughout. As observed by others at the scene, there was a large amount of dog faeces on the floor of the house. The electricity had been lost in the house. In the laundry area where the dog was located, the washing machine cable had been broken. Detective Sergeant Lawler opines that the dog had chewed through the cord, which in turn cut the electricity.¹¹⁰
76. Numerous fingerprints were developed in the examination of the house. In short, the fingerprints which were identified were those of Laila, Logo and persons who accompanied Logo to Laila's house on 20 November 2023, and investigating police. There were no fingerprints identified which raised any suspicions or suggested any third party had any involvement in Laila's death.¹¹¹
77. Detective Sergeant Lawler also notes that a 1985 VL Holden Commodore was located in the garage of 15/8 Petunia Street. This car was later identified as belonging to Mr Zakria and was being stored by Mr Lado as it was unregistered.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [49].

¹⁰⁸ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [50].

¹⁰⁹ V2/59 – EFIMS – Forensic Result Summary; V2/60 – Expert Statement from Fingerprint Expert Hayam Abdallah dated 11 October 2025; V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [50].

¹¹⁰ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [51].

¹¹¹ V2/59 – EFIMS – Forensic Result Summary; V2/60 – Expert Statement from Fingerprint Expert Hayam Abdallah dated 11 October 2025.

¹¹² V1/16 – G. Zakria 20.11.2023 at [13].

Mr Lado occasionally worked on the car with his neighbour, Jayson Kersten.¹¹³

Detective Sergeant Lawler opined that the car could be worth approximately \$15,000.¹¹⁴

78. Detective Sergeant Lawler concluded by stating that no alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia were located anywhere in the house.¹¹⁵
79. **Body examination:** Detective Sergeant Lawler describes Laila's body as lying on its back on the upper landing of the stairs. Laila's head was positioned near the doorway of the bathroom. His left arm was above his head, positioned into the bathroom. His right arm was partially hanging over the landing of the stairs. His right leg was straight and there was a silver knife positioned on the inside of the leg. His left leg was bent inwards at the knee and was positioned partially into the bedroom.
80. Police enquiries determined that the red padlock was a workplace safety requirement for Laila's work. In the pants pocket was an iPhone and car keys; no drugs or drug paraphernalia were located on Laila's body or clothing.¹¹⁶

Motor vehicle examination:

81. Detective Sergeant Lawler states that at the time police attended 15/8 Petunia Street, Laila's motor vehicle (a silver Toyota Camry, registration EIG-14Y) was parked across the garage in a position that was deemed unusual. It was later determined that the vehicle was parked across the driveway by Laila on a regular basis as his garage had another vehicle in it (the VL Holden Commodore belonging to Mr Zakria) and Laila parked the car across the driveway to prevent the theft of the Commodore.¹¹⁷
82. Detective Sergeant Lawler states that an open block of chocolate was located within the vehicle and was marked as an exhibit as police considered the chocolate should have melted due to the weather. Examination revealed that only Laila's DNA was on the packaging.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ V1/17(B) – Kersten ERISP 20.11.2023, pg 10.

¹¹⁴ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [54].

¹¹⁵ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [54].

¹¹⁶ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [55]-[58].

¹¹⁷ See V1/19 – Additional information from Jayson Kersten dated 21 November 2023.

¹¹⁸ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [62].

83. Detective Sergeant Lawler conducted an investigative search of the vehicle on 24 November 2023.¹¹⁹ During the search, the following items were located: boxing gloves, slides, drink bottle, deodorant, work gloves, work helmet, work jacket, a lunch bag containing uneaten rotten food, unopened noodles, protein powder, wallet, other miscellaneous items, a script in Laila's name, a pre-employment drug and alcohol test and medical notes from Laila's visit to the GP on 7 November 2023. The pre-employment drug and alcohol test form showed that Laila had completed a test on 25 October 2023 and was negative for any drugs or alcohol.¹²⁰

Phone examinations:

