



## **CORONERS COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

Inquest: Inquest into the death of ZY

Hearing dates: 12 August 2025

Date of findings: 12 August 2025

Place of findings: NSW State Coroner's Court, Lidcombe, NSW

Findings of: Deputy State Coroner Carmel Forbes

Catchwords: Homicide by a known person

File number: 2023/00322215

Representation: Mr S Perry Counsel Assisting the inquest.

Findings: **Identity of deceased:** Ms ZY  
**Date of death:** 8 October 2023  
**Place of death:** [REDACTED], Riverwood, NSW  
**Manner of death:** Homicide by a known person  
**Cause of death:** Neck compression

Non-publication orders NOTE: Pursuant to s74 *Coroners Act (2009) NSW* I order that there be no publication of any material that identifies the deceased person or her family

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## FINDINGS

### Introduction

1. This is an Inquest into the sad and tragic death of Ms ZY who was 56 years of age at the time of her death. Ms ZY died as result of neck compression by her husband Mr LZ on 8 October 2023.
2. The role of a Coroner as set out in s.81 of the *Coroner's Act 2009* ("the Act") is to make findings as to:
  - (a) the identity of the deceased.
  - (b) the date and place of the person's death.
  - (c) the physical or medical cause of death, and
  - (d) the manner of death, in other words, the circumstances surrounding the death.
3. The issues in this case as to identity, date, place, cause, and manner are uncontroversial. This is a mandatory inquest as the Act requires a Coroner to conduct an inquest in circumstances where a person died as a result of a homicide. (s. 27 *Coroners Act 2009*). In this case there is no further investigation required in relation to the homicide. Mr LZ took his own life shortly after Ms ZY death.

## Background

- 1 Ms ZY married Mr LZ on 11 November 1998, their marriage broke down and their divorce was finalised on 7 November 2009. Despite this, they continued to reside together. There was a neighbour who rented the granny flat at the back of their property.
- 2 Ms ZY confided to a friend at her work the following issues with her relationship with Mr LZ:
  - (1) When they lived in China, Mr LZ and Ms ZY would sometimes argue because of their 10-year age gap.
  - (2) Mr LZ came to Australia first. While Ms ZY was still in China, she found out that Mr LZ had requested that her visa be cancelled. Ms ZY was upset and considered a divorce at this time.
  - (3) In 2023, Ms ZY contracted COVID-19, and she complained that Mr LZ did nothing for her and did not check on her.
  - (4) In 2023, Ms ZY considered moving out.
  - (5) Ms ZY would talk about going back to China, getting old and spending time with her friends.
  - (6) Sometimes when they were working, Ms ZY went to the bathroom crying. This was usually because of a message or call from Mr LZ.
  - (7) Ms ZY described Mr LZ as very selfish and only thinking about himself.
- 3 In late September 2023, Mr LZ was diagnosed with stage 2 nasopharyngeal cancer. Mr LZ and Ms ZY booked a flight back to Shanghai, China where they planned to stay for 5 months, during which time Mr LZ would receive treatment for his cancer. The flights

were scheduled to depart Sydney at 9:30pm on 8 October 2023. They were scheduled to return to Sydney on 9 April 2024.

- 4 Ms ZY also spoke to her friend at work about Mr LZ'S diagnosis. Ms ZY said that after the diagnosis, Mr LZ went into his shell and would stay at home and not go out. Mr LZ also frequently changed his mind about where he wanted to get treatment, and this caused Ms ZY stress. In late September 2023 or early October 2023, Ms ZY told her friend that after they returned from China, she would try and move out of the house. On 4 October 2023, she said that Ms ZY sounded sad because Mr LZ still did not know where he wanted to get treatment.
- 5 At approximately 5:37pm on 7 October 2023 Ms ZY confirmed to her friend that she was still flying on 8 October 2023 but did not know what would happen when she returned.

