

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

The late Mr Zachary John BISSELL, Late of Illawong NSW 2234

In the early evening of 6 August 2011, Mr Zachary Bissell rescued a friend at Como Railway Station in New South Wales.

Mr Bissell and a group of friends were on a platform at the Como Railway Station waiting for a city bound train to arrive. The group had purchased tickets for the 6:40pm train, however when their train arrived at the station, only some of the group were able to board before the doors closed. The rest of the group stood on the platform, waiting for the 7:00pm service.

Before the train arrived, one of the group jumped off the platform onto the train tracks and began running south. He ran until he reached the end of the station, where the tracks coming from different directions meet. He continued to run for about 30 metres. Mr Bissell immediately jumped down off the platform and began yelling at his friend to get off the tracks. A train travelling south towards Sutherland was quickly approaching and Mr Bissell pulled his friend towards the other track and out of the way of the passing train. Tragically, Mr Bissell was struck by a northbound train and died from his injuries.

By his actions, Mr Bissell displayed considerable bravery.

Detective Senior Sergeant Peter John BOWSER, Queensland Police

In the early afternoon of 2 November 1998, Detective Senior Sergeant (then Detective Senior Constable) Peter Bowser assisted in the removal of a suspected explosive device from an offender at Logan in Queensland.

A man, who appeared to be affected by alcohol, entered the Logan Central Police Station regarding a personal matter. When police checked their records they found an outstanding warrant for his arrest. As an officer approached the man he became extremely agitated, pulled what appeared to be a home-made explosive device from his briefcase, and threatened to 'take out' as many as he could.

Other police officers immediately lunged at the offender and a struggle ensued. An officer grabbed the briefcase from the man's lap, while another officer managed to wrest the device from the man's hand, pulled it away, and ran with the device to a nearby park where he held onto the device's spring loaded mechanism. The second officer also ran to the park with the offender's briefcase.

Detective Senior Constable Bowser interviewed the offender who stated that the device contained explosives. He then drove a police vehicle to the park and, despite placing himself in danger, placed a ballistic vest on the officer holding the device before examining it with a torch. He later assisted another officer until Bomb Squad experts arrived and determined that it would not detonate. The other devices which were found in the offender's briefcase were disarmed and destroyed.

By his actions, Detective Senior Sergeant Bowser displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Ms Malak CHIHA, Canning Vale WA 6155

On the evening of 29 April 2013, Ms Malak Chiha went to the assistance of her mother who had been stabbed during a domestic violence incident at Canning Vale in Western Australia.

Malak was at home with her parents and two brothers when her father assaulted her mother with a kitchen knife. Malak and her elder brother, Youcef, stepped in to prevent further injury to her mother when a scuffle broke out between them all. The knife broke away from the handle and Malak pushed it away so that her father could not reach it. As Malak attempted to ring the police her father hit her causing the phone to fall to the floor.

As the scuffle continued, Malak attempted to assist her mother. She then ran across the street to a neighbour's house to seek help, and returned with her neighbour who intervened in the scuffle between her father and brother. Another man then arrived to assist, and together with the neighbour, removed her father from the house. The other man came back inside and assisted Malak in attending to her mother and calling for emergency services.

At that point, Malak's father managed to re-enter the house and, armed with a piece of timber, made his way to front of the house where he threw it at Malak's brother, injuring him on the leg. A further scuffle ensued until the neighbour and the other man managed to subdue Malak's father and remove him to another room where they remained until police and ambulance personnel arrived.

Sadly, as a result of her injuries Malak's mother died at the scene.

By her actions, Ms Chiha displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Youcef CHIHA, WA

On the evening of 29 April 2013, Mr Youcef Chiha went to the assistance of his mother who had been stabbed during a domestic violence incident at Canning Vale in Western Australia.

Youcef was at home with his parents, sister and younger brother when his father assaulted his mother with a kitchen knife. Youcef and his sister, Malak, stepped in to prevent further injury to his mother and a scuffle broke out between them all. The knife broke away from the handle and Youcef's sister was able to push it away so their father could not reach it.

As Youcef continued to keep his father away from his mother a neighbour, who had been called by Youcef's sister, arrived on the scene and attempted to intervene to stop the scuffle. Youcef was then assaulted by his father sustaining injuries to his arm and head before his father was taken outside by the neighbour and another man. The second man then assisted Youcef's sister to contact emergency services.