84. Detective Sergeant Lawler states that three phones were examined as part of the investigation, namely a Nokia mobile phone located in 15/8 Petunia Street during the investigative search of the unit (XF002066791), an iPhone belonging to Ms Muche (X0005314534) and an iPhone located in Mr Lado's pocket (XF002066797).¹²¹
85. The results of the phone examinations are summarised by Detective Sergeant Lawler as follows:
- a. Nokia phone (XF002066791): A Cellebrite examination was conducted which indicated that the phone had not been used since July 2023. Ms Muche later confirmed that the phone was her old phone and she had left it at the unit when she moved to Melbourne.¹²² Detective Sergeant Lawler stated that this phone provided no assistance to the investigation.¹²³
 - b. Ms Muche's phone (X0005314534): Ms Muche voluntarily provided this phone to police for a Cellebrite examination.¹²⁴ The phone contained messages between Mr Lado and Ms Muche which were consistent with Ms Muche's

¹¹⁹ Electronic Material Tab 13 – Video recording of investigative search of motor vehicle MV EIG14Y.

¹²⁰ See Electronic Material Tab 13 – Video recording of investigative search of motor vehicle MV EIG14Y; V1/63 – NSW Police photographs from investigative search x 22, pg 32.

¹²¹ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [65].

¹²² V1/51 – Review of Nokia phone located in 15/8 Petunia St, Marayong dated 5 December 2023.

¹²³ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [66].

¹²⁴ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [67]; Electronic Material – Tab 17 – Cellebrite – Mekdes Muche dated 23 November 2023.

statements. Police otherwise considered that this phone did not shed any light into the circumstances of Mr Lado's death.

- c. Mr Lado's iPhone (XF002066797): This was the main phone used by Mr Lado and was registered to Mr Lado through Vodaphone.¹²⁵

86. Detective Sergeant Lawler states that Mr Lado's iPhone was examined by Scene of Crime Officers for fingerprints and no fingerprints were detected. While DNA swabs were taken, profiling was not carried out due to the low levels of DNA present and the low prospect of obtaining a profile suitable for analysis.¹²⁶
87. Detective Sergeant Lawler further states that Mr Lado's iPhone is an iPhone 11 with a six-digit PIN. He states that in circumstances where the PIN is not known, police were unable to gain access to the phone to conduct a Cellebrite examination without assistance from the Digital Forensics Unit with an approximate waiting time of up to seven years. He states that because of this, police have not yet gained access to this phone but that upon access being obtained, police will be able to see any messages, call logs and internet browsing history present on the phone.

Review of relevant CCTV footage

88. As part of the investigation, police completed a review of available CCTV footage from properties surrounding 15/8 Petunia Street. The results of that review are summarised by Detective Sergeant Lawler at [80]-[95] of his statement.
89. The CCTV footage from 12/8 Petunia Street (which captures a portion of the backyard of 15/8 Petunia Street, including the rear door leading to the garage and the rear sliding door),¹²⁷ contains footage which is of interest in determining the likely time of Laila's death. It is summarised by Detective Sergeant Lawler at [88]-[92] of his statement:
 - a. During the evening of 9 November 2023, the white roller blind for the back sliding door to 15/8 Petunia Street was up and falling slightly below the top of

¹²⁵ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [68]; V2/53 – IPND 0415089811 Deceased Mobile Phone.

¹²⁶ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [70]; V2/59 – EFIMS – Forensic Result Summary; V2/60 – Expert Statement from Fingerprint Expert Hayam Abdallah dated 11 October 2025.

¹²⁷ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [88].

the door. A further black-out blind was down. From that evening onwards, the configuration of these blinds at 15/8 Petunia Street did not change.¹²⁸

