



**CORONERS COURT
OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

Inquest:	Inquest into the death of Pete Tan HOANG
Hearing dates:	3 July 2018
Date of findings:	3 July 2018
Place of findings:	State Coroner's Court, Glebe
Findings of:	State Coroner Les Mabbutt
File number:	2014/263670
Catchwords	CORONIAL – Homicide by unknown person or persons
Representation:	Coronial Advocate assisting the Coroner Mr Peter Bain
Recommendation pursuant to s 82	To the NSW Commissioner of Police I recommend that the death of Mr Hoang be referred to the Unsolved Homicide Squad for further investigation

Introduction

Pete Tan Hoang was shot dead shortly after midnight on 7 September 2014 in Dunmore Street Croydon Park. Mr Hoang was 38.

At the time of his death, Mr Hoang was facing court proceedings in Melbourne relating to \$1.5 million in cash that was suspected as being proceeds of crime.

Mr Hoang described himself as a professional gambler.

Why was an inquest held?

The role of the Coroner pursuant to s 81 of the *Coroners Act 2009* is to make findings regarding:

- The identity of the deceased
- The date and place of that person's death
- The cause and manner of that person's death

A Coroner may also make recommendations in accordance with s 82 of the Act concerning any public health or safety issues arising out of the death.

Section 27(1)(a) of the *Coroners Act* requires an inquest be held if it appears to a Coroner that a person died or might have died as a result of homicide. In this case, the evidence establishes Mr Hoang suffered gunshot wounds inflicted by another person.

The Officer in Charge of the investigation into Mr Hoang's death Detective Sergeant Rudens gave evidence in the inquest.

Background

Mr Hoang was born in Danang, Vietnam on 7 December 1975 under the name Tan Minh Nguyen-Tran and grew up in a farming community. In 1997 Mr Hoang arrived in Australia on a flight from Indonesia in 1997 travelling under a passport in a false name.

Mr Hoang resided in Australia under the name Minh Tan NGUYEN, and later changed his name to Peter Minh Tan NGUYEN, then Peter NGUYEN and finally Pete Tan HOANG.

Mr Hoang frequented casinos at Star City - Sydney, Melbourne's Crown Casino and Jupiter's Casino on the Gold Coast, Queensland. Reports from various law enforcement agencies indicate Mr Hoang was gambling millions of dollars through various casinos over many years.

Mr Hoang was well known within the Vietnamese Community, making many donations to Buddhist Temples and charities. He was also involved in promoting Vietnamese entertainment events in both Melbourne and Sydney and was regarded in that industry as a wealthy sponsor and promotor of shows. Not much is known of his personal life. Mr Hoang never married.

In mid 2000 Mr Hoang was excluded from Sydney's Star City Casino. In mid 2005, Mr Hoang was charged with 'malicious wounding' and ultimately sentenced to a section 9 bond for 18 months. In late 2010 Mr Hoang was issued a Criminal Infringement Notice for contravening the exclusion order from Star City Casino.

In 2012 Mr Hoang was charged by the Australian Federal Police with 'dealing in monies reasonably suspected to be the proceeds of crime' after attending Crown Casino Melbourne with \$1.5million in cash. The charge was pending at the time of his death. Mr Hoang was seen many times over the years in possession of large amounts of cash.

Mr Hoang used an encrypted Blackberry device and rented prestige cars.

The events leading to Mr Hoang's death

On the evening of 5th September, Mr Hoang had been out until the early hours at a Karaoke Bar in Campsie. Records from his apartment security access card indicate he arrived home at his apartments around 3.50am, 6th September. Further records indicate Mr Hoang used his access card next at 3.02pm, 3.10pm and 5.34pm of 6th September 2014.

Around 9.00pm on the 6th September, Hoang had dinner at a Thai restaurant, in Surry Hills with some acquaintances from the Vietnamese entertainment industry. It was noted that Mr Hoang had two mobile phones with him and at times during the dinner was typing messages

into the phones. Mr Hoang seemed a little distracted, but there was no indication as to what was to unfold that night.

