



# MAGISTRATES COURT *of* TASMANIA

## CORONIAL DIVISION

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### **Record of Investigation into Death (Without Inquest)**

*Coroners Act 1995  
Coroners Rules 2006  
Rule 11*

I, Olivia McTaggart, Coroner, having investigated the death of Damian Brian Thompson

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

- a) The identity of the deceased is Damian Brian Thompson, date of birth 30 January 1953.
- b) Mr Thompson was 71 years of age and lived with his wife in Sprent. Sprent is a rural town located about 25 kilometres southwest of Devonport. Mr and Mrs Thompson have four children together. Mr Thompson had very significant medical issues, including cardiac conditions, peripheral vascular disease, kidney failure and chronic back pain. However, he still remained active. During his working life he had been employed in various fields, including mining and shearing. Later in life, he ran an orchard with his family. In more recent years, he did not work and received the disability pension. He was an experienced motorcyclist and held a motorcycle licence.

In the afternoon of 3 January 2024, Mr Thompson rode his motorcycle, a 2006 Yamaha with sidecar, to a podiatrist's appointment in Devonport. At 4.23pm, following the conclusion of his appointment, he sent a message to his son, Dustin, to say that he was on his way home. At about 5.10pm he was travelling in a general westerly direction on Swamp Road at Kindred, a short distance away from his home. At that time, torrential rain was falling. Mr Thompson lost control of his motorcycle on a curve and travelled off onto the incorrect side of the road, crashing through a barbed wire fence and landing in a paddock. He sustained severe injuries to his left leg and his left hand. A witness coming upon the scene called emergency services and Mr Thompson was transported by ambulance to the Launceston General Hospital. Unfortunately, his background of significant medical disease meant that his recovery was difficult and, on 5 February 2024, he

underwent an above knee amputation of his left leg. He later developed Covid-19 and associated respiratory failure, causing a poor prognosis. A palliative approach was ultimately adopted in conjunction with his family. He passed away on 5 March 2024.

- c) Mr died as a result of sustaining multiple injuries in a motorcycle crash. Covid-19 pneumonia and his existing serious medical conditions contributed to his death.
- d) Mr Thompson died on 5 March 2024 at Launceston, Tasmania.

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

- The Police Report of Death for the Coroner;
- Tasmanian Government Death Report to Coroner;
- Affidavits confirming identity;
- Hospital records for Mr Thompson;
- Opinion of the forensic pathologist regarding cause of death;
- Affidavit of Shelley Thompson, wife of Mr Thompson;
- Affidavit of Constable Martin Wilson, police officer attending the scene, and scene photographs; and
- Tasmania Police traffic crash records.

### **Comments and Recommendations**

In this investigation, the witness first at the scene saw a dog without an owner in the area of the crash. It was subsequently identified that the dog had uncharacteristically escaped from what was thought to be secure fencing on a nearby property. I am not able to make a finding that Mr Thompson lost control of his motorcycle whilst trying to avoid the dog. It is possible that this is the case but there is insufficient evidence to make a finding to the requisite standard. I also note that there is a suggestion that Mr Thompson may have been travelling faster than he normally would, possibly in an attempt to "beat the storm". Alternatively, he may have simply lost control of his motorcycle in the extremely wet conditions. Ultimately, I am not able to determine the reasons for his loss of control and crash. I am satisfied, however, that no other person or motorist was involved.

I convey my sincere condolences to the family and loved ones of Mr Thompson.

**Dated:** 28 April 2026 at Hobart, in the State of Tasmania.

**Olivia McTaggart**  
Coroner