



**CORONER'S COURT
OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

Inquest:	Inquest into the death of Ronen Veinstein
Hearing dates:	25 February 2026
Date of findings:	20 March 2026
Place of findings:	Coroners Court of New South Wales, Lidcombe
Findings of:	Magistrate Joan Baptie, Deputy State Coroner
Catchwords:	CORONIAL LAW – Missing person, suspicious circumstances, referral to the Unsolved Homicide Squad
File number:	2011/387570
Representation:	Ms Amanda Chytra, Coronial Advocate Assisting

Non-publication order:

1. That the following information contained in the brief of evidence tendered in the proceeding is not to be published under Section 74(1)(b) of the *Coroners Act 2009* (NSW):

a. All material contained within the Brief of Evidence.

2. Pursuant to Section 65(4) of the *Coroners Act 2009* (NSW), a notation be placed on the Court file that if an application is made under S65(2) of that Act for access to the documents on the court file, that material shall not be provided until the NSW Police Force has had an opportunity to make submissions in respect of any application.

Findings:	<p>The identity of the deceased</p> <p>Mr Ronen Veinstein who was reported as a missing person to the New South Wales Police Force on 25 May 2005, is now deceased.</p> <p>Date of Death</p> <p>The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the date of Mr Veinstein's death</p> <p>Place of Death</p> <p>The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the date of Mr Veinstein's death</p> <p>Cause of death</p> <p>The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the date of Mr Veinstein's death</p> <p>Manner of Death</p> <p>The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the date of Mr Veinstein's death</p>
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Recommendations:	I recommend that the death of Mr Ronen Veinstein be referred to the Unsolved Homicide Team of the NSW Police Homicide Squad for further investigation in accordance with the protocols and procedures of that Team. I further recommend that a copy of the brief of evidence and transcript of the Inquest into the death of Mr Ronen Veinstein be provided to the Unsolved Homicide Team for this purpose.
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Contents

Introduction	2
The role of the Coroner and the scope of the inquest	3
Mr Veinstein’s background	3
Criminal history and the use of multiple alias names	5
Department of Immigrations and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) records	6
Factual Background relating to Mr Veinstein’s disappearance	6
Forensic Examination and other enquiries	9
Evidence of Detective Senior Constable Scott Wilcox	10
Can it be concluded that Mr Veinstein is deceased?	10
Conclusions	11
Findings pursuant to section 81(1) of the Coroners Act 2009 (NSW)	12
Recommendation	13

Introduction

- 1 This inquest concerns the disappearance of Mr Ronen Veinstein.
- 2 Mr Veinstein was born on 9 October 1964 in Israel.
- 3 At the time of his disappearance Mr Veinstein resided with his wife, Mrs Regina (Ginni) Veinstein and their children in Mooball, New South Wales.
- 4 Mr Veinstein was last seen alive in Mooball, in December 2004, after Mrs Veinstein returned home from shopping and discovered that he was not at home. He did not return home subsequently.
- 5 Mr Veinstein was reported to Byron Bay police as a missing person by a friend on 25 May 2005.
- 6 On 27 September 2007, Mrs Veinstein was arrested and charged with Mr Veinstein's death. On 3 April 2009, the Director of Public Prosecutions withdrew the charges against Mrs Veinstein.
- 7 The New South Wales Police Force (NSWPF) continued to investigate the whereabouts of Mr Veinstein. Unfortunately, all enquiries failed to establish the current whereabouts of Mr Veinstein. On 19 July 2011, Police filed a "Report of Suspected Death to the Coroner," confirming his disappearance and indicating that it was suspected that Mr Veinstein was deceased.
- 8 This inquest has focused on determining if Mr Veinstein is deceased, and if so, whether the cause and manner of his death can be determined.
- 9 Mr Veinstein's former partner and one of his sons has been present during these proceedings. I would like to acknowledge the unimaginable difficulties his family are experiencing with the lack of conclusive evidence relating to his whereabouts and his fate. I would like to thank his family for their contribution and participation in this inquest. I hope that his memory has been honoured by the careful examination of the circumstances surrounding his disappearance.
- 10 I would also like to express my personal condolences to Mr Veinstein's family and friends.