Mr Hoang and his acquaintances left the restaurant about 9.30pm. He dropped his acquaintances at their car, and left alone. He did not divulge his plans for the evening. Mr Hoang was driving a rented Nissan GTR sports car which was fitted with a GPS tracking system. A review of the GPS records indicates Mr Hoang left the city area about 11.15pm. The vehicle was then driven by a direct route to Croydon Park

At 11:39pm Mr Hoang's car was detected near the McDonalds Croydon Park entrance. The vehicle remained stationary there for 18 minutes before it turned into adjoining Dunmore St.

Mr Hoang drove along Dunmore St and parked outside a block of units just after a midnight. He exited his vehicle where an unknown person ran towards him from the nearby units. This person shot Mr Hoang 5 times before getting into the passenger side of a hatchback which was parked on Dunmore St nearby. The hatchback then drove off.

Many residents nearby heard the gunshots, but thought they were fireworks or a vehicle backfiring. Mr Hoang's body was not discovered until about an hour later. A pedestrian walking to a nearby hotel noticed Mr Hoang lying on the footpath of Dunmore Street. Thinking Mr Hoang may have been passed out drunk, the pedestrian notified security staff when he arrived at the hotel. Security staff from the hotel investigated, and found Mr Hoang cold and without a pulse. The security staff notified emergency services. Mr Hoang died at the scene.

Cause of death

An autopsy was performed at the Department of Forensic Medicine, Glebe on 8 September 2014 by Forensic Pathologist Dr Van Vuuren. Dr Van Vuuren found that Mr Hoang had 5 gunshot wound tracks, to the head, neck and left arm areas.

Dr Van Vuuren concluded that Mr Hoang died from multiple gunshot wounds.

Mr Hoang's identity was confirmed by fingerprints.

The investigation into Mr Hoang's death

The Officer in Charge of the investigation into Mr Hoang's death, Detective Sergeant Rudens gave evidence. Despite an extensive police investigation over several years no persons have been identified as being involved in the death of Mr Hoang.

Other than a generic description, no other identifying information has been obtained regarding the vehicle leaving the scene after Mr Hoang was shot. Mr Hoang's reason for travelling to Dunmore Street Croydon Park remains unknown.

Police examined Mr Hoang's Blackberry device and found all data had been deleted from the device, most likely by remote means. No other forensic evidence has been obtained to identify the persons involved in Mr Hoang's death or to clarify the circumstances relating to the reason Mr Hoang attended Dunmore Street Croydon Park.

Investigating police suspect Mr Hoang was lured to Croydon Park by a person or persons unknown via a message on his Blackberry. These unknown persons then lay in wait and

shot Mr Hoang. A direct motive, and the person or persons responsible for Mr Hoang's death remain unknown.

Conclusion

The evidence discloses the identity of Mr Hoang, the date, place and cause of his death. The evidence establishes that Mr Hoang was shot multiple times by an unknown person or persons.

Given the nature of Mr Hoang's death I recommend the investigation into Mr Hoang's death be referred to the Unsolved Homicide Unit of the NSW Police Homicide Squad for further investigation.

Findings Pursuant to s 81 of the Coroners Act 2009

Identity

The person who died was Pete Tan Hoang.

Date of death

7 September 2014

Place of death

Dunmore St, Croydon Park, New South Wales.

Cause of death

Multiple gunshot wounds.

Manner of death

Homicide, Mr Hoang was shot five times by a person or persons unknown.

Recommendation pursuant to section 82 of the Coroners Act 2009

To the NSW Commissioner of Police

I recommend that the death of Mr Hoang be referred to the Unsolved Homicide Unit of the NSW Police Homicide Squad for further investigation.

Les Mabbutt
State Coroner
3 July 2018