



VICTORIA POLICE

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26 March 2001
17:30 hrs

HUNT FOR MISSING PSYCHIATRIC PATIENT

Detectives from the Armed Offenders Squad are in charge of a search for a psychiatric patient who went missing in Southbank yesterday.

The 43-year-old man, Neville Colin Garden, was on a day outing with hospital staff and wandered off about 2.30pm.

When last seen he was wearing a green t-shirt, black/grey shorts, white runners and a brown hat.

He is described as Caucasian, 165cm tall, obese build, light brown hair and goatee with blue eyes.

Police have been informed by staff that he requires medication and are very concerned for his welfare.

Members of the public should not approach the missing man but contact police.

Anyone with information, or who may see a man matching this description is asked to call police on "000" or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Senior Constable Rob Pugh
Mispers/march2001/noville garden.doc

****CORRECTION****

Neville Garden is 45-years-old.

Senior Constable Tim Baker

UPDATE 27/03/01 10:08 hrs

Police are continuing the search for the missing man. Neville Colin Garden was last seen by his carers at 2.30pm on Sunday whilst on a sanctioned outing to Southbank.

When Mr Garden disappeared, his carers scoured the immediate area and engaged the assistance of a routine police foot patrol who joined in, but with no success.

The information contained in this report may be subject to variation once further details are ascertained.

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Visit the Crimestoppers Website - www.crimestoppers.com.au

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RELEASES

Page 2\Hunt for missing psychiatric patient

Hospital staff returned to the hospital and officially informed medical authorities of the situation.

Mr Garden is on daily medication for both his psychiatric illness and diabetes. Police have been advised his current condition is stable, however this is attributable to regular medication.

Medical staff have expressed concerns for both Mr Garden's mental and physical health should he not receive his medication over an extended period.

Police are appealing to the general public to be on the look-out for Mr Garden and advise that he should not be approached.

Any possible sightings should be reported immediately to police on "000".

Senior Constable Rob Pugh

A photograph of Mr Garden is now available via the Media Unit.

UPDATE 27 March 2001 12:59 hrs

Police throughout the state have been alerted to keep a look-out for Neville Colin Garden, who went missing from Southbank on Sunday.

Armed Offenders Squad detectives are following up a number of possible sightings of Garden in the metropolitan area and have also checked several addresses of known associates of the missing man.

Sergeant Creina O'Grady
Mispors/march2001/neville garden.doc

UPDATE 28 March, 2001 12:17 hrs

Police are continuing to search statewide for missing man Neville Garden.

Several possible sightings are being investigated, including one in Dandenong yesterday, and police are also making enquiries in the Mildura area.

Police believe Mr Garden does have a valid passport.

Police are re-iterating appeals for anyone who sees the missing man to contact 000 and advise of the location.

Senior Constable David Gamble

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UPDATE 28/03/01 16:34 hrs

A media conference was held at the St Kilda Rd Police complex this afternoon with Head of the State Crime Squad, Commander Rod Lambert.

Commander Lambert said missing man Neville Garden was *not* an escapee, rather an absconder from a mental institution, who was not guilty of a criminal offence, at this stage.

He said under the Mental Health Act, police had the power to apprehend Mr Garden and return him to the institution from where he went missing.

Commander Lambert said police were concerned for Mr Garden's welfare as he had been missing for three days and his medication would now begin to wear off.

He said Mr Garden could be a danger to himself, as well as to others.

Commander Lambert said the missing man had a valid passport and police had taken every precaution to ensure that he did not fly out of the state or the country.

Commander Lambert said police believed Mr Garden's moves were "not spontaneous" and that there may have been an amount of preparation involved.

Commander Lambert said police had investigated all possible sightings of the man, who was still outstanding.

Commander Lambert said police would seek a review of the conditions under which Mr Garden was released.

Media Officer Kathie Kambouropoulos
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UPDATE 29 March, 2001 13:05 hrs

Police have arrested a man believed to be Neville Colin GARDEN in country Victoria. He will be escorted back to Melbourne this afternoon.

Armed Offenders Squad detectives will speak to the man to confirm his identity

Sergeant Graeme OGRADY report may be subject to variation once further details are ascertained.

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29th March 2001

**MISSING PSYCHIATRIC PATIENT FOUND
IN GIPPSLAND**

Police have confirmed that they have located missing psychiatric patient Neville Garden in Gippsland this morning.

A number of Mallacoota residents contacted local police after noticing a man matching the description of Garden. He was located in the town centre around 9.15 this morning.

A local policeman kept surveillance of the man for nearly two hours until the arrival of assistance from nearby police.

The man has been arrested and is being flown back to Melbourne where he is to be interviewed by the Armed Offenders Squad.

Senior police have praised the local community and local police for their invaluable assistance in locating Neville Garden.

Kevin Loomes
Deputy Media Director

The information contained in this report may be subject to variation once further details are ascertained.

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