



RON FREITAS

District Attorney, San Joaquin County
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News from the Office of District Attorney Ron Freitas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jury Convicts Robert Somerville in Stockton Firefighter Murder

Stockton- Today, San Joaquin County District Attorney Ron Freitas announced a jury found defendant Robert Somerville, 68, guilty of murder in the shooting death of Stockton Fire Department Captain Vidal “Max” Fortuna.

“Stockton Fire Department Captain Fortuna’s death was an unfathomable tragedy. He was murdered because the defendant made the choice to shoot without cause, legal justification, or concern for human life,” **said San Joaquin County District Attorney Ron Freitas.** “I would like to thank the jury for their dutiful deliberation and Deputy District Attorney Elton Grau for seeking justice for Captain Fortuna and our community.”

At approximately 4:45AM on January 31, 2022, Stockton Fire Department Dispatch was notified via 911 call of a fire in the vicinity of Aurora and Washington Streets. Engine 2 was dispatched to the scene and located the fire at 142 Aurora Street. Engine 2 firefighters attempted to enter the building in order to prevent the fire from advancing from the trailer to the structure. Tragically, Captain Fortuna was shot in the line of duty and succumbed to his injuries.

The defendant returns before the Honorable Judge Charlotte J. Orcutt in Department 8D of the San Joaquin County Superior Court on April 10, 2023 at 10AM for sentencing.

The San Joaquin County District Attorney’s Office would like to offer our appreciation to Stockton Police Department, Detective Castro, Victim-Witness Advocate Liliana Del Castillo, Paralegals Michelle Vargas and Lisa Madrigal for their investigative efforts and dedication to the successful prosecution of the defendant. The Office also extends our sincerest condolences to Captain Fortuna’s family, friends, and fellow firefighters at Stockton Fire Department.

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