- b. At 10:09pm on 9 November 2023, an unknown person appears to be captured in the rear yard of 15/8 Petunia Street. A torch or mobile phone light is seen to ignite. However, the footage is of a poor quality and it is not possible to ascertain any distinguishing features of the person present.¹²⁹
 - c. At 12:16am on 10 November 2023, the lights are on inside 15/8 Petunia Street, although no person is sighted.¹³⁰
 - d. During the evening of 15 November 2023, the blind was seen moving with a short figure moving past the blind. Police believe that the short figure captured was Laila's dog which caused the blind to move.¹³¹
 - e. On 18 November 2023, the lights at 15/8 Petunia Street go out. Police believe that this was caused by Laila's dog chewing through the washing machine power cord.¹³²
90. Relevant footage was also captured from a CCTV camera located at 6/8 Petunia Street, which captures the front of 15/8 Petunia Street. Police reviewed footage from 4:20pm on 13 November 2023 to 1:05pm on 20 November 2023. That review indicates that Laila's vehicle remained parked in an identical position from at least 13 November 2023 to 20 November 2023.¹³³

Canvassing of witnesses

91. As part of the investigation, police spoke to a large number of witnesses. They can be summarised as follows:
- a. **Istiaq Ahmed:** Mr Ahmed lived at 14/8 Petunia Street with his wife. Unit 14 shares a roof with Units 13 and 15 and a common wall with Unit 15. Mr Ahmed was aware of an African male living at Unit 15 and that the male owned a dog.

¹²⁸ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [90].

¹²⁹ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [92]; Electronic Material Tab 8 – CCTV Footage from 12/8 Petunia Street, Marayong.

¹³⁰ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [92]; Electronic Material Tab 8 – CCTV Footage from 12/8 Petunia Street, Marayong; CCTV Footage Review of 12/8 Petunia Street, Marayong at pg 9.

¹³¹ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [91].

¹³² V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [91].

¹³³ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [94].

Mr Ahmed said that at about 9pm or 10pm on 4 or 5 November 2023, he and his wife were watching television when they heard screaming coming from Unit 15. The screaming sounded like a male and lasted 2-3 seconds. He said it sounded like something was happening to the male, and that it was “*like they were scared*”. He said he then heard a little bit of running around for a few seconds before the noise ceased. Mr Ahmed also said that at around 5pm on 19 November 2023, he could hear the dog at Unit 15 crying inside the unit and running up and down the stairs for around 30 minutes.¹³⁴

- b. **Rosemary Richards:** Ms Richards lived at 10/8 Petunia Street with her partner and her son, **Jayson Kersten**. She had only met Laila on one previous occasion but had seen him around the unit complex. Ms Richards’ evidence was that she had a conversation with Laila on Friday, 10 November 2023 at around 4:30pm. She said the conversation took place before her shift commenced at 6:00pm. She recalled standing on the front patio of her unit and having a loud argument with Jayson over him “*smoking pot*”. As she approached her parked car, she heard a voice call out, “*Are you Jayson’s mum?*”. She then turned and saw “*a Sudanese man*” standing out the front of Unit 15 near a grey car. She responded, “*Yes, if you catch him smoking pot please dob him in to the police*”. She then got into her car and drove to work. She said that she did not know the man’s name but has seen him around the unit complex.¹³⁵
- c. Detective Sergeant Lawler said of this that police have no evidence as to whether or not the conversation took place, but believe Ms Richard’s evidence is not consistent with Laila’s phone records.¹³⁶
- d. **Jayson Kersten:** Mr Kersten is Ms Richards’ son. He participated in an ERISP on 20 November 2023 and provided a further statement on 22 November 2023.¹³⁷ He then provided further information to police verbally on 26 November 2023.

¹³⁴ V1/38 – Statement of Istiaq Ahmed dated 20 November 2023.

¹³⁵ V1/34 – Statement of Rosemary Richards of 20 November 2023 at [4]-[6].

¹³⁶ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [108].

¹³⁷ V1/17(B) – Kersten ERISP 20.11.2023; V1/18 – Second Statement of Jayson Kersten of 22 November 2023.

