

**FORM 37**

Rule 60(1)

**FINDING INTO DEATH WITH INQUEST**

*Section 67 of the Coroners Act 2008*

**Court reference:** 4187/09

**Inquest into the Death of PATRICK PAUL**

Delivered On:	4 October 2011
Delivered At:	Melbourne
Hearing Dates:	4 October 2011
Findings of:	JANE HENDTLASS
Representation:	Sgt David Dimsey
Place of death:	Melbourne Assessment Prison, 317 Spencer Street, Melbourne West, Victoria 3000

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In the Coroners Court of Victoria at Melbourne

I, JANE HENDTLASS, Coroner

having investigated the death of:

**Details of deceased:**

Surname: PAUL  
First name: PATRICK  
Address: 179 Princess Drive, Morwell

AND having held an inquest in relation to this death on 4 October 2011 at Melbourne

find that the identity of the deceased was PATRICK PAUL aka PATERIKI PAORA

and death occurred on 27th August, 2009

at Melbourne Assessment Prison, 317 Spencer Street, Melbourne West, Victoria 3000

from

1a. ISCHAEMIC HEART DISEASE  
1b. CORONARY ARTERY ATHEROSCLEROSIS

in the following circumstances:

1. Patrick Paul was 68 years old when he died. He was also known as Pateriki Paora. Mr Paul migrated from New Zealand and lived in Melbourne for more than 25 years. He lived at 179 Princess Drive in Morwell.
2. Mr Paul's medical history included prior acute myocardial infarction with two coronary stents, hypertension, post traumatic stress disorder, gout, alcohol abuse, liver cirrhosis, depression and anxiety and exposure to herbicides during the Vietnam war. Mr Paul was prescribed metoprolol, amlodipine, telmisartan, atorvastatin, pantoprazole, sertraline, allopurinol and had a glyceryl nitrate patch. Mr Paul's general practitioner was Dr Peter Tiedall in Kyabram. His post traumatic stress disorder was managed through Veterans Affairs at the Austin Hospital.

3. On 13 May 2008, Mr Paul was sentenced in the Shepparton Magistrates' Court to four months in prison with three months suspended for two years for failing to stop after an accident, unlicensed driving and refusing a preliminary breath test. His licence was cancelled and he was disqualified from driving for four years. Mr Paul appealed the severity of the sentence to the County Court.

4. On 30 June 2009, Mr Paul was sentenced on appeal to the Shepparton County Court to 18 months in prison with the sentence wholly suspended for two years. His licence was cancelled and he was disqualified from driving for four years.

5. On 19 February 2009, Mr Paul was again charged with unlicensed driving and driving with a blood alcohol concentration exceeding the legal limit. On 18 August, Mr Paul was sentenced in the Melbourne Magistrates' Court to six months in prison to be served immediately for unlicensed driving and driving with a blood alcohol concentration exceeding the legal limit. His licence was cancelled and he was disqualified from obtaining a licence for five years.

6. Mr Paul was placed in the Melbourne Custody Centre. He was noted to suffer from ischaemic heart disease, hypertension and gout and was prescribed multiple medications. Despite his history of drink-driving offences, he did not provide the admitting medical review with any evidence of on-going alcohol abuse but the medical officer recorded that he suffered a medical condition requiring six or more medications and regular or on-going treatment. This rating was not recorded on the E\*Justice system.

7. On 19 August 2009, Mr Paul was transferred to the Melbourne Assessment Prison. At 4.00pm, he was already feeling unwell and vomiting. He had not received his medications for two days. Mr Paul was placed under observation and, by 5.05pm, he seemed much improved in the medical cell.

8. On 20 August 2009, Mr Paul was taken to St Vincent's Hospital for tests. He was assessed by Dr Jordan Kamel. Mr Paul reported a three day history of epigastric pain radiating through to his back, left sided chest pain, shortness of breath, poor exercise tolerance, sweating, tremor and constipation. He had not had an alcoholic drink for three days and had not had his regular medications during the first two of these days in custody.

9. Dr Kamel observed that Mr Paul's electrocardiogram did not show any obvious ischaemic changes and was consistent with earlier investigations, his troponin levels did not indicate further recent myocardial infarction, his chest pain had remained constant during the three days and he responded to oral antacids.

10. Dr Kamel attributed Mr Paul's illness to possible alcohol withdrawal symptoms. Accordingly, Justice Health has recommended that all prisoners with reported drug and alcohol

intake are to be reassessed by an appropriately qualified health professional within seven days of custody for signs and/or symptoms of drug or alcohol withdrawal.

11. Mr Paul was discharged back to the Melbourne Assessment Prison on the same day with a loading dose of anticoagulant aspirin and advice for its maintenance.

12. On 26 August 2009, Mr Paul reported feeling 6/10 in concentration and energy but said he would seek help if required. He was referred to the psychiatry registrar for review of his medication.

13. At 10.35am on 27 August 2009, Prison Officer Duck found Mr Paul unresponsive in his cell. He was unable to be revived.

14. At 11.25am on 27 August 2009, Patrick Paul died.

15. The forensic pathologist who performed the autopsy formed the opinion that the cause of death was ischaemic heart disease and coronary artery atherosclerosis. Toxicological analysis detected 0.4mg/L sertaline, which is consistent with therapeutic use.

16. Accordingly, I find that Patrick Paul aka Pateriki Paora died of ischaemic heart disease and coronary artery atherosclerosis.

Signature:

Dr Jane Hendtlass  
Coroner  
4 October 2011

