JURISDICTION	**:**	CORONER'S COURT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
ACT	**:**	CORONERS ACT 1996
CORONER	**:**	SARAH TYLER, CORONER
HEARD	**:**	5 NOVEMBER 2026
DELIVERED	**:**	12 NOVEMBER 2026
FILE NO/S	**:**	CORC 703 of 2026
DECEASED	**:**	RUIZ-AVILA, ADAM LEOPOLD

Catchwords:

Nil

Legislation:

Nil

Counsel Appearing:

Senior Constable C Robertson assisted the Coroner

Case(s) referred to in decision(s):

Nil

Coroners Act 1996
(Section 26(1))

RECORD OF INVESTIGATION INTO DEATH

I, Sarah Tyler, Coroner, having investigated the suspected death of ***Adam Leopold RUIZ-AVILA*** *with an inquest held at Perth Coroners Court, Central Law Courts, Court 85, 501 Hay Street, PERTH, on 5 November 2026, find that the death of* ***Adam Leopold RUIZ-AVILA*** *has been established beyond all reasonable doubt and that the identity of the deceased person was* ***Adam Leopold RUIZ-AVILA*** *and that death occurred on 6 February 2026 in the waters of the Indian Ocean off the coast near the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck, Two Rocks, from immersion in water (drowning) in the following circumstances:*

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INTRODUCTION

1 Adam Leopold Ruiz-Avila (Adam[1]) was born in Subiaco on 5 January 1978. For the reasons set out below, I am satisfied that his death occurred on 6 February 2026 as a result of immersion in water (drowning).

2 A police officer from the Western Australia Police Force Homicide Squad, Missing Person Team, prepared a report to the State Coroner on 3 August 2026, indicating that it is the belief of the Western Australia Police Force that Adam is deceased.

3 On the basis of the information provided by the police in relation to Adam's disappearance, the Acting State Coroner determined pursuant to section 23 of the *Coroners Act 1996* (WA), there was reasonable cause to suspect that Adam had died, and that his death was a reportable death. The Acting State Coroner made a direction on 1 September 2026 that a coroner hold an inquest to investigate the circumstances of his suspected death.

4 I held an inquest at the Perth Coroner's Court on 5 November 2026. The inquest consisted of the tendering documentary evidence compiled during the police investigation conducted into Adam's disappearance, as well as hearing evidence from Detective Sergeant Jeremy Spivey, who investigated the circumstances of Adam's disappearance, and later prepared the report for the Coroner.

5 Members of Adam's family, including his wife, mother, sister, mother-in-law and father-in-law, all attended the inquest. They each provided a valuable contribution to the inquest process.

6 It became apparent to me in the course of the inquest that Adam was a stoic, sensitive and deeply private individual. At his family's request, and taking into account what I anticipate would have been Adam's wishes, I have endeavoured to respect his privacy, and refer only to those matters I must refer to in making the findings I must make in this case.

7 The inquest into Adam's disappearance, and suspected death, made it very clear that Adam was dearly loved, and is very much missed, by his family and loved ones.

ADAM

8 Adam was 48 years old when he disappeared on 6 February 2026.

9 He was born in Subiaco, and was a middle child of three children.

[1] At the request of Adam's wife and other family members, I have referred to Adam by his first name at both the inquest and throughout this inquest finding. No disrespect is intended by the use of his first name.

10 The family moved around Australia frequently when Adam was young, rarely staying in one place for more than a year. As a result, Adam struggled to form friendships growing up, and was described as an anxious and introverted person.

11 When Adam was 14 years old, he left school and began working on a mussel boat in Rockingham. He then went on to work in the construction industry at various locations over the years.

12 In 2004, Adam met his future wife. They later married in 2016. At the time of his disappearance, Adam and his wife lived at their home in an eastern suburb of Perth with their two beloved dogs.

13 While Adam was described as an anxious and introverted person as a child, he did not have a known history of diagnosed mental health issues. Adam's wife recalled that in about 2016, Adam appeared depressed while he was working in a fly-in, fly-out capacity, but he stopped doing that work, and his symptoms appeared to resolve.

14 In around 2022, Adam was diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome in both of his hands. As a result, he had not worked in the four years before his death, and he spent a lot of time at home alone, maintaining the house and playing computer games.

15 By all accounts, Adam and his wife enjoyed a loving, happy relationship. They regularly travelled together both overseas and within Australia, and particularly enjoyed travelling within Australia to places where they could take their dogs along with them.

16 In around early 2024, Adam's mother and father separated. Adam became the only person in his family to maintain contact with his father, however Adam's contact with his father ended about six months before Adam's disappearance after a falling out between them.