Meanwhile Youcef's father managed to re-enter the house and, armed with a piece of timber, made his way to front of the house where he threw it at Youcef injuring him on the leg. A further scuffle ensued between Youcef and his father until the neighbour and the other man managed to subdue his father and remove him to another room where they remained until police and ambulance personnel arrived.

Sadly, as a result of her injuries Youcef's mother died at the scene.

By his actions, Mr Chiha displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Mr Thomas Charles CRAVEN, 64 Ninth Avenue, Joslin SA 5070

On the afternoon of 25 April 2014, Mr Thomas Craven attempted to rescue a man caught in a rip at Petrel Cove in South Australia.

Mr Craven noticed a man face down in the surf off Petrel Cove and immediately ran across rocks, entered the rough water, and swam five metres to reach him. He held the man's head above water and attempted to swim back to shore with the man despite a strong rip which was forcing them towards rocks.

Mr Craven then noticed another man enter the water and begin to make his way to them. Both men held onto the unconscious man and began to battle the rough seas to make their way back to shore. Buffeted by the waves and struggling against the rip Mr Craven was near complete exhaustion at this point and, unable to hold the injured man any longer, he informed the other man that he would have to let go. Mr Craven then managed to reach the safety of the rocks.

After several minutes the other man also became exhausted and was forced to release the unconscious man. He also managed to reach the rocks and was later winched to safety by a rescue helicopter. Unfortunately the unconscious man was unable to be located.

By his actions, Mr Craven displayed considerable bravery.

Ms Anita May ETTRIDGE, 8 Harding Way, Australind WA 6233

On the morning of 30 March 2015, Ms Anita Ettridge went to the assistance of a bus driver who was being attacked at Australind in Western Australia.

Ms Ettridge was a passenger on a local bus travelling to her senior high school in Australind. She was sitting in the front right seat, behind the driver, with her headphones on. The bus came to a stop near the Australind Medical Centre and a young boy walked past her. He produced a large machete-looking knife, lifted it up to shoulder height and slashed it down towards the driver several times. The bus driver put her hands up to stop him and a struggle ensued.

Ms Ettridge moved from her seat to the offender's left hand side and managing to grab hold of his forearm, used her free hand to grab the knife's handle. The pair struggled briefly before Ms Ettridge was able to force the knife into a slot near the door.

Meanwhile, a witness ran into the nearby Medical Centre and called for assistance. A man immediately left the building and ran towards the bus. He entered the bus and approached the offender and Ms Ettridge, who were both still holding the knife. He grabbed the handle and Ms Ettridge was then able to slide her hands away from the weapon.

The man repeatedly asked the boy to let the knife go. The boy suddenly released his grip which allowed the man to fully grasp the knife's handle and throw it out of the boy's reach in the direction of the dashboard.

By her actions, Ms Ettridge displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Senior Constable Mark Patrick EVERITT, Queensland Police

On the evening of 5 September 2014, Senior Constable Mark Everitt assisted in the rescue of people after a truck accident near Charleville in south western Queensland

At about 9pm a B-double truck carrying over 52 tonnes of a highly explosive chemical crashed off the Angellala Creek Bridge on the Mitchell Highway and burst into flames. The driver, who was severely injured, managed to get out of the truck's cabin and crawl up onto the bridge.

Two passing truck drivers arrived on the scene and noticed that the cabin of the overturned truck was well alight and beginning to melt. Minor explosions were occurring, as black smoke and 10 metre high flames were visible. They attended to the injured truck driver, administering first aid and providing comfort.

Four Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) firefighters from the Charleville Station arrived on the scene and went to assist the injured driver. Not long after, the burning truck exploded, sending debris into the air. A second explosion and shock wave quickly followed, causing extensive damage to the surrounding area. The firefighters, the injured man and the two truck drivers sustained significant injuries as they were only about 30 metres from the exploding vehicle.

Senior Constable Everitt and another Queensland Police Service (QPS) officer responded to the incident and established a cordon about 1km from the site. Three Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) paramedics and a QFES inspector then arrived on the scene.

Senior Constable Everitt and the QFES inspector saw the four QFES firefighters and one of the truck drivers walking towards them and supporting each other. They advised Senior Constable Everitt that two more people remained at the scene. The injured men were then transported to hospital.

Despite the hazardous environment and possibility of further explosions, Senior Constable Everitt, his colleague, and the QFES inspector then went to the crash site where they encountered the second motorist still assisting the truck driver. He assessed the two injured men and had a QAS paramedic brought to the site. When a cloud of toxic smoke rising from a damaged bag in close proximity to the victim was observed, the injured men were evacuated and all first responders quickly left the scene.