The role of the Coroner and the scope of the inquest

- 11 When a case of a missing person who is suspected to have died is reported to the Coroner, the Coroner must determine from the available evidence whether that person has in fact died.
- 12 If a Coroner forms the view that a missing person has died, the Coroner has a statutory obligation to make findings about the identity of the person who died, when and where they died, and the cause and manner of their death. If the Coroner is unable to answer any of these questions, then an inquest must be held.
- 13 In Mr Veinstein's case, the missing person investigation conducted by the New South Wales Police Force (**NSWPF**) has been unable to locate him or any physical evidence as to his location since 25 May 2005. As such, it is not possible to answer all of the questions that a Coroner is required to answer, and an inquest has been held.
- 14 During these proceedings, a brief of evidence containing statements, photographs and other documentation, was tendered in court and admitted into evidence. The current officer in charge of the investigation, Detective Senior Constable Scott Wilcox gave oral evidence.
- 15 All the material placed before the Court has been thoroughly reviewed and considered.

Mr Veinstein's background

- 16 Mr Veinstein was born in Israel.
- 17 He arrived in Australia in 1989, together with his then partner, Ms Karni Shai. Mr Veinstein and Ms Shai have one son, Mr Jonathon (Booni) Shai. He was born in June 1993.
- 18 Their relationship ended sometime after their son's birth, and Ms Shai and Jonathan returned to Israel for about "four or five years". They both returned to Australia in 1997.
- 19 There is limited evidence which suggests that Mr Veinstein has two other children to two different women in Israel, although their names and other details are unknown.

- 20 Mr Veinstein had a documented history of drug misuse, particularly relating to heroin. He had been using heroin since he was 16 years of age. His mother would assist him financially as his drug use prevented him from maintaining employment while he was domiciled in Isreal.
- 21 Mr Veinstein went through periods of abstinence from illicit substances but reported that these periods of time left him feeling as if there was a “black hole” inside him.
- 22 In September 2000, Mr Veinstein met Ms Helga Hunke when he was living in Brunswick Heads. They married in November 2000.
- 23 Ms Hunke did not see Mr Veinstein using heroin when they first met but did recall his use of cannabis. During their short marriage, Mr Veinstein recommenced his use of heroin, and the relationship ended shortly afterwards.
- 24 In 2001, Mr Veinstein met Mrs Regina Syme who owned a coffee shop in Mullumbimby. Mrs Syme had been separated from her husband, Mr Tony Syme, since 1999.
- 25 In 2002, Mr Veinstein and Ms Hunke divorced, as did Mr and Mrs Syme.
- 26 Mr Veinstein and Mrs Syme married in April 2002. Mrs Regina Syme adopted her husband’s surname, becoming known as Mrs Regina (Ginni) Veinstein. Together they had two children, Kesem and Noah. Mrs Veinstein also had a child, Eden, from a previous relationship.
- 27 Mr and Mrs Veinstein resided at 79 Pottsville Road, Mooball with the three children. Mooball is a small town which is located about 35 kilometres from Byron Bay.
- 28 The property at that time was described as a seven-acre rural property, with a house and studio. The property was registered in Mrs Veinstein’s name, although they both contributed to the mortgage payments.
- 29 Mr and Mrs Veinstein operated a joint bank account. Mr Veinstein had a credit card in his name and did not own a mobile phone. The couple owned a 2001 Mitsubishi 4-wheel drive vehicle which was purchased on finance and used by both of them.
- 30 Mr Veinstein was working casually and as a sub-contractor for a company called “Always Painting”, which was run by a friend of Mr Veinstein’s, Mr Oren Tabakof.
- 31 Mrs Veinstein indicated to police that Mr Veinstein was using drugs, however, was uncertain what drugs he was using.

