

## Australian Town Reacts After Manhunt Ends Peacefully



Published on March 31, 2026

Document Date: Tue, Jun 16 2026 04:57:45 pm

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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The rural Victorian town of Porepunkah in Australia has been left grappling with shock, sadness and relief after a seven month police manhunt finally concluded.

The search followed the fatal shooting of two police officers in August by local resident Dezi

Freeman, an event that thrust the small community of just over 1,000 people into national and

international attention. The extensive manhunt, one of the largest in the state's history, ended on

Monday when officers shot Freeman dead after a three hour stand off at a property about two hours' drive north of Porepunkah.

Residents speaking to media described a mix of emotions. Many expressed deep sorrow over the loss of life, particularly given the close knit nature of the Alpine region community, where both the slain officers and Freeman were known. Others welcomed the end of the ordeal, hoping it will allow the town to begin healing and regain a sense of normalcy.

Local volunteer and chamber of commerce president Marcus Warner said the community is now focused on recovery after months under intense media scrutiny and emotional strain.