



Wilson family boycotts Cambodia murder inquest

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After more than a decade, an inquest into the murder of a Victorian man by the Khmer Rouge has resumed.

David Wilson was taken hostage along with two other foreigners when the Khmer Rouge attacked a train he was travelling on in Cambodia in 1994.

He was killed less than two months later by his captors.

An inquest into his death stalled in 2000 while the coroner waited for the trials against his killers to conclude in Cambodia.

Deputy state coroner Iain West has taken over the case from the former state coroner Graeme Johnstone.

The dead man's father, Peter Wilson, says he will no longer be following the inquest because it would be too traumatic and he would like to lay the issue to rest.

The Department of Foreign Affairs Department was criticised at the time for not doing enough to secure Mr Wilson's release.

The counsel assisting the coroner, Ian Freckleton SC, said documents handed to the court by the Rudd government in 2008 will shed some light on efforts made by Australia to free him.

The court heard on Monday that a fresh witness has come forward since the last time the inquest sat.

Dr Freckleton said that earlier this year, Darryl Hockey submitted a statement to the court saying he became aware of information relevant to the inquest while living in Cambodia in 2010.

"He hired a motorcycle and spoke to a variety of persons who he believed had first-hand information about the circumstances in which the three hostages had been killed," Mr Freckleton said.

Mr Freckleton said while Mr Hockey's information is pertinent, it was procured many years after the events and was of a hearsay nature.

It was also revealed at Monday's hearing that a former Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade employee who was stationed in Cambodia at the time, Alastiar Gaisford, has applied to the court for interested party status which could give him the power to call witnesses.

In his previous statements to the inquiry, Mr Gaisford has criticised the then-government's efforts secure Mr Wilson's safe release.

He maintained there was "inadequate guidance" for department staff on what to do in hostage taking scenarios and an absence of protocols.

He also argued the government should have threatened to cancel aid or withdraw consular representation unless the Cambodian Government could ensure the hostages would be safe.

The inquest is scheduled to resume at a date yet to be set.