Criminal History and the use of multiple alias names

- 32 Mr Veinstein had first come to the attention of NSW Police in 1993.
- 33 In 1993, he was found guilty of two fraud offences and placed on a three-year Good Behaviour Bond with supervision from the NSW Probation and Parole Service.
- 34 In 1994, he was convicted and fined for two separate shoplifting offences.
- 35 In 1994, an application was made to the Local Court by the Probation and Parole Service, indicating that Mr Veinstein had breached the Good Behaviour Bond, imposed in 1993. An arrest warrant was issued on 8 September 1994. Mr Veinstein left Australia on 19 September 1994 and returned on 3 March 1999. He was arrested due to the warrant on 8 October 1999, although no action was ultimately taken by the Court on the breach of his bond.
- 36 Mr Veinstein was known to use various aliases, including the names of people he knew, as well as variations on the spelling of his first and last names.
- 37 The names included:
- Ronen Wainhtein,
 - Ronen Wainshtein,
 - Ronen Wainsthein,
 - Ivan Sibony,
 - Aviv Gонуonzki,
 - Erez Wienstien,
 - Ronen Vinstein,
 - Ronen Veinstein,
 - Ronan Weinstein,
 - Ronen Weinstein, and
 - Ronen Wainsthein
- 38 The name he used for his driver's licence and other Transport for NSW records was "Ronen Veinstein". His driver's licence expired in 2006.
- 39 The name that appeared on the NSW Police Force COPS system was "Ronen Wainshtein", although the various aliases referred to above, were also included on the Police Force's COPS system.

Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) records

- 40 Immigration records disclose that after Mr Veinstein returned to Australia in 1999, he left Australia on only one other occasion, being 5 February 2000 and returned on 4 May 2000.
- 41 On 25 October 2001, Mr Veinstein was arrested by DIMIA compliance officers, due to his expired visa. Mr Veinstein contested the basis of his arrest, claiming that he had married a woman named Ms Caitlin McKewon on 10 January 1990, some four months after he arrived in Australia in the company of Ms Shai. He claimed that due to his marriage to Ms McKewon, he had applied for permanent residency, however, the relationship ended and his application was refused. Ms Veinstein was released from Immigration detention and placed on a bond. He was also refused a further stay in Australia.
- 42 Mr Veinstein lodged an application for a new visa which was declined. He appealed DIMIA's determination and successfully argued his case, which resulted in the original decision being overturned. He was granted a Bridging Visa, which permitted him to stay in Australia while his application was being processed.
- 43 On 1 September 2003, DIMIA wrote to Mr Veinstein advising him of his obligations to present for mandatory health checks and police probity checks as part of his application. On 16 September 2002, Mr Veinstein contacted DIMIA to enquire about the location of the service providing the health check and to notify the Department that they still had possession of his passport following his arrest in 2001.
- 44 DIMIA records disclose that they had no further contact with Mr Veinstein and his case was finalised on 26 September 2005. It is noted that his bridging visa expired on 24 October 2005, rendering him an unlawful non-citizen.

Factual Background relating to Mr Veinstein's disappearance

- 45 Mr Veinstein was last seen in December 2004.
- 46 Sometime in December 2004, Mrs Veinstein called her friend Ingrid to ask for her assistance with the children as Mr Veinstein had left the house and had not returned. Ingrid attended the premises and encouraged Mrs Veinstein to contact the NSW Police and report Mr Veinstein as a missing person.

- 47 During December 2004 and January 2005, Mrs Veinstein's former husband, Mr Tony Syme attended her home on a number of occasions. During those visits he recalled that Mrs Veinstein received a number of phone calls from Mr Veinstein's mother, Ms Lydia Wagner and other family members in Israel. The communications established that no-one had heard from Mr Veinstein, and no-one knew his whereabouts.
- 48 On 25 May 2005, Mr Ami Tabakhoff reported Mr Veinstein as a missing person to Detective Senior Constable (**DSC**) Hutchinson. He was concerned that Mrs Veinstein had not already reported him as missing.
- 49 On 26 May 2005, Mrs Veinstein participated in the first of two voluntarily recorded records of interview with NSW Police.
- 50 In her first interview, Mrs Veinstein told police that she had left the farm in the morning with her three children to go shopping in town. At that time, Mr Veinstein was at their home. She confirmed that they only had the one vehicle, being the Mitsubishi 4 wheel-drive.
- 51 Mrs Veinstein told police that she had returned home sometime later that day and found that Mr Veinstein was not at home, and that his wallet and passport were missing. She was asked if he took any clothing and she responded "well some" but stated that she could hardly remember anything. She could not recall what day this occurred.
- 52 She recalled that this was not the first time he had left home without notice, referring to an occasion when he "went off to South America."
- 53 Mrs Veinstein told police that he was using drugs and they were having a lot of arguments about money issues. Mrs Veinstein indicated that she had also experienced depression for the last two years.
- 54 Mrs Veinstein was asked by police about their banking arrangements. Mrs Veinstein indicated that they had a joint bank account, which had not been accessed by him since his disappearance. She was also asked about his access to credit cards. She responded with a non-responsive answer, referring instead to a photograph of Mr Veinstein and his mother.
- 55 On 2 June 2005, Ms Shai provided a statement to police. She confirmed that her son Jonathon had been visiting Mr and Mrs Veinstein, when he witnessed a fight between the Veinsteins, where Mr Veinstein was hitting Mrs Veinstein and throwing items in the swimming pool. Jonathan contacted Ms Shai and she collected him from the property. He had little contact with Mr Veinstein afterwards.

