



**CORONERS COURT
OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

Inquest: Inquest into the disappearance and suspected death of David Mark Webber

Hearing dates: 1 May 2026

Date of findings: 1 May 2026

Place of findings: Coroners Court of New South Wales, Newcastle

Findings of: Judge Caleb Franklin, Deputy State Coroner

Catchwords: CORONIAL LAW – missing person – whether missing person now deceased – manner and cause of death

File number: 2022/00209652

Representation: Danny Winter-Mirenzi, Coronial Advocate Assisting the Coroner

Findings:

Identity of deceased: The person who died was David Mark Webber.

Date of death: David died on, or sometime very shortly after, 12 January 2013.

Place of death: David died in the Newcastle area of NSW.

Cause of death: The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the cause of death. The cause of David's death is unknown.

Manner of death: The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the manner of death. The manner of David's death is unknown.

Introduction

- 1 This inquest concerns the disappearance and suspected death of David Mark Webber. David was born on 5 April 1965. He was last seen alive on 12 January 2013 by his partner, Ms Katrina Quinn, at his residential address at 34 Hamilton Street Hamilton North. At the time of his disappearance, he was 47 years old.
- 2 David was reported missing to the police on 14 January 2013 by Ms Quinn. Police have made extensive enquiries to try and locate him since that date. Despite the extensive police investigation, David's whereabouts has not been ascertained, and no bodily remains have ever been located.

Why was an inquest held?

- 3 Under the Coroners Act 2009 ("the Act") the coroner is responsible for investigating all reportable deaths or suspected deaths. When police suspect a missing person may have died, the suspected death is reportable to the coroner. Once that report is made the coroner is obliged to investigate to attempt to answer several questions. The primary question is whether the person has in fact died.
- 4 If the coroner concludes that a missing person has died, the coroner is then obliged to make further findings and attempt to answer questions as to the date, place, cause and manner of death.
- 5 In addition to deciding these questions, at the conclusion of proceedings, the coroner may, if necessary and appropriate, make recommendations in relation to matters arising directly from the evidence.
- 6 In missing person cases, there is often very little information about what happened to the person after they were last seen alive. In David's case, the extensive investigation by the New South Wales Police Force (NSWPF) has been unable to reveal exactly what happened to him after he was last seen alive on the morning of 12 January 2013.

Accordingly, as it has not been possible to answer the questions that a coroner is required to address under the Act, it is mandatory for an inquest to be held.

- 7 I recognise and acknowledge that the operation of the Act and the coronial process in general represents an intrusion by the State into the lives of the family and friends of a missing person. It is understandable that some families and friends would prefer to attempt to cope with the consequences of such a traumatic loss in private. The sense of loss experienced by family members and friends does not always diminish by the passage of time. I acknowledge that this inquest by its very nature has unfortunately compelled family members to relive distressing memories and to do so in a public forum. I thank the family for their participation in this process.

Hearing and evidence

- 8 A hearing of this inquest was held on 1 May 2026 at Newcastle Courthouse.
- 9 Detective Sergeant Scott Wheeler, as the current Officer in Charge (OIC), gave oral evidence at the inquest. Detective Sergeant Scott Wheeler took carriage of the case from previous investigating police. The case was originally assigned to Detective Senior Constable Jeanette De Koeyer in 2013, who was responsible for the original investigations before the case was suspended in 2014. In 2021 the case was reopened and allocated to Detective Senior Constable Alexander Gordon who conducted a full review of the original investigation and conducted further enquiries before preparing a brief of evidence.
- 10 A brief of evidence, including the statement of the previous OIC Detective Senior Constable Alexander Gordon dated 12 October 2022, was tendered to the court and marked as Exhibit 1. Further evidence was tendered through the current OIC, being the police case file which included 5 digital video discs (DVDs) containing photographs of David's car and CCTV footage from Newcastle train station and also a police officer's notes relating to viewing the CCTV footage these items were collectively marked as Exhibit 2.

11 No other witnesses were called, and no other evidence was tendered.

David's life and background

12 David was born on 5 April 1965 to parents Terrence Webber and Carmel Webber. Both parents were alive at the time David was last seen alive but have since died in 2017 and 2019 respectively. David was one of twelve siblings but had limited contact with his family.