- e. Mr Kersten initially told police he had received a text message from Laila at 12:22pm on 12 November 2023, following which he immediately attended 15/8 Petunia Street and spoke to Laila.¹³⁸ This led to Mr Kersten participating in an ERISP.
- f. In his ERISP, Mr Kersten said he had been friends with Laila for around six to seven months and saw Laila a couple of times per week.¹³⁹ He said that he knew Laila to be a hard worker, and that he and Laila used to smoke cannabis together and work on Laila's VL Commodore together.¹⁴⁰ Mr Kersten said he last saw Laila on the evening of Tuesday, 14 November 2023. He went to the shop to get smokes following a disagreement with his partner and saw Laila in the street. He also said he heard screaming coming from Laila's house (or the house next to it) on Monday, 13 November 2023 at around 6:30pm or 7pm and that the screaming "*sounded like a mental breakdown*".¹⁴¹ Finally, he said he thought he had spoken to Laila on Friday, 10 November 2023 and Laila had told him he had the following Monday off work.¹⁴²
- g. Following Mr Kersten's ERISP, police reviewed the COPS system which indicated that Mr Kersten was involved in a domestic dispute at around 10:20pm on 12 November 2023 and police were contacted.¹⁴³
- h. Mr Kersten then provided a further statement to police on 22 November 2023 in which he clarified that the last time he saw Laila would have been between 11:20pm and 11:25pm on 12 November 2023. He said that he reconciled this time as police left his house just before 11pm and he then left the house to cool down and went to buy smokes. It was at this time that he saw Laila standing in the middle of the road. He knew it was Laila because of the person's hairstyle and body shape. He purchased cigarettes at 11:28pm, shortly after seeing Laila.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁸ V1/8 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [97].

¹³⁹ V1/17(B) – Kersten ERISP 20.11.2023 at pgs 5-6.

¹⁴⁰ V1/17(B) – Kersten ERISP 20.11.2023 at pgs 6 and 10.

¹⁴¹ V1/17(B) – Kersten ERISP 20.11.2023 at pgs 13-14.

¹⁴² V1/17(B) – Kersten ERISP 20.11.2023 at pg 18.

¹⁴³ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [101]. V1/69 – COPS Event E 95859154.

¹⁴⁴ V1/18 – Second Statement of Jayson Kersten (unsigned) dated 22 November 2023.

- i. Mr Kersten provided his phone to police on 26 November 2023. His phone showed two text messages from Laila to Mr Kersten sent on 8 October 2023 and 12 October 2023. There were no messages between Laila and Mr Kersten on 12 November 2023.¹⁴⁵
- j. Detective Sergeant Lawler opined that Mr Kersten is mistaken as to the dates and times at which he had contact with Laila but has not intentionally misled police.¹⁴⁶
- k. **Connie Doherty:** Ms Doherty lived at 3 Petunia Street with her partner **Joshua Sheen**. The driveway of her house is directly opposite the complex in which 15/8 Petunia Street is located. Ms Doherty was aware of an African man living in the unit complex and knew that he owned a dog and drove an early 2000 model silver Toyota Camry. She did not know him personally. Ms Doherty said she had seen a black Commodore or BMW coming and going from unit complex fairly often. She said she last saw it at around 3:10pm on 14 November 2023 and at the time, the African male was talking to the driver. She further said that at 8:35am on 20 November 2023, the silver Toyota Camry was not parked in its usual spot at 15/8 Petunia Street. Finally, she was certain that the silver Toyota Camry had been coming and going from 15/8 Petunia Street in the week prior to 21 November 2023.¹⁴⁷
- l. Detective Sergeant Lawler opined that Ms Doherty's evidence is inconsistent with the CCTV footage which shows Laila's car parked outside his premises between 13 and 20 November 2023. He believes Ms Doherty has Laila's car with a silver Rav 4 which is parked near the driveway to 15/8 Petunia Street and frequently came and went from the location. He also states that there was a black sedan parked outside 15/8 Petunia Street from around 12:55pm on 14 November 2023, but that sedan is used by another Sudanese male who resides within the unit complex.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [103].

¹⁴⁶ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [104].

¹⁴⁷ V1/40 – Statement of Connie Doherty dated 21 November 2023.

¹⁴⁸ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [121]-[122].