- 56 On 7 June 2005, Detective Hutchinson made enquiries with DIMIA. DIMIA confirmed that Mr Veinstein had arrived back in Australia on 4 May 2000 and had not left Australia after that date.
- 57 On 27 April 2006, Detective Senior Constable (**DSC**) Duncan King became involved in the investigation and Strike Force Wondaree was established to further investigate Mr Veinstein's disappearance.
- 58 On 8 August 2006, Mr Ami Tabakhoff provided a statement to police, indicating that he had last seen Mr Veinstein in either November or December 2004. Police then spoke with a number of other potential witnesses.
- 59 On 31 August 2006, Mrs Veinstein participated in her second voluntary electronically recorded witness statement with police. Her account in this interview was largely consistent with her earlier recorded interview.
- 60 Between August 2006 to August 2007, enquiries were made through Interpol in an attempt to obtain a DNA sample from one of Mr Veinstein's family members. A sample was obtained; however, no successful match has been made to any unidentified body.
- 61 On 27 August 2007, Mrs Veinstein had a number of conversations with witnesses regarding the events surrounding Mr Veinstein's disappearance. Over the ensuing day, she had further conversations with a number of people regarding similar disclosures.
- 62 On 30 August 2007, Police confirmed that "information was received (from witnesses that Regina Veinstein had confessed to murdering Ronen Veinstein to the witness."
- 63 The information provided to police was that Ms Veinstein had confessed to hitting Mr Veinstein over the head with a rock as he was lying asleep and then burning his body and scattered his ashes all around their property at Mooball. She was further alleged to have stated to a witness, "I killed him on 9 December 2004."
- 64 On 27 September 2007, Mrs Veinstein invited two of Mr Veinstein's friends to the property in Mooball to view the areas where she had burned Mr Veinstein's body and subsequently disposed of his remains on the property. After leaving the property, the two friends went to the police with a piece of cloth and an ashen substance that they had retrieved from the property.
- 65 On 27 September 2007, police arrested Mrs Veinstein and charged her with the murder of her missing husband.

- 66 Police conducted a recorded interview with Mrs Veinstein immediately after her arrest. Mrs Veinstein declined to answer any questions.

Forensic Examination and other enquiries

- 67 A Crime Scene Warrant was granted to the investigating Police on 27 September 2007, following Mrs Veinstein's arrest.
- 68 Police conducted various searches of the property at Mooball, including the house and studio over a four-day period, commencing on 28 September 2007. Forensic testing was conducted in various areas of the house, including the use of luminol. The luminol testing produced a positive reaction to blood, however, the sample was not a match for Mr Veinstein's blood or DNA.
- 69 Police excavated a number of areas of interest on the property. One area of interest which was excavated was found to contain the partial remains of a horse.
- 70 On 2 October 2007, Police applied for, and were granted, a Crime Scene Warrant for the Mitsubishi 4WD. Two areas of interest were located, however, neither area matched Mr Veinstein's blood or DNA.
- 71 On 4 October 2007, Police conducted a further search of the Mooball property.
- 72 DSC King made numerous enquiries with various government departments and service providers, which indicated that Mr Veinstein had not used any government service, banking, telecommunication service or utility since December 2004.
- 73 On 29 October 2007, DSC King sent a report to the Director of Public Prosecutions (**DPP**), requesting a review of the brief of evidence with a view to withdrawing the charges against Mrs Veinstein.
- 74 The prosecution proceeded to a committal hearing on 8 August and 14 November 2008.
- 75 On 3 April 2009, the charges were withdrawn by the prosecution.
- 76 On 2 August 2018, Detective Sergeant Rodney Vandermaat was allocated the case and reviewed the investigation into Mr Veinstein's disappearance.
- 77 Detective Vandermaat sought to re-interview Mrs Veinstein. His enquiries indicated that she had left Australia on 4 October 2021 and has not returned to Australia.