13 As a child, David completed primary school at St Laurence O'Toole Broadmeadow and then attended Marist Brothers High School in Hamilton. He was employed as a construction supervisor in the building industry. His interests included camping, fishing and soccer.

14 David married Ms Deborah Moyle in his late teenage years, and they remained married for approximately 20 years. They share four children from that relationship, Tasman, Reagan, Teah and Reinee. In 2011, David commenced a new relationship with Ms Katrina Quinn, who was the person who reported him missing to police. Ms Quinn and David continued their relationship until he was last seen alive on 12 January 2013.

15 At the time he went missing, David was working for Hunter Prestige Construction, a business operated by Mr Shane Bower. He had previously jointly owned and operated a business with his brother Michael Webber. However, the business had ceased operations in November 2011 following some failed business dealings and there were reports of outstanding business debts.

16 David had a medical history that included insulin dependent type 1 diabetes which required insulin injections with every meal. He always carried a medication bag, which included his diabetes medication. He had no known allergies. David reportedly had mental health issues including depression, anxiety and panic attacks. He was known to be a heavy drinker of alcohol and was an ex-smoker. His regular medications at the time of his disappearance included Zoloft for his anxiety, and his diabetes medications

included NovoRapid Flexpen (insulin aspart), Lantus SoloStar Pen (insulin glargine) and GlucaGen Hypokit (glucagen hydrochloride).

- 17 It appears David was first diagnosed with diabetes on 10 October 2009, following a period of admission to John Hunter Hospital. The hospital records for that admission indicate the primary diagnosis of new onset diabetes mellitus and a secondary diagnosis of panic attacks. Later medical records from 4 April 2011 indicate his diabetes remained poorly controlled for some time.
- 18 David had a limited criminal history including previous convictions for drink driving. In 2001 he was convicted of Driving with a Middle Range Prescribed Concentration of Alcohol and in 2002 he was convicted of Driving with a High Range Prescribed Concentration of Alcohol. He was also convicted of Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm in 2008.

Events leading up to David's disappearance

- 19 David did not attend work on Friday 11 January 2013. He told his son Tasman and his employer at Hunter Prestige Construction that he would not be attending work that day because he would be having an Xray scan of his chest. There is no independent evidence that he had been referred for an X-ray scan and investigating police believe this was a deliberate lie to avoid revealing the true reason he could not attend work.
- 20 Significantly, on Friday 11 January 2013, the day prior to the last known sighting of David, he was arrested and charged with a number of serious historical sex offences relating to a younger brother and two younger sisters. These offences were alleged to have occurred between 1979 and 1983 when David was still a young person.
- 21 David had voluntarily attended Newcastle Police Station on 11 January 2013 by prior arrangement. David had been aware since 23 August 2012, when he was previously arrested and released without charge, that he was being investigated by police in relation to some of these historical sex offences.

- 22 On 11 January 2013 David was charged with seven offences and then later released on bail by the police. These charges included one count of indecent assault on a male, one count of attempt to carnally know a girl under the age of 10 years, two counts of commit act of indecency on female under 16 years, and three counts of sexual assault. His bail acknowledgement required as a condition of his bail that he report to police once per week, being each Wednesday, at Waratah Police Station. Police records indicate he did not report to police on Wednesday 16 January 2013 as required by his bail and that he never reported to police on any later date.
- 23 David's bail acknowledgement and Court Attendance Notices also required him to appear at Newcastle Local Court on 12 February 2013. He never appeared at Newcastle Local Court on this or subsequent dates to which the criminal proceedings had been adjourned. Ultimately a bench warrant was issued for David's arrest by Newcastle Local Court on 22 April 2013. That warrant has never been executed as David has never been located by the police. The solicitor assisting David in relation to those charges, Mr Stuart Gray, told police that he had not had any contact with David since the day of his arrest, being 11 January 2013.