#### **Events of 8 October 2023**

- 6 At approximately 9:20am on 8 October 2024, the neighbour left the granny flat and walked through the side gate next to the main house. When he passed the house, he saw Ms ZY washing dishes in the kitchen through a window. They had a brief conversation.
- 7 At approximately 9:34am and 9:52am Ms ZY sent a WeChat voice message to her friend at work.
- 8 At approximately 10:04am and 10:05am, a real estate agent received text messages from Ms ZY indicating that she needed to go back to China that day, due to a family emergency.
- 9 Police believe that Ms ZY died between this time and 11:29am.
- 10 At approximately 11:29am, their daughter called Ms ZY. Mr LZ answered the phone and told her that Ms ZY was in the shower. She thought it was strange for her mum to

be showering at this time. She also described Mr LZ's voice has huffy or rushed but she did not think this was unusual because he was a fast talker. She then called Ms ZY's phone nine times between 1:00pm and 1:51pm. She called Mr LZ's phone three times between 1:02pm and 1:47pm.

- 11 At approximately 1:20pm, the neighbour returned to the address. He entered the granny flat via the side gate of the property. He heard a mobile phone ring for about 15 minutes and thought it was strange that no one picked up the phone. Between approximately 1:20pm and 1:43pm he left his granny flat and looked in the back door of the house and saw a phone on the table inside. He then walked towards the white Pantech truck parked in the driveway and saw Mr LZ hanging from a strap in the back of the truck. He then attempted to call Ms ZY but there was no answer. At 1:55pm he called triple zero.
- 12 Police attended and lowered Mr LZ to the ground. They then searched the property. As they entered a hallway on the left side of the kitchen, police noticed items strewn on the floor inside the smaller bedroom. There was a large beige coloured desk on wheels angled slightly across the room with a small white storage basket and a set of purple washing gloves on top. Police saw Ms ZY, deceased, behind the desk.
- 13 Police conducted an extensive canvass. Residents in surrounding properties reported no unusual sounds or disturbances. No CCTV footage from neighbouring homes captured any relevant activity. DNA and fingerprint analysis did not identify any profiles other than those of the deceased. A mixed DNA profile was found on Ms ZY's neck with Mr. LZ unable to be excluded as a contributor.
- 14 The neighbour who lived in the granny flat voluntarily provided a DNA sample and fingerprints for elimination purposes. His movements on the day were corroborated by CCTV footage an independent witness accounts, confirming he was away from the property during their suspected time of death. Investigators reviewed mobile phone data, financial records, and medical documentation. Police concluded that there was

no evidence suggesting the involvement of any other person in the deaths of Mr LZ and Ms ZY and that Mr LZ was responsible for Ms ZY's death.

### **Post-mortem examination**

- 15 An external post-mortem examination was conducted by Dr Istvan Ferenc Szentmariay, Senior Staff Specialist Forensic Pathologist, who determined that the cause of Ms ZY's death was neck compression. Dr Szentmariay noted that CT examination showed a recent subtle fracture of the thyroid cartilage of the anterior neck. There was subcutaneous bruising of the back of both shoulders along with rib fractures and small red spots in her eyes and mouth, all consistent with the neck compression and asphyxia. Toxicological analysis did not detect the presence of any drugs or alcohol in Ms ZY's system.

### **Conclusion**

- 16 Mr LZ's cancer diagnosis, his withdrawal, and Ms ZY's apparent intention to leave the relationship after their planned trip to China provide important context to this devastating event. I conclude that Ms ZY's identity, the date and place of her death, and the cause and manner of her death, have been sufficiently disclosed in accordance with ss 27(1)(c) and 27(1)(d) of the Coroners Act (2009). I am satisfied that Ms ZY died from neck compression inflicted by her husband at [REDACTED] in Riverwood on 8 October 2023.

### **Concluding remarks**

- 17 I will close by conveying to the family, particularly ZY's daughter, my sympathy for their tragic loss in such traumatic circumstances.
- 18 I thank the Coronial Advocate for his support in the conduct of this inquest.
- 19 I also thank the officer in charge, Detective Senior Constable C Burney, for his thorough work in conducting the investigation and compiling the brief of evidence.

**Statutory findings required by s 81(1) Coroners Act (2009)**

**Identity of deceased:** Ms ZY

**Date of death:** 8 October 2023

**Place of death:** [REDACTED], Riverwood, NSW

**Manner of death:** Homicide by a known person

**Cause of death:** Neck compression

I close this inquest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Forbes', written in a cursive style.

Magistrate C Forbes  
Deputy State Coroner  
Coroners Court of NSW