17 Adam and his wife had two dogs, Ruby and Dash, who they dearly loved. The dogs were both approaching 16 years of age, and were reaching the end of their lives.

18 In November 2025, Ruby passed away. Ruby's death was a significant event for Adam.

19 Adam and his wife knew that with Dash's advanced age, he would likely also pass away soon. Both Adam and his wife were devastated at the thought of losing their last remaining beloved dog.

20 Adam's wife explained her shock that Adam would leave his best buddy Dash behind. She felt that Adam knew Dash was dying, and felt that he may not have been able to deal with that loss.

21 While it is apparent that Adam was facing some distressing personal circumstances in the lead up to his disappearance, including the loss of his beloved pets, his physical health issues (carpal tunnel syndrome) and his associated inability to work, and the breakdown of his relationship with his father, it is also apparent that no one who knew or loved Adam had any sense that he was struggling with his mental health, or that he was contemplating ending his own life.

22 Adam's wife explained that she and Adam had made plans including overseas holidays and plans for their retirement, and that she felt that they were planning for their future.

23 As a result, the events of 6 February 2026 were a shock to everyone who knew and loved Adam.

ADAM'S DISAPPEARANCE

24 On 6 February 2026, Adam's wife woke up at about 5.30 am, as she usually would, and got ready for work. Adam was still in bed at the time she left for work, which was not unusual.

25 Adam's wife said goodbye to Adam before leaving the house. She did not notice anything out of the ordinary with Adam that morning.

26 At 12.58 pm, Adam's wife sent Adam a text message, but he did not respond. Adam did not respond to any of her other messages for the remainder of the afternoon, which was highly unusual for Adam.

27 At about 5.30 pm, Adam's wife arrived home from work, and noticed that Adam's car, a blue Toyota Yaris, was not in the driveway. She initially thought that Adam had gone out to help his mother with something, so she didn't want to interrupt him.

28 Adam's wife tried to call Adam to see where he was, but he did not answer her calls.

29 At about 6.00 pm, Adam's wife went into Adam's study, and saw that his computer was still on. She went to turn off the computer, and saw a notepad application open on one of the monitors with a message on screen.

30 The message was a suicide note. The note emphasised Adam's love for his wife, and his apologies for the decision he had come to, which he explained

was mainly due to his anxiety which had worsened over his life, and his health issues.

31 On the second monitor, Adam's wife found a Google maps page open with a pin dropped to a location in Two Rocks. That location was the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck, which overlooks the Indian Ocean, and is a beach access point with stairs down to the water.

32 Adam's wife was confused, and very concerned, by the note she had discovered.

33 She called Adam's family members, who confirmed that they had not seen or heard from Adam. They agreed that Adam's wife should contact the Police for assistance.

34 At about 6.07 pm, Adam's wife called 000, and reported what she had found, and her concerns for Adam's welfare.

THE SEARCH FOR ADAM

35 As a result of the telephone call from Adam's wife, the police commenced investigations into the concerns raised for Adam's welfare.

36 Police officers attended both Adam's home to speak with Adam's wife, and the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck, which was the address that had been pinned by Adam on his home computer.

37 At about 6.43 pm, police officers found Adam's Toyota Yaris, parked on Sovereign Drive in Two Rocks. The car was locked, with no one inside. Adam's wife gave the police permission to break into the car to search for any clues to Adam's whereabouts inside.

38 Police officers also commenced an immediate search of the area around Adam's car, and investigated whether there was any CCTV footage in the area that might reveal Adam's movements after arriving in Two Rocks.

39 Adam's mobile phone was discovered by police officers inside Adam's car.

40 After Adam's car was discovered, extensive land, air and sea searches were conducted in the area surrounding the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck in Two Rocks over the following two days, in an effort to try to locate Adam.

41 The search for Adam was extensive, and involved resources including:

a) The WA Police Emergency Operations Unit (EOU), who arranged the Forward Command Post at Two Rocks Marina, and assisted in the coordination of the search and rescue incident;

b) Joondalup District Response Police Officers;

c) Water Police, which included police divers, who assisted in the sea searches conducted;

d) Police Air Wing, who assisted with aerial searches;

e) Remote Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) resources, who assisted with the deployment of drones for further search capabilities;

f) The Police Mounted Unit, who assisted in the land search;

g) State Emergency Services (SES) volunteers;

h) Volunteer Marine Rescue, who assisted with ocean searches;

i) The Regional Operations Group, a specialist section of the police that can be deployed where extra resources are required; and

j) The State Operations Command Centre (SOCC) who assisted with continued intelligence support.