The last recorded sighting of David

- 24 David was last seen alive by his partner Ms Katrina Quinn at approximately 7:00am on Saturday 12 January 2013 at his residential address at 34 Hamilton Street Hamilton North. Notably, at the time he went missing David had left his medication bag (containing insulin), his dog and his laptop at home, which was considered unusual for him, particularly as he required regular medication including insulin with every meal.
- 25 David was a 47-year-old male at the time he went missing and he would be 61 years of age today. At about the time of his last known sighting his physical appearance was described as being a Caucasian male, medium build, 5'9" tall, with blue eyes and short sandy grey hair.

The police investigation and efforts to locate David

- 26 At approximately 5:00pm on 14 January 2013, David's partner, Katrina Quinn, attended Waratah Police Station and reported David as a missing person. At the time of reporting David missing, Ms Quinn was unaware that David had been arrested and charged with several offences on 11 January 2013. Ms Quinn told police that she and David lived separately and that when she attended his home on 13 January 2013, his dog was unattended and that David, his motor vehicle and his mobile phone were missing.
- 27 David did not attend work at Hunter Prestige Construction on Monday 14 January 2013 or at any time thereafter.
- 28 A keep a lookout for (KALOF) job was created on the police Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and a warning was placed on David's grey Holden Colorado motor vehicle (NSW registration CDI-19V). Case C51135139 was established. The Missing Persons Unit (as it was known then) completed an Identification Form with relevant details included.

Mobile phone records

- 29 On 14 January 2013 a triangulation for David's phone was authorised by the Duty Operations Inspector. The triangulation enquiries conducted both on 14 January 2013 and on later dates revealed that his mobile phone was either switched off or the battery was flat.
- 30 Police also obtained Call Charge Records for David's phone and an Optus mobile phone invoice from Ms Katrina Quinn. David's mobile phone records indicate his last known cell tower location was Broadmeadow at 6:51pm on 11 January 2013 and that he last used his mobile phone for internet data at 6:04am on 12 January 2013. There was no further relevant activity on David's mobile phone service.

- 31 David's partner, Katrina Quinn, had tried to call him on his mobile phone on multiple occasions over the weekend of 12 and 13 January 2013 with nil response.
- 32 David's mobile phone was ultimately located under the seat of his motor vehicle by his son, Tasman Webber, after the vehicle was released to Tasman by the police on 6 February 2013. The recent call history on David's mobile phone showed multiple missed calls received from Katrina Quinn, David's children, work clients and other associates in the period after 12 January 2013.

David's motor vehicle

- 33 On 19 January 2013 police received information from an anonymous person that David's motor vehicle CDI-19V was parked on Thorn Street, Newcastle near the intersection with King Street. Police located the vehicle parked at that location, finding it unlocked with a set of keys located underneath the driver's seat and a newspaper dated 12 January 2013 inside the vehicle. Other items located in the vehicle included diabetic pens and other medication and a small esky containing two apples and a banana. A parking ticket issued at 12:55pm on 15 January 2013 was located on the front windscreen.
- 34 An extensive canvass of the surrounding area was conducted upon police locating David's vehicle parked on Thorn Street with nil result. The vehicle was towed for forensic analysis.
- 35 As noted above, the vehicle was later returned to David's son, Tasman Webber, on the 6 February 2013 and Tasman subsequently located his father's mobile phone underneath the driver's seat.

Health Records

- 36 Police contacted and spoke with the Psychiatric Emergency Care Centre (PECC Unit) at the Calvary Mater Hospital on the 21 January 2013. They were advised that David was not a current or recent patient.
- 37 Police spoke with Bruncker Road General Practice on 24 January 2013. Medical records were also subsequently obtained. Enquiries confirmed that David had last attended the practice on Thursday 10 January 2013 where he was seen by Dr Mark Desouza. Medical records note David presented with a complaint of “did not go to work on Wed[nesday], could not sleep on Tuesday, body aching with sore throat, headaches the next day, phlegm, cough with green phlegm, partner has been sick, nose a little stuffy, ears heavy, voice croaky. Went home from work today. Has had cold and flu tablets today, energy levels not good, laid on the lounge all day on Wed[nesday] and most of this afternoon, appetite ok.” On examination, it was noted David had no fever, throat was clear, chest was clear and there were no focal signs. He was prescribed Clarithromycin (trade name Klacid) but advised to wait for 5 days and only to use the medication if he was not improving or symptoms were worsening. It appears David obtained the prescribed medication the following day. Dr Desouza also issued a medical certificate stating that David was unfit to attend work for the period from Thursday 10 January 2013 to Friday 11 January 2013.
- 38 Medicare records confirmed that the appointment on 10 January 2013 was the last time that David attended on a medical practitioner and Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme (PBS) records confirmed the related prescription was the last prescription medication that David had supplied under the PBS.

