



WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE FORCE

**OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF POLICE**

POLICE HEADQUARTERS

6TH FLOOR

2 ADELAIDE TERRACE, EAST PERTH

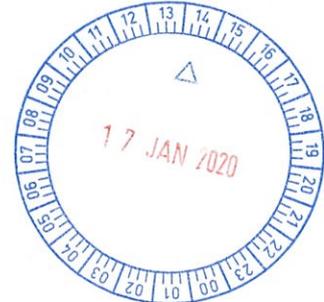
WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6004

TELEPHONE : (08) 9222 1474

Your Ref: A783426  
Our Ref: fA1683778  
Inquiries: commissioner@police.wa.gov.au

Mr Stephen Brockway  
Advisory Officer  
Legislative Council Committee Office  
Parliament House  
4 Harvest Terrace  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

**BY EMAIL:** lcpac@parliament.wa.gov.au



Dear Mr Brockway

**INQUIRY INTO WORKSAFE WA**

Thank you for your correspondence dated 16 October 2019 advising of the Standing Committee on Public Administration's (the Committee) intention to reclassify the Police Attendance Report relating to the sudden death of Mr Jarrod Arthur Hampton at Broome on 14 April 2012, from private to public.

I understand the Committee wishes to make public the three main probable contributors to Mr Hampton's death which are described in page 23 of the report. Firstly, Mr Hampton had no means of maintaining positive buoyancy in an emergency, such as a Buoyancy Compensation Device (BCD). Secondly, there was no standby diver on-board *MV Paspaley II*, a 33-metre commercial pearl diving vessel, who could immediately render assistance to Mr Hampton. Finally, a dive supervisor was not available to immediately recognise the emergency and coordinate a response.

These contributors were based on the post mortem results available to police at the time, where the cause of death was 'consistent with drowning'.

Subsequent State Coroner findings determined Mr Hampton's cause of death was 'drowning secondary to incapacitation from an air embolism'. Further to this, 'his chances of survival had he been retrieved as soon as he surfaced were remote'.

Based on the State Coroner's findings it is now the investigating officer's opinion the absence of a standby diver and a dive supervisor, whilst best practice, can no longer be considered probable contributors to Mr Hampton's death. However, it is still the opinion of the investigating officer that Mr Hampton not having a means of maintaining positive buoyancy in an emergency, such as a BCD, can still be considered a possible contributor to his death. Having a means of controlling buoyancy may have assisted Mr Hampton to the surface, reducing panic and preventing him from developing an air embolism.

The Western Australia Police Force Major Crime Division consulted with Deputy State Coroner King who conducted the inquest. Mr King has no objection to the release of the identified information but recommended highlighting his finding that Mr Hampton had a low chance of survival even if he had been retrieved from the water quickly.

Taking all of the above information into consideration, I have no objection to the probable cause to Mr Hampton's death being made public.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Blanch', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

COL BLANCH  
ACTING COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

17 January 2020