Evidence of Detective Senior Constable Scott Wilcox

- 78 Detective Senior Constable Scott Wilcox was assigned to this matter in 2021. He has prepared two statements in these proceedings, both dated 20 February 2026. In addition, Detective Wilcox gave sworn oral evidence on 25 February 2026.
- 79 Detective Wilcox gave evidence that he had recently conducted “Signs of Life” checks regarding Mr Veinstein. These checks included:
- State and Territory Missing Person’s Units,
 - Banking institutions,
 - Medicare,
 - Births, Deaths and Marriages,
 - NSWPF COPS entries
- 80 In addition, Detective Wilcox has made enquiries concerning DNA profile matches in Australia relating to unidentified human remains, without success.
- 81 Detective Wilcox expressed his opinion, based on his review of the evidence and his most recent enquiries, that Mr Veinstein is no longer alive.

Can it be concluded that Mr Veinstein is deceased?

- 82 The first finding that a Coroner is required to determine following an inquest into the suspected death of a missing person is whether that person is deceased. This question is required to be determined on the balance of probabilities, and there must be clear, cogent and exact evidence that a missing person has died before such a conclusion can be made.
- 83 Mr Ronen Veinstein has not been seen since December 2004.
- 84 Mr Veinstein had been known to disappear previously, although he would always reappear.
- 85 Mr Veinstein’s mother and his brother reside in Israel. He has made no attempt to contact any of his family members since December 2004.
- 86 Immigration records confirm that Mr Veinstein has not accessed an international point of departure since 4 May 2000, when he returned from

overseas. At the time of his disappearance, his passport was in the custody of DIMIA. His is therefore believed to still be in Australia.

87 Mr Veinstein has not accessed any banking or government services, nor has he come to the attention of the police in any of the states and territories.

88 Mr Veinstein has not attempted to contact any of his children, relatives or friends in Australia since December 2004.

89 The circumstances of his disappearance appear suspicious, although there is currently no person or persons of interest relating to his disappearance.

90 The Court has considered all the available evidence and is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that Mr Veinstein is now deceased, however, it is not possible to determine either the cause or manner of his death. Similarly, it is not possible to determine the date or the location of his death.

Conclusions

91 Prior to December 2004, Mr Veinstein was known to be socially active and involved with his family and the local community. He was in contact with his family and friends in Israel.

92 Mr Veinstein's disappearance was sudden and complete.

93 His wife was charged with his murder; however, those charges were eventually withdrawn. Despite further investigations by the police, no person is currently a suspect in Mr Veinstein's disappearance and death.

94 It is important that the investigations into his disappearance and death are continually reviewed. I am of the view that Mr Veinstein's death should be referred to the Unsolved Homicide Squad, and I propose to make that recommendation.

95 Before turning to the Findings that I am required to make, I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to Ms Amanda Chytra, Coronial Advocate for her significant assistance, commitment, support and preparation of this case.

96 I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Officer in charge of the investigation, Detective Senior Constable Wilcox for his assistance with the preparation of the brief of evidence.

97 Finally, I would like to record my most sincere condolences to the families of Mr Veinstein.

Findings pursuant to section 81(1) of the Coroners Act 2009 (NSW)

I make the following findings pursuant to section 81 (1) of the Coroners Act 2009 (NSW):

The identity of the deceased

Mr Ronen Veinstein who was reported as a missing person to the New South Wales Police Force on 25 May 2005, is now deceased.

Date of Death

The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the date of Mr Veinstein's death

Place of Death

The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the date of Mr Veinstein's death

Cause of death

The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the date of Mr Veinstein's death

Manner of Death

The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the date of Mr Veinstein's death

Recommendations

I recommend that the death of Mr Ronen Veinstein be referred to the Unsolved Homicide Team of the NSW Police Homicide Squad for further investigation in accordance with the protocols and procedures of that Team. I further recommend that a copy of the brief of evidence and transcript of the Inquest into the death of Mr Ronen Veinstein be provided to the Unsolved Homicide Team for this purpose.

I now close this inquest

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan Baptie', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Magistrate Joan Baptie

Deputy State Coroner

20 March 2026