

CORONERS COURT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF BEVAN SPENCER VON EINEM

[2026] SACC 38

Inquest Findings of his Honour State Coroner Whittle

28 August 2026

CORONIAL INQUEST

Examination of the cause and circumstances of the death of a prisoner who succumbed to cancer while serving a term of imprisonment for life.

Held:

1. Bevan Spencer von Einem, aged 79 years of Yatala Labour Prison, died at Yatala Labour Prison on 5 December 2025 as a result of complications of metastatic malignancy on a background of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, atherosclerotic vascular disease and Type 2 diabetes.
2. Circumstances of death as set out in these findings.

No recommendations made.

**INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF
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Satisfaction of a mandatory obligation

- 1 The most fundamental duty of the government of any contemporary society is to protect its people. The obligation to protect extends not only to law abiding citizens, but also to people in prison, including long-term prisoners who have demonstrated a complete inability to live according to the norms of society. The subject of this inquest fell into that category.
- 2 Pursuant to s 21 the *Coroners Act 2003*, the Court is obliged to conduct an inquest into the death of any person that occurs while in custody. The main purpose of such mandatory inquests is to review the care provided to ascertain if systemic issues contributed to the death and, if so, make recommendations to address those issues.
- 3 I therefore investigated the cause and circumstances of this death and held a mandatory inquest, in which materials were received into evidence.
- 4 I am satisfied that the subject of this inquest was lawfully and appropriately held in custody. I am satisfied that there were no systemic issues of concern that I need to explore or discuss, or that need public exposition. I am satisfied that the subject was provided with medical care of a high standard. I am satisfied that the cause of death was complications of metastatic malignancy on a background of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, atherosclerotic vascular disease and Type 2 diabetes.
- 5 It is customary but not obligatory for a coroner delivering findings to identify and convey positive aspects of a person whose death is under investigation. To attempt to do so in this case would be neither appropriate nor productive. The acts committed by the subject of this inquest, proved and alleged, are well-known. It does not serve the public interest to recite the story of the life that led up to this inquest.

Keywords: Death in Custody; Prison; Natural Causes