

## THE AUSTRALIAN

---

### Christopher John Gott, 22 years on the run, now in a coma in Rio

The crashed car on Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro. Picture: AP.

CAMERON STEWART THE AUSTRALIAN 12:00AM April 6, 2018

For the 22 years that he was on the run, convicted Australian pedophile Christopher John Gott, must have feared that the law would eventually run him down.

Instead, it was a black Hyundai i30.

The 63-year-old Gott now lies in a coma in a Rio de Janeiro hospital after the freak accident, unaware of the extraordinary events that have led to his capture.

On the evening of January 18, the Australian fugitive was enjoying himself at Brazil's famous Copacabana Beach when a car suddenly veered off the road and ploughed across the crowded pavement, crashing through tables and chairs before stopping on the beach.

The car hit 17 people, including Gott, who lay sprawled and bloodied on the ground as an angry crowd, believing it was a terrorist attack, tried to haul the driver, Antonio de Almeida Anquim, out of his battered Hyundai. The accident made international headlines.

It turns out that the 41-year-old Anquim had suffered a seizure. The accident killed an eight-month-old girl and left four others in a serious condition.

Victims of the accident lie on Copacabana Beach. Picture: AP.

Gott, who had severe head injuries, was taken to the Miguel Couto Hospital where Brazilian authorities checked his passport and told the Brazilian press he was a 68-year-old Australian called Daniel Marcos Philips.

Except that he wasn't. Brazilian police learned that the Australian had worked as a teacher in an international school in Rio for almost 20 years. But when they checked their records further they could find no record of someone by the name Daniel Marcos Philips entering or leaving Brazil. They asked Interpol to contact the Australian Federal Police to seek more information.

But when Australian authorities ran a check on that name they found that no Australian passport had ever been issued to a Daniel Marcos Philips. It was a fake.

For days, the Brazilian authorities had no idea of the true identity of the gravely injured Australian who was in a coma and hooked up to machines keeping him alive.

Eventually, they took a fingerprint from the unwitting Gott and sent it to Australia in the hope of solving the mystery.

Bingo.

Authorities in Australia ran the test and found that it matched a schoolteacher from Darwin named Christopher John Gott.

Gott, who was born on May 31, 1954, had been a high-school teacher in Melbourne in the 1980s and in Darwin from 1992 to 1994.

In 1994, he was arrested on 17 separate child sex offences, including sexual intercourse with a child under 14 and gross indecency and sexual abuse of a 16-year-old.

Gott was sentenced in Darwin to six years' jail with a non-parole period of two years.

After serving two years in prison, he was released on parole on April 5, 1996.

Gott told authorities he was going to catch a bus to Melbourne and live with his parents, but he never arrived.

After travelling across the desert from Darwin, Gott got off the bus in Adelaide and vanished.

In doing so, he broke his parole conditions and is therefore still a wanted man in the Northern Territory.

Victoria Police by this time also wanted to question him over possible child sex offences while he was teaching at a school in Fitzroy in the 1980s.

For the next 22 years, no one knew where Gott had gone. His family disowned him and told police they were not interested in knowing his fate.

When Australian authorities learned recently that their fugitive was in a coma in a Rio hospital, they asked their Brazilian counterparts to ensure he did not escape.

But there is little danger of that. Tests show Gott's brain is severely damaged. He is not expected to survive and, if he does, it is likely he would live in a vegetative state.

The main concern now is what damage this convicted pedophile may have done as a teacher in his Rio school over the 20 years he was working there.

Brazil police have launched an investigation, but no conclusions have been drawn.

Meanwhile, Gott lies comatose in hospital, unaware that his days on the run are now over and that justice has caught up with him in the strangest of ways.

*Cameron Stewart is also US contributor for Sky News Australia.*



## Yassmin kicked out of US

Muslim activist Yassmin Abdel-Magied has been refused entry to the United States by immigration officials this morning and put back on a plane.



**COMMENT**

## Australia's patrol boat debacle

ROBERT GOTTLIEBSEN

It's now clear the government has stuffed up the \$4bn patrol boat tender, as politics intrudes into naval spending decisions.



COMMENT

## Open letter to Peter FitzSimons

THE MOCKER

We conclude the only person Bandana Man would take notice of is himself. So here it is ... an open letter to Peter FitzSimons from himself.



LIVE

## Boxer's extraordinary meltdown

Australian boxer Clay Waterman left shocked and bemused after Zambian opponent accuses judges of hometown bias.



**MARGIN CALL**

## Suited men add to NAB intrigue

WILL GLASGOW, CHRISTINE LACY

Three men in suits have arrived at former NAB chief of staff Rosemary Rogers' new \$3.8m pad in Melbourne.

---



**WEALTH**

## ALP plan stumps specialist funds

JAMES KIRBY

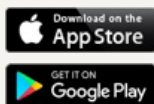
Specialist funds for retirees are calling foul on the ALP's controversial plan to scrap retiree cash rebates.

A NOTE ABOUT RELEVANT ADVERTISING: We collect information about the content (including ads) you use across this site and use it to make both advertising and content more relevant to you on our network and other sites. This is also known as Online Behavioural Advertising. You can [find out more about our policy and your choices, including how to opt-out here](#)

[^ Back to top](#)

[LOG IN](#)
[SUBSCRIBE](#)
**THE AUSTRALIAN** 
  

### The Australian app



### Our Products

- The Australian app on iOS
- The Australian app on Android
- Facebook messenger app
- Chinese Site
- Today's paper

### Terms of Use

- Editorial Code of conduct
- Standards of Practice
- Subscription terms
- Group Subscription Terms
- Accessibility
- Privacy Policy
- Relevant Ads Opt-out
- Cookie Policy

### Contact Us

- Help
- Contact Us info
- Photo Sales
- News Archive

### About Us

- About The Australian
- Advertise with us
- Our journalists
- Subscribe
- The Australian Plus member benefits
- Sign up to Newsletters
- Manage Your Newsletters

Copyright The Australian. All times AEST (GMT +10:00)