Enquiries at David’s home

- 39 Police attended David’s residential address with Ms Katrina Quinn on 24 January 2013. The premises were found to be locked and secured and there was no evidence that David had been at the premises since he went missing. Significantly, the little medical bag containing insulin that David usually carried with him was located in the

home. A total of 47 insulin pens were also in the fridge of his home. David's camping and fishing equipment, as well as his laptop, were also found at the premises.

40 Items including David's toothbrush, razor and sunglasses were taken from the house by police for the purpose of DNA examination. DNA results were obtained and uploaded to the DNA database. DNA results were also later obtained for David's mother, Carmel Webber, on 13 November 2014 and a DNA profile was uploaded to the Missing Person Database on 16 December 2014. David's DNA profile has not been matched with any human remains located in the years since his disappearance.

41 On 6 March 2013 police conducted a canvass of neighbours around David's house. Neighbours reported that there had been no activity at David's house, except for Katrina Quinn visiting to check the house. That same day, police also canvassed around Terrence Webber's residential address, with neighbours reporting no unusual activity and stating they had not sighted David.

Information from witnesses

42 On 15 January 2013 information was provided to police by Katrina Quinn and Tasman Webber that David frequented a designated camping spot at the Riverside Caravan Park, Gloucester Tops. Police spoke with the caretaker at Riverside Caravan Park, who had not recently seen David or his vehicle.

43 A review of CCTV footage from Newcastle Railway Station from 12 and 13 January 2013 was conducted by police. The CCTV footage did not show or provide any evidence that David attended the railway station on those dates.

44 On 20 January 2013, Katrina Quinn informed the police that David may have been in contact with an organisation known as "Dads in Distress". Ms Quinn informed the police that it was out of character for David to go missing, but that he had told her he was under stress at work and was only living from week to week on his earnings due to his mortgage and paying child support. She also advised police that she had major

concerns for David's welfare as it was unknown how much insulin David had access to for his diabetes.

45 Police contacted and spoke with Jeff Lindsay from the organisation "Dads in Distress" who conducted checks of their call logs, finding that David had spoken to an operator on 12 January 2013. Further checks revealed that David had joined their online support group. An image of David was disseminated to the 120 people registered in the support group. However, no further information to assist in locating David was subsequently obtained.

46 On 24 January 2013 Mr Joe Young contacted police and identified himself as a friend of David's who had known him for many years. He stated that he feared for David's welfare. Mr Young told police that he had last spoken to David by telephone on 11 January 2013 and had not heard from him since. He also informed the police that David was suffering from depression, that this was exacerbated by his failed business, that he was not happy in his current working environment and that he had told Mr Young that he wished he saw his children more frequently. Mr Young also told police that he and his family had given David money in the past when he was short on funds.

47 Since David went missing police spoke to family, friends, current and former partners, neighbours and associates on multiple occasions in the weeks and years since David went missing. Follow up enquiries were made in 2022 with Katrina Quinn, his partner at the time he went missing, Tasman Webber, his son, Terrence Webber, his late father, and Deborah Moyle, his former wife, and Michael Webber, his brother. None of those persons had seen or heard from David since the date of his disappearance on 12 January 2013.

Intelligence Reports

48 A Missing Person media release resulted in a report of David as a missing person with accompanying photograph appearing in the local Newcastle Herald newspaper on 16 February 2013.

- 49 Police received multiple reports to Crime Stoppers in the years that followed. Subsequent follow up enquiries and investigations by police did not reveal any further reliable information or evidence as to David's whereabouts.
- 50 Subsequently, police filed a Report of Suspected Death to the Coroner in relation to David on 1 July 2022 and a brief of evidence was received by the Coroners Court at Newcastle on 31 October 2022.