- m. **Jackson Koayen:** Mr Koayen had been friends with Laila for around four years. His evidence was that he saw Laila on 18 November 2023 at around 12:30pm in the food court at Mt Druitt Westfield.¹⁴⁹
- n. Detective Sergeant Lawler stated that police examined CCTV from the relevant location and date and did not sight Laila or any person resembling him at the relevant time. He opined that Mr Koayen was confused as to the date and time at which he saw Laila.¹⁵⁰
- o. **Joshua Sheen:** Mr Sheen lives at 3 Petunia Street with **Connie Doherty**. He did not know Mr Lado personally, but knew a young Sudanese man lived at 15/8 Petunia Street and moved in with a Sudanese woman and a very young child. Mr Sheen said that he left for work at around 8:10am on 20 November 2023 and Laila's vehicle was not parked in Petunia Street or in front of the garage inside the unit complex.¹⁵¹
- p. Detective Sergeant Lawler opined that Mr Sheen's statement was inconsistent with the CCTV footage which showed Laila's car parked outside his premises between 13 and 20 November 2023.¹⁵²

Review of bank records

92. As part of the investigation, police reviewed Laila's bank records.¹⁵³ Nothing of interest was identified. Laila was employed fulltime and appeared to live a relatively modest lifestyle. While he engaged in some sports betting, the levels do not appear to be excessive so as to have caused financial stress.¹⁵⁴

Other enquiries

93. On 30 November 2023, Mekdes attended 15/8 Petunia Street with Philip Lado to pack up Laila's belongings. In doing so, she noticed there were a large number of shoes that were missing. Mekdes said Laila had a collection of about 20 pairs of shoes that varied in price from around \$200-\$500 per pair. She said Laila loved the shoes and *"would never give them away or sell them and was proud of his shoe*

¹⁴⁹ V1/27 – Statement of Jackson Koayen dated 26 November 2023.

¹⁵⁰ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [110]-[111].

¹⁵¹ V1/39 – Statement of Joshua Sheen dated 21 November 2023.

¹⁵² V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [115].

¹⁵³ V3/81 – Westpac Bank Records; V3/82-85 – Various NAB Bank Records.

¹⁵⁴ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [125].

collection". She also noticed that Laila's MacBook Pro laptop was missing, which she thought was unusual because he used the laptop to store photos and videos that he would "*never get rid of*" as well as important documents.¹⁵⁵

94. Of this, Detective Sergeant Lawler noted that Mekdes had not been at 15/8 Petunia Street between July and November 2023, that Laila had no pawning events on the NSW Police computer system, and that Laila informed police on 9 November 2023 that there was nothing stolen from his house during his previous break and enter report.¹⁵⁶

95. As part of the investigation, police also completed a review of property crime in the area between 6 and 10 November 2023.¹⁵⁷ Detective Sergeant Lawler opined that none of the property crime identified was linked to Laila's death.¹⁵⁸

POST MORTEM EXAMINATIONS

96. On 23 November 2023, Dr Jennifer Pokorny, Forensic Pathologist, performed a post mortem examination. The cause of death could not be ascertained.¹⁵⁹

Coronial investigation

97. Over the past 12 months, various additional records and statements have been obtained as part of the coronial investigation in an attempt to shed further light on the manner and cause of Laila's death.

98. Specifically, a range of personal records pertaining to Laila have been obtained and reviewed, including his criminal history,¹⁶⁰ Local Court files,¹⁶¹ Community Corrections files,¹⁶² and electricity records.¹⁶³ In summary, these records have provided very limited further insights into Laila's circumstances in the period leading up to his death and do not assist in determining the manner or cause of his death.

¹⁵⁵ V1/13 – Second Statement of Mekdes Muche dated 4 December 2023 at [11].

¹⁵⁶ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [130].

¹⁵⁷ V2/70 – SF Cormack Property Crime Review and Map.

¹⁵⁸ V1/9 – DS Lawler 21.02.2024 at [128].

¹⁵⁹ V1/5 – Post-Mortem Examination Report dated 13 May 2024.

¹⁶⁰ V2/70 – Criminal History.