42 Police investigations established that the note that Adam had left on his computer for his wife to find had last been modified at 8.30 am on 6 February 2026.

43 CCTV from a neighbour's house showed Adam's car leaving his home at 8.55 am on 6 February 2026.

44 Police enquiries established that Adam's car had been detected on the Western Australia Police Force Automatic Number Plate Recognition (**ANPR**) system on 6 February 2026, travelling from his home suburb in the direction of Two Rocks.

45 Adam's car was captured on the ANPR system at the following times:

9.11 am on Tonkin Highway, Morley
9.55 am on Marmion Avenue, Yanchep
10.01 am on Two Rocks Road, Two Rocks

46 Images captured by the ANPR system depict the driver as the only person visible in the vehicle.

47 Adam's computer was further interrogated by police, to see whether there was any further insight into the circumstances of his disappearance.

48 The police discovered that on 4 February 2026, two days before his disappearance, Adam had researched dive weight belts on the Boating, Camping, Fishing (**BCF**) website.

49 Enquiries with Midland BCF identified CCTV footage from 10.22 am on 5 February 2026, which showed Adam purchasing a dive weight belt and seven 1.3 kg dive weights. This was considered to be an excessive amount of dive weights for one person.

50 It appears Adam took these purchases home, as the empty box used to carry the weight belt and weight were carried in was later found by Adam's wife and police officers in the bin at Adam's home.

51 Adam's wife also discovered that Adam's snorkel bag, flippers, board shorts, blue rash guard vest, beach towel and backpack were also missing from the home. These items have never been found.

52 Following the receipt of this information, the investigating police officers considered it likely that Adam had immersed himself in water while weighted down by the weight belt and numerous weights in the ocean near the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck, with the intention of ending his life.

53 While these investigations were being undertaken, the search efforts for Adam in the area of the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck, and the nearby ocean, continued.

54 At about 8.20 pm on 7 February 2026, Dr Paul Luckin, a specialist anaesthetist and expert in search and rescue survivability, provided advice to the police in relation to the search for Adam. Dr Luckin is frequently consulted in search and rescue operations to provide an opinion regarding the timeframe for survival for persons who are missing. Dr Luckin was briefed with all relevant information regarding the circumstances in which Adam went missing.

55 Based upon the available information, Dr Luckin concluded that if Adam had entered the water with the intention of ending his life, wearing the weight belt and weights, then he would not have been able to swim more than a short distance, and would have drowned immediately.

56 If Adam had entered the water and then decided to drop the weight belt and weights, Dr Luckin concluded that he would have returned to shore. However, if for some reason he remained lost at sea without wearing the weight belt or weights, on the surface, then Dr Luckin concluded there was no prospect that Adam could have survived beyond the evening of 7 February 2026 and into the early hours of 8 February 2026.

57 By 8 February 2026, after two days of intensive searches, no sign of Adam had been detected.

58 In the evening of 8 February 2026, taking into account the advice provided by Dr Luckin, the Police Commander in charge of the search and rescue operation, Inspector Morawski, expressed the opinion that all search and investigative avenues had been exhausted, and that the search for Adam should be terminated.

59 In accordance with police procedures, an independent search and rescue qualified advisor, Acting Sergeant Jenkins, undertook an independent review of the search, to ensure that no avenues remained available for investigation to try to locate Adam.

60 As part of that process, Adam's wife met with senior police officers at the search area on 8 February 2026. At that time, the police explained to Adam's wife the search efforts that had been undertaken, and that the Western Australia Police Force had reached the point at which the search for Adam would be formally terminated.

61 While this must have been devastating news for Adam's family, they expressed their appreciation and gratitude to all those involved in the search for Adam, and were understanding of the decision to bring the search to an end.

62 At 9.52 am on 9 February 2026, after detailed consultation, the District Superintendent of the Joondalup District, Superintendent Baddock, formally terminated the land, sea and air search for Adam.

63 Adam's body has never been found.

Comment Regarding the Search Effort for Adam

64 In the course of the inquest, I have considered the quality of the search efforts for Adam, on the part of the Western Australia Police Force, but also the other agencies involved in the search.

65 It is important to acknowledge the comprehensive, timely, professional and thorough response of the Western Australia Police Force, and the other agencies involved, who swiftly responded to the call for assistance to try to locate Adam.

66 I am satisfied that the search efforts, which continued over a number of days, were of a very high standard.

67 Adam's family expressed their gratitude to the police, and the searchers involved, for their efforts in the search for Adam. I hope that the knowledge that everything that could reasonably be done to try to find Adam was done brings them some degree of comfort in the face of their terrible loss.

