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Queensland Man Charged Over Wife's Drowning Death

July 31, 2025

– Categories: Crime



A former Australian Army major, Graeme Davidson, has been charged with the murder of his wife, Jacqueline Davidson, following her death during a kayaking trip at Lake Samsonvale in Queensland's Moreton Bay region on November 27, 2020. The case, initially treated as a tragic accident, was reclassified after a prolonged investigation.

Jacqueline Davidson, 54, drowned while kayaking with her husband, who was 55 at the time. Graeme Davidson was arrested in Brisbane in May 2025 after arriving from Thailand, where

he had been residing since the incident. Queensland police charged him with one count of murder and multiple counts of fraud and attempted fraud.

According to court documents presented during a bail hearing in Brisbane Supreme Court, the couple had been paddling about 10 metres apart when Mr. Davidson attempted to stand on his kayak. Defence counsel Craig Eberhardt KC stated that Jacqueline used a previously agreed-upon “safe word” to indicate concern. Moments later, she fell into the water. Mr. Davidson described the lake as murky and filled with weeds and said he tried to rescue her but could not locate her immediately.

Mr. Davidson told authorities that neither he nor his wife wore life jackets during the outing. He claimed the life jackets had been destroyed by rats while stored at their former home in Bondi, a claim reportedly supported by a witness, according to his legal team. Emergency services were alerted by bystanders after Davidson pulled his wife from the water and attempted CPR. Despite efforts to revive her, she was pronounced dead at the scene.

Police reopened the case more than a year later, citing inconsistencies and new forensic evaluations. They alleged the couple’s marriage had been under stress and that Jacqueline had discovered Davidson was having an affair in 2019. However, the defence stated there had been no history of domestic violence and that the couple had planned to remain together.

Davidson is also accused of attempting to claim more than \$1 million in life insurance benefits following his wife’s death. The defence contends that the policies had been arranged jointly in mid-2020 and that attempts to claim the benefits were routine.

During the investigation, Davidson was reportedly seen on CCTV burning documents in his backyard shortly after the incident. His lawyer argued that the contents of the documents were unknown and not necessarily incriminating. Davidson also purchased a new vehicle soon after the drowning, but the defence stated the purchase had been planned beforehand.

The bail hearing is ongoing and is expected to resume later this week. Davidson remains in custody.