¹⁶¹ V2/72 – Local Court of NSW files relating to recorded charges appearing on Mr Lado's criminal history.

¹⁶² V2/74 – Community Corrections NSW Case Management File.

¹⁶³ V2/76 – Electricity Records.

99. On 26 January 2026, Detective Senior Constable Callum McCarthur provided a statement setting out the steps he had taken while Officer in Charge of the investigation.¹⁶⁴ These included:
- a. Making enquiries with Laila's employer to see whether a pre-employment medical examination was conducted which might shed light on any medical conditions Laila had at the time of his death. Those enquiries indicated that no pre-employment medical examination was carried out.
 - b. Inspecting Laila's iPhone on 26 January 2026 to see whether the "brute force" program installed on his phone on 23 November 2023 had succeeded in unlocking the phone. Detective McCarthur advised that Laila's iPhone was still locked and running the "brute force" program. This means that while Laila's iPhone cannot currently be examined by way of Cellebrite examination (eg, to shed light on his phone use on the evening of 9 November 2023 – for example, his internet browsing history), there is some prospect that the program will eventually unlock Laila's iPhone and allow it to be examined at that future time.

CONCLUSION

100. The evidence does not permit me to make a finding as to the cause or manner of Laila's death. In the period leading up to his death, Laila's relationship with Mekdes had broken down and Mekdes and Loyalty had moved to Melbourne to live with Mekdes' mother. The accounts of Mekdes, Phillip, Mr Zakria and Mr Kot commented on the adverse impact this had on Laila's mental state in the months and weeks leading up to 9 November.2023.
101. Laila's interactions with police on 9 November 2023 could be suggestive of paranoid behaviour. Laila attended Blacktown Police Station in the early hours of 9 November 2023 and was described by Constable Gauci as cagey in demeanour and possibly affected by drugs or alcohol. Laila reported a possible break and enter via the Police Assistance a short time later and then spoke to Constable Ruddock who attended his house to conduct a forensic examination. Constable Ruddock

¹⁶⁴ V1/10 – Statement of Detective Senior Constable Callum McCarthur dated 26 January 2026.

said that there were no signs of any break and enter at Laila's unit and made the observation that while Laila was very concerned about a possible break and enter, he could not provide any further information to assist with an investigation.

102. These observations must in turn be viewed in light of:
- i. The evidence of Laila's younger brother Logo and various friends, who said Laila appeared normal in their last interactions and was not someone who they observed to have mental health issues.
 - ii. Laila's normal attendances at work and the gym in the days leading up to his last confirmed movements – including on 9 November.
 - iii. That Laila did not have any reported history of mental health issues or excessive drug or alcohol use.

103. Notwithstanding the comprehensive investigation conducted by police, there is no evidence which might lead to a conclusion that Laila's death was suspicious. Similarly, there is no evidence that any third party had any involvement in Laila's death.

104. Laila's identity and place of death are uncontroversial. I accept the evidence of the forensic pathologist that when Laila's body was discovered he had been deceased for some time. On the available evidence I am satisfied on the balance of probabilities that Laila died on 10 November 2023 the same day his phone activity ceased.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

105. I offer my heartfelt condolences and sympathy to Laila's family and thank them for participating in this inquest when it has been so difficult and sad.

106. I thank counsel assisting, Ms G Marsden and her instructing solicitor, Ms A Shrestha for the work they put into assisting me in this inquest. I would also like to acknowledge the work of Detective Senior Constable Callum McArthur who conducted a thorough police investigation in this matter.

SECTION 81 CORONERS ACT (2009) FINDINGS:

Identity

The person who died was Mr Laila Philip Samson Lado

Date of death

Mr. Lado died on 10 November 2023

Place of death


Mr. Lado died at 15/8 Petunia Street, Marayong, NSW

Cause of death

The cause of Mr. Lado's death is unascertained.

Manner of death

The manner of Mr. Lado's death is unascertained.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Forbes', written in a cursive style.

Magistrate Carmel Forbes

Deputy State Coroner

Coroners Court of NSW, Lidcombe

6 May 2026