POLICE INVESTIGATION INTO ADAM'S SUSPECTED DEATH

68 The investigation into Adam's disappearance, and suspected death, became the responsibility of the Western Australia Police Force Homicide Squad, Missing Person Team, as a coronial investigation.

Proof of Life Checks

69 As part of the police investigation into Adam's disappearance, enquiries were made with a number of agencies and other institutions across Australia, to see whether there was any record of contact with Adam after he was last known to be alive, or whether there was any record which would otherwise suggest that Adam is still alive.

70 At the conclusion of those investigations, it was apparent that there was no evidence to suggest that Adam was still alive.

71 Searches of the following databases have revealed no new records for Adam after his disappearance on 6 February 2026:

Western Australia Police Force
Electoral Roll
Centrelink
Medicare
Immigration
Proof of life enquiries with all other states and territories
Births Deaths and Marriages for all other states and territories

72 Enquiries with various banking institutions established that Adam held accounts with three banking institutions. One account comprised a shared account with his wife, which had no transactions of significance noted.

73 A second account was a substantial savings account, which had not been accessed since 2025. A final account showed no transactions since 5 February 2026, which was the date on which Adam purchased a weight belt and weights from Midland BCF.

74 These enquiries establish that Adam has not had contact with any of the government agencies one would expect a person to make contact with in their day-to-day life, since his disappearance on 6 February 2026.

75 Police investigators arranged for Adam's DNA profile to be obtained and uploaded on a DNA database, in the event that any human remains are discovered in the future that may belong to Adam.

76 A check of DNA profiles currently held for known unidentified human remains did not identify any matches to Adam's DNA. However, Adam's DNA sample will remain on the database, and will be checked against any unidentified human remains recovered in Australia.

VIEWS OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE FORCE

77 Detective Sergeant Spivey undertook the coronial investigation into Adam's suspected death, and authored the report to the coroner regarding the circumstances of Adam's suspected death.

78 Detective Sergeant Spivey's analysis, after considering all of the evidence, was that Adam:

> *[f]ormulated and executed a plan to drown himself with the assistance of a weight-belt purchased on 5 February 2026 for this purpose*.

79 Detective Sergeant Spivey concluded that Adam went to the Two Rocks beach area on 6 February 2026 where he used the weight belt he had purchased to weigh himself down and he drowned in the waters of the Indian Ocean.

VIEWS OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS

80 On the available evidence, Adam's family and friends appear united in their belief that he took his own life on 6 February 2026.

81 Adam's wife expressed in her statement her strong belief that Adam took his own life.

82 With the benefit of hindsight, and taking into account what Adam wrote in the note he left for his wife to discover, Adam's wife believes that Adam had become increasingly isolated over the past few years.

83 He had been unemployed for about four years, and had difficulty finding new employment in the construction industry. He was struggling after the death of one of their beloved dogs Ruby in November 2025. Adam's wife believes that Adam knew that their remaining beloved dog Dash was dying given Dash's advanced age, and he was not able to deal with that. Dash passed away a few days after Adam disappeared.

84 Adam's wife explained in her statement that if Adam wanted to leave their relationship and start a new life for himself, he had the means and financial ability to do so. However, Adam took no property with him, did not take his passport or any money, and has not accessed any of his known financial resources since his disappearance.

85 Further, the evidence clearly establishes that Adam's relationship with his wife was a close, loving and supportive relationship, and there was no suggestion, from anyone who knew and loved Adam, that Adam wished to end the relationship.

86 Adam's mother advised in her statement that she also believes that Adam ended his own life. The note that was left behind was written in the way that Adam spoke, using words that he would use. She was also aware that Adam was familiar with the Two Rocks area, as they had lived there as a family for a time in his childhood, and Adam's mother and father had lived there again for time in around 2019.

87 Adam's sister agreed that Adam had become increasingly withdrawn and isolated over the last few years, and felt that he had started to become somewhat apathetic to situations in his life.

88 Adam's sister now suspects that some of that apathy may have been due to Adam struggling with depression. My impression from Adam's sister's statement is that while she was shocked by Adam's disappearance and the note that he left behind, with the benefit of hindsight, she sees that he must have been dealing with his own pressures, that no one saw or understood at the time, which may have caused him to end his own life.

89 The evidence of those who knew and loved Adam was consistent in describing him as a stoic and private individual, who when he set his mind to something, would follow through with a plan.

90 I am satisfied that those closest to Adam are of the opinion that Adam made a decision to end his own life, and died by suicide.

HAS DEATH BEEN ESTABLISHED?