By his actions, Senior Constable Everitt displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Mr Michael Bradley HADJ, PO Box 48, Charleville Qld 4470

On the evening of 5 September 2014, Mr Michael Hadj assisted in the rescue of people after a truck accident near Charleville in south western Queensland

At about 9pm a B-double truck carrying over 52 tonnes of a highly explosive chemical crashed off the Angellala Creek Bridge on the Mitchell Highway and burst into flames. The driver, who was severely injured, managed to get out of the truck's cabin and crawl up onto the bridge.

Two passing truck drivers arrived on the scene and noticed that the cabin of the overturned truck was well alight and beginning to melt. Minor explosions were occurring, as black smoke and 10 metre high flames were visible. They attended to the injured truck driver, administering first aid and providing comfort.

Four Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) firefighters from the Charleville Station then arrived and went to assist the injured driver. Not long after, the burning truck exploded, sending debris into the air. A second explosion and shockwave quickly followed, causing extensive damage to surrounding area. The two passing truck drivers, the injured truck driver and the four QFES firefighters sustained significant injuries as they were only 30 metres from the exploding vehicle.

Two Queensland Police Service (QPS) officers responded to the incident and established a cordon about 1km from the site. Mr Hadj and two other Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) paramedics and a QFES inspector arrived on the scene.

When the four QFES firefighters and one of the truck drivers emerged from the scene with multiple injuries and in shock, Mr Hadj's colleagues triaged the men, provided vital initial treatment to the injured and then transported them to Charleville Hospital.

Despite the hazardous environment and possibility of further explosions, Mr Hadj then attended the site to treat the two remaining injured men. He organised for the truck driver to be evacuated and then turned his attention to the injured driver who had suffered severe burns. When he observed a cloud of toxic smoke rising from a damaged bag in close proximity he quickly completed his initial treatment and assisted in the evacuation of all personnel from the scene.

By his actions, Mr Hadj displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Senior Constable Kenric Robert HEAD, Queensland Police

On the evening of 5 September 2014, Senior Constable (then Constable) Kenric Head assisted in the rescue of people after a truck accident near Charleville in south western Queensland

At about 9pm a B-double truck carrying over 52 tonnes of a highly explosive chemical crashed off the Angellala Creek Bridge on the Mitchell Highway and burst into flames. The driver, who was severely injured, managed to get out of the truck's cabin and crawl up onto the bridge.

Two passing truck drivers arrived on the scene and noticed that the cabin of the over turned truck was well alight and beginning to melt. Minor explosions were occurring, as black smoke and 10 metre high flames were visible. They attended to the injured truck driver, administering first aid and providing comfort.

Four Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) firefighters from the Charleville Station arrived on the scene and went to assist the injured driver. Not long after, the burning truck exploded, sending debris into the air. A second explosion and shock wave quickly followed, causing extensive damage to the surrounding area. The firefighters, the injured man and the two truck drivers sustained significant injuries as they were only about 30 metres from the exploding vehicle.

Constable Head and another Queensland Police Service (QPS) officer responded to the incident and established a cordon about 1km from the site. Three Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) paramedics and a QFES inspector then arrived on the scene.

Constable Head and the QFES inspector saw the four QFES firefighters and one of the truck drivers walking towards them and supporting each other. They advised Constable Head that two more people remained at the scene. The injured men were then transported to hospital.

Despite the hazardous environment and possibility of further explosions, Constable Head, his colleague, and the QFES inspector proceeded to the crash site where they encountered the second motorist still assisting the truck driver. Constable Head immediately brought a QAS paramedic to the site. When a cloud of toxic smoke rising from a damaged bag in close proximity to the victim was observed, the injured men were evacuated and all first responders quickly left the scene.

By his actions, Senior Constable Head displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Mr Troy Anthony HUGHES, 7 Stirbeck Street, Holbrook NSW 2644

On the afternoon of 17 July 2015, Mr Troy Hughes rescued a woman from a burning, overturned vehicle near Holbrook in New South Wales.

Mr Hughes was a part of a team undertaking roadworks on the Hume Highway at Kyeamba when a vehicle, travelling at speed, braked violently, veered off the road and collided with a tree. The impact caused the vehicle to flip onto its roof and erupt into flames.

Mr Hughes immediately ran to the vehicle, which was well alight. Observing a sole driver still behind the steering wheel, he reached into the car and managed to free the woman. He had just started dragging her from