Signs of Life checks

- 51 In the years since David disappeared, police have on multiple occasions conducted the standard enquiries that would be made in the event of a person being reported missing. These enquiries for any signs that David was still alive were conducted with various external agencies, both interstate and national bodies, including police forces, missing persons units, immigration and passport authorities, Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC), utility providers, Births, Deaths and Marriages departments, Medicare/PBS, financial institutions, airlines, and Centrelink. No signs of life were detected.
- 52 David had one active bank account held with Westpac Bank at the time he disappeared. Enquiries in 2022 showed no recent transactions on the account from 5 November 2020 to 5 November 2021. The account had an available balance of \$127,653.86 as of 5 November 2021 with no relevant transactions since his disappearance.
- 53 Since David's disappearance, police have not found any evidence of any medical, financial, telephone, electronic, immigration or other activity or interactions by David. A check of unidentified deceased persons and remains was conducted and no unidentified bodies or remains have been identified as being David Webber.

54 To this date, there has unfortunately been no further evidence located that indicates David is still alive.

Opinion of investigating police

55 Based on the police investigation and information available, the previous OIC Detective Senior Constable Alexander Gordon, was of the opinion that there was no evidence to suggest that David was avoiding police apprehension and had relocated to another area where he was living under an assumed identity, that there were no suspicious circumstances surrounding David's disappearance, and that David was now deceased.

56 In concluding that David is now deceased, Detective Senior Constable Alexander Gordon noted that despite all searches for signs of life, there had been no detection of any financial, medical, telephone or electronic, immigration or travel activities by David and that he had no obvious financial means to support himself and no obvious means by which to access the insulin medication that he required daily to stay alive.

57 Detective Senior Constable Alexander Gordon also opined that David died on 12 January 2013 in Newcastle and that death was self-inflicted, possibly due to injuries sustained as a result of a fall from height, such as jumping from a cliff.

58 In forming these opinions, Detective Senior Constable Alexander Gordon noted that there was no evidence that David had left the vicinity of Newcastle, that his car was located within walking distance from Strzlecki Lookout (a local cliff location well-known as the frequent scene for self-inflicted deaths), that David had a history of significant physical and mental health issues including depression and that he had been experiencing a number of stressors in the immediate leadup to his disappearance including health issues, business and financial issues, and the historical sex offences which were the immediate catalyst.

59 Since Detective Senior Constable Alexander Gordon prepared his statement 2022, there have still been no confirmed sightings of David or any other evidence of his whereabouts. Although no remains have been located, investigating police remain of

the opinion that this is a case of self-inflicted death, given the combination of stressors leading up to the time of his disappearance, including the recent criminal charges, as well as financial issues and physical and mental health issues.

60 The current OIC Detective Sergeant Scott Wheeler gave oral evidence at the inquest that he shared the same opinion as the previous OIC Detective Senior Constable Alexander Gordon, that David's life had ended on or shortly after 12 January 2013. Detective Senior Constable Gordon's evidence was that there was no information that suggested there were any suspicious circumstances relating to David's disappearance. He also gave evidence that given the circumstances surrounding David's disappearance, including financial issues, his mental health issues, that David had contacted "Dad's in Distress" the day before he disappeared, the information from David's friend Mr Joe Young that David had been depressed, and then the introduction of the historical sexual assault charges, that he was of the opinion that David may have taken his own life.

Consideration

61 A finding that a person is deceased is a finding of great significance and gravity, not only for the family members of that person and the emotional toll that such a finding will invariably bring, but also because such a finding carries with it important legal and administrative consequences. Such a finding is made on the balance of probabilities, but there must be clear, cogent and exact evidence that a person has died before it can be made.

62 The available evidence establishes the following:

- i. David was last seen alive at about 7:00am on 12 January 2013.
- ii. No remains have been located.
- iii. David had a medical history that included insulin dependent type 1 diabetes which required daily injections including insulin injections with

every meal. He always carried a medication bag, which included his diabetes medication. After his disappearance David's medication bag and a large quantity of his insulin medication was located in his home. There was no evidence that he had been hoarding his medication or that he had any means of accessing it after the date of his disappearance.