91 In my view, the evidence establishes, beyond all reasonable doubt, that Adam died on 6 February 2026 in the waters of the Indian Ocean off the coast near the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck in Two Rocks.

92 There is extensive compelling evidence in support of this conclusion. In reaching this conclusion, I have relied on the following facts:

a) Adam was struggling with his mental health, in relation to his undiagnosed, and very well concealed anxiety, in the period before his disappearance;

b) Adam was also grieving the loss of his beloved dog Ruby, and facing the very difficult imminent death of his remaining beloved dog Dash. He was also dealing with other personal stressors in the time before his disappearance, which do not need to be elaborated on in this finding;

c) At 8.30 am on 6 February 2026, Adam last modified a note on his home computer outlining his intention to end his life by suicide;

d) Adam also left behind a map with the location of the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck in Two Rocks pinned to the screen;

e) At 8.55 am on 6 February 2026, Adam left his home in his vehicle, heading in the direction of the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck in Two Rocks;

f) Adam's vehicle was captured on ANPR footage heading in the direction of the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck in Two Rocks, arriving at about 10.00 am on 6 February 2026;

g) Adam's car was left abandoned at that location, with his mobile phone inside;

h) Adam was familiar with the Two Rocks area, as his family had previously lived in the area;

i) Police enquiries established that Adam had purchased a dive weight belt and an excessive quantity of dive weights at about 10.20 am on 5 February 2026, the day before his disappearance;

j) The empty boxes for the dive weight belt and dive weights were located at Adam's home, but the items themselves have never been located;

k) The evidence established that moving from the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck into the waters of the Indian Ocean would take very little time, estimated by investigators to be a matter of minutes at most;

l) Adam's timeframe for survival had he entered the water wearing the dive weight belt and dive weights indicated that

death would occur almost instantaneously. If he removed the dive weight belt and dive weights but remained in the water for some reason, there was no prospect that Adam could have survived beyond the evening of 7 February 2026 and into the early hours of 8 February 2026;

m) An extensive land, sea and air search between 6 February 2026 and 9 February 2026 failed to find any trace of Adam; and

n) Since 6 February 2026, there has been no contact of any kind from Adam, or any activity to suggest that he is still alive.

93 I am satisfied on the basis of all of the evidence before me that Adam's death has been established beyond reasonable doubt.

94 **I find that Adam is deceased**.

CAUSE AND MANNER OF DEATH

95 I am also satisfied, beyond reasonable doubt, that the cause of Adam's death was **immersion (drowning)**.

96 I make this finding notwithstanding the fact that Adam's body has not been found, and therefore no post mortem examination has been possible to ascertain his cause of death.

97 I have concluded that Adam entered the waters of the Indian Ocean wearing a weight belt loaded with an excessive amount of weights, with the intention of ending his life by immersion (drowning), and that he subsequently died from immersion in the ocean.

98 Having carefully considered all of the available evidence, I have concluded that Adam deliberately took his life.

99 I therefore find that the death occurred by way of **suicide**.

CONCLUSION

100 Having considered the evidence within the coronial brief, listened carefully to the evidence of Detective Sergeant Spivey, and taken into account the views of Adam's family, including the views shared by all of the members of the family who attended the inquest, I am satisfied that Adam's death has been established beyond all reasonable doubt.

101 There are no eye witnesses to Adam's final moments, so the exact sequence of those events must remain a mystery.

102 However, when considered as a whole, it is my view that the evidence in this case leads to the inescapable conclusion that Adam died on 6 February 2026 after he entered the waters of the Indian Ocean off the coast near the Sovereign Drive Viewing Deck in Two Rocks.

103 I am satisfied that Adam entered the waters of the Indian Ocean wearing a dive weight belt with an excessive amount of weights attached, with the intention of ending his life by immersion in water (drowning).

104 I expect that these findings will come as no surprise to Adam's family, who have believed from the outset that Adam's death occurred by way of suicide.

105 Beyond the explanation Adam provides in the note he left for his wife, exactly what led Adam to act as he did can never be known.

106 However, it is clear that Adam did not give those who loved him any clue that he was contemplating ending his life by suicide, until the suicide note that he had left for his wife to discover after his death was located. Sadly, it is not uncommon for those contemplating taking their lives to give no prior warning of their intention to do so.

107 It is an unspeakable tragedy to all those who knew and loved Adam that he ended his life in these circumstances. I can only hope that my finding that Adam has died may provide Adam's loved ones with some sense of finality, as they continue to cope with their terrible loss.

108 I wish to convey to Adam's family and friends my sincere condolences, on behalf of the Court.

S. Tyler
Coroner
12 November 2026