

IN THE CORONERS COURT  
OF VICTORIA  
AT MELBOURNE

Court Reference: COR 2012 0305

**FINDING INTO DEATH WITH INQUEST**

*Form 37 Rule 60(1)*

*Section 67 of the Coroners Act 2008*

*(Amended Pursuant to Section 76 of Coroners Act 2008 on 6 March 2014)*

**Inquest into the Death of: CHRISTIAN CHARLES DEJANOVIC**

Delivered On: 17 February 2014

Delivered At: Coroners Court of Victoria  
Level 11, 222 Exhibition Street  
Melbourne 3000

Hearing Dates: 17 February 2014

Findings of: PETER WHITE, CORONER

Police Coronial Support Unit Leading Senior Constable Tracey Ramsey

I, PETER WHITE, Coroner having investigated the death of CHRISTIAN CHARLES DEJANOVIC

AND having held an inquest in relation to this death on 17 February 2014  
at Melbourne

find that the identity of the deceased was CHRISTIAN CHARLES DEJANOVIC

born on 1 October 1980

and the death occurred on 24 January 2012

at St Albans Railway Station, St Albans 3021

**from:**

1 (a) MULTIPLE INJURIES IN A TRAIN INCIDENT

**in the following circumstances:**

Background

1. Christian Charles Danjovic, (Christian) died after being struck by a train at or near the St Albans Railway Station on January 24, 2012, shortly after 5.33 pm.
2. Christian was 31 years of age at the time of his death.
3. He had been educated at Mowbray School in Melton, and the RMIT where he completed his VCE, and then at NMIT where he obtained a certificate in marketing. Later he undertook residential training at the Maritime College in Tasmania and gained employment as a cadet marine engineer. At the time of his passing he had two subjects to go to complete the course, for which he had enrolled for February 2012.
4. He enjoyed a close family life with his parents Dianne and Drago Danjovic (Royal Australian Navy retired).
5. Prior to a 2008 injury, discussed below, Christian had participated in various outdoor sporting and other activities. He was also a co-carer for his father.
6. In 2008, he was involved in an accident, in which he suffered a debilitating back injury. I also note that Christian had a history of behavioural problems and suffered from a learning disorder, for which he saw a psychiatrist. His history also included bouts of depression dating from his teenage years, for which he had been treated with anti depressants. According to his psychiatrist, he had not been taking anti depressant medication for some time.

7. Again according to his psychiatrist, his history also included court appearances in respect of possession of illicit drugs, theft, and drunk and disorderly behaviour. My assistant informs that these incidents may have occurred before his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, and are not the subject of an existing criminal record.
8. However, it is relevant that Christian had used marijuana from the age of 16 years, and in the 24 hours prior to his death.<sup>1</sup> We also know from his mother that he had suffered considerable back pain following his 2008 injury, which had led to surgery and to ongoing neurosurgical review and treatment.<sup>2</sup>
9. He never married and did not leave any children.
10. Notably according to his mother, 'Christian believed in social justice and practised social justice through his approach to other human beings. Christian was the first person to assist if he thought someone was in distress, and there were many examples that come to mind when recalling Christian's compassion and concern for other people'<sup>3</sup>. Others have described him as a loving person who would do anything for his friends.
11. It is also relevant that in early January 2012, Christian was ordered to leave the home he had been renting with his then partner, in Werribee. He then moved back to his family home, albeit temporarily, and stayed with his parents.

#### January 24, 2012

12. On this day January 24, Christian had been in the city and at 4.43pm had purchased a ticket from Southern Cross to St Albans station, a trip that takes approximately 35 minutes. He was in high spirits as he had rented a Melton property, with his parent's assistance, which would accommodate his two Staffordshire dogs and also allow for his planned visits to Tasmania, where he planned to complete his studies towards his degree in marine engineering.
13. Christian arrived at the St Albans station at 5.32 pm and at 5.33pm, I am satisfied that he approached an iron fence of approximately one meter in height, while facing across the

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<sup>1</sup> See the evidence of Professor Drummer in his statement at exhibit 1, and in testimony, concerning the probable effect of regular marijuana use upon his reaction times and co-ordination.

See also his evidence as to the possible effect of marijuana use on Christian's reasoning and thought processes, and his inability to comment on whether reasoning and/or thought processes, had been impacted in this instance.

<sup>2</sup> See exhibits 2(a) (1-4), correspondence from Melbourne neurosurgery.

<sup>3</sup> Family letter to Court dated June 5 2012.

railway line in an north easterly direction. His position at that time was as marked with an arrow at exhibit 6 photograph A05.

### Finding

At this time, the evidence of bystander, Michael Zupan establishes that a group of some 6-7 children approached in the direction of the railway crossing at the north east of the rail crossing on the diagonally opposite side of Main Street, under the supervision of a woman, possibly the mother of members of this group. The group in question were observed by Mr Zupan to be noisy and running around the area, in a somewhat uncontrolled manner.

(At the same time, as observed by railway employee Anton Kormóczi, who was behind Christian in the position circled in photograph A05), I find that Christian (also) saw a young girl of approximately 7 years of age unidentified, who was diagonally across the road, that is, north east of his position as shown in exhibit 6, photos A01 and E01. I find that this same young girl had isolated herself from the group of children earlier observed in this area by Mr Zupan and was moving around in an apparently distraught state.

From the further testimony of Anton Kormoczi, I am also satisfied that at a point just before the approach of an oncoming train, this young girl moved from the side of the crossing entrance to wards an unsecured gate which separated pedestrians from the track area, which led directly to the rail tracks,-she having momentarily lost contact with her parent/carer whose identity also remains unknown. At the time, she was visibly upset.

I further find that on seeing the young girl move in this direction, and understanding the danger that she was in, that Christian jumped over a fence (see exhibit 6 photo A07), and then ran towards her, intent on her rescue. Tragically, it appears that he misjudged the distances and the speed of the train and was struck by the left front of the train, as the young girl turned back.

He died immediately, because of the injuries so sustained.

### Comment

It is also appropriate to record here my view that he may not have misjudged the distances and speeds at all.

Rather, it is quite possibly the case that the generosity of spirit of this man extended to his jumping over the fence and running forward in an attempt to cause the youngster to turn back, and that he did so while fully appreciating the sacrifice he was making.

What ever his state of mind was at the time, I am satisfied that with little thought for his own well being, Christian rushed forward to aid a youngster who was in great danger. By this conduct, he clearly demonstrated a remarkable degree of courage and selflessness.

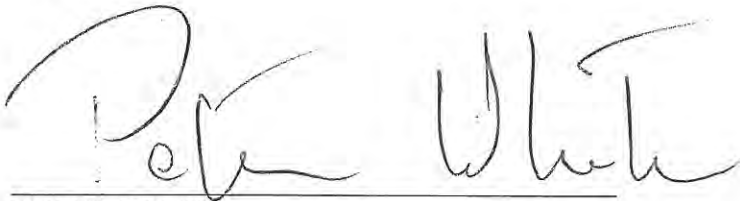
I express my sincere condolences to his family for their loss, and in so doing record my belief that this man and his actions will long be remembered.

I direct that a copy of this finding be provided to the following:

The Family of Christian Danjovik

The office of the Commissioner for Police

Signature:



PETER WHITE  
CORONER

Date: 17 February 2014