- iv. Despite extensive and comprehensive investigations and searches for signs of life undertaken by police, there have been no confirmed sightings, no confirmed contact or interactions with friends, family or associates, and there has been no detection of any financial, medical, telephone or electronic, immigration or travel activities by David.
- v. No evidence has been obtained indicating that David is still alive and police have not identified any suspicious circumstances in relation to David's disappearance. He was aware that police were undertaking investigations in relation to the historical sex offences prior to the date of his arrest and voluntarily attended the police station on the date of his arrest. He had no obvious financial means to support himself and no obvious means by which to access the insulin medication that he required daily to stay alive. There is no evidence to suggest that David is avoiding police apprehension or that he has relocated to another area where he is living under an assumed identity.
- vi. David's motor vehicle CDI-19V was located parked on Thorn Street, Newcastle near the intersection with King Street on 19 January 2013. Located inside the vehicle was a newspaper dated 12 January 2013, insulin medication, the keys for the vehicle and David's mobile phone. Given the date of the parking infringement located on the vehicle, the vehicle had likely been left at the location not later than 15 January 2013.

- vii. There is no evidence that David had travelled domestically or internationally, or that he had left the Newcastle area by means of motor vehicle, public transport or otherwise on 12 January 2013 or at any later date.

- viii. David had a history of significant physical and mental health issues including diabetes, anxiety and depression and he had reportedly been experiencing a number of stressors in the immediate leadup to his disappearance. These stressors included his physical and mental health issues, work, business, financial and family issues, and he had spoken to others including friends and professionals about these concerns in the time leading up to his disappearance.

- ix. On 11 January 2013, the day before his arrest, David was arrested and charged with seven serious historical sex offences where a younger brother and two younger sisters were the complainants in offences alleged to have occurred between 1979 and 1983. He had not told his partner about these charges.

63 Having considered all the evidence I am satisfied on the balance of probabilities that David is now deceased.

64 I am satisfied that David died sometime on or very shortly after 12 January 2013, noting in particular, the date he was last seen alive, his daily need for diabetes medication, that he had left his medication bag at home, and the time and dates of his last mobile phone use.

65 I am satisfied that David died in the Newcastle area, noting in particular the location where his car was located, his daily need for diabetes medication and that he had left his medication bag at home, that his phone was located in his car, the last known cell tower location for his mobile phone and that there were no confirmed sightings of

David on public transport or at transport access points and no other evidence that he had left the Newcastle area.

66 As David's body was not found, I do not consider that the evidence enables me to make a finding as to the direct cause of David's death. It is possible that David may have died because of injuries sustained from a fall from height, as opined by police. However, given his significant insulin dependent type 1 diabetes and resultant need for medication, it is also possible he may have died from complications of his Type 1 diabetes.

67 I do not consider that the evidence enables me to make a finding as to the manner of David's death. It is possible that David may have died as the result of a self-inflicted death, as opined by police, as he was experiencing several significant stressors in the immediate leadup to his disappearance as set out above. However, given his significant insulin dependent Type 1 diabetes and resultant need for medication, it is also possible that without access to his diabetes medication he may have died from natural causes.

Findings

68 For the reasons set out above, I make the following findings pursuant to s 81(1) of the Act:

Identity of deceased

The person who died was David Mark Webber.

Date of death

David died on, or sometime very shortly after, 12 January 2013.

Place of death

David died in the Newcastle area of New South Wales.

Cause of death

The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the cause of death. The cause of David's death is unknown.

Manner of death

The available evidence does not allow for any finding to be made as to the manner of death. The manner of David's death is unknown.

Closing remarks

69 I thank all the police involved in the investigation of this matter, particularly the current officer in charge, Detective Sergeant Scott Wheeler of Newcastle City Police District. I also express my gratitude to the coronial advocate assisting me throughout the inquest, Mr Danny Winter-Mirezni.

70 I express my sincere and respectful condolences to David's family and friends for their tragic loss. While this inquest has not been able to answer all the outstanding questions, it is hoped that from the inquest process some closure is achieved for David's family, friends and loved ones.

71 I close this inquest.

Judge Caleb Franklin
Deputy State Coroner
Coroners Court of NSW
Newcastle Courthouse

1 May 2026
