



## Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes

### TRANSCRIPT

#### Transcript of 7pm ABC News segment regarding Scott Johnson inquest aired on 13 April 2015

*[Transcript prepared by legal team assisting the Inquiry]*

**Speakers:** Juanita Phillips (JP)  
 Emma Alberici (EA)  
 Steve Johnson (SJ)  
 Pamela Young (PY)

03:23	JP	The NSW Coroners Court has ordered an extraordinary third inquest into the death of Scott Johnson who fell from a cliff at Manly's North Head in 1988. The first inquest ruled it was a suicide while the second changed that to an open finding. Now, Mr Johnson's family believe this third inquest could find that the 27-year-old was the victim of a gay hate crime. Lateline's Emma Alberici reports.
03:50	EA	For the Johnson family, this day's been a long time coming.
03:54	SJ	I came into this same building 26 years ago, in 1989, when the police had rushed to judgement.
04:05	EA	Scott Johnson moved to Australia from America in the mid-80s to be with his boyfriend. Mr Johnson's brother believes he was attacked and thrown off the cliff at Manly's North Head, a place where gay men used to meet to have casual sex.
04:20	SJ	The second inquest in 2012 considered the family's investigative work. No police investigation had been done at that time. So, we really see this as the first inquest and we're so grateful for it.
04:36	EA	In Court, the Senior Counsel assisting the family, John Agius, said 50 persons of interest had been uncovered by investigators and that five gangs of gay bashers had been found in the general geographical area. Coroner Michael Barnes agreed the new evidence should be tested in open court. The police have welcomed his decision, although the Detective Chief Inspector who led the Homicide Squad's two-year investigation doesn't believe this fresh inquest will change the open finding delivered in 2012.

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<b>05:10</b>	<b>PY</b>	An open finding is potentially the most appropriate finding but of course that's up to the coroner. It's not impossible that it be - perhaps, go back towards suicide either or misadventure. Any of those things are possible as well.
<b>05:25</b>	<b>EA</b>	The Johnson family has asked for anyone with information that might be useful to come forward. The Inquest is scheduled to start in early December. Emma Alberici, ABC News.
<b>05:37</b>	<b>JP</b>	And you can see an exclusive interview with the lead detective in that case on Lateline tonight at about 10:30 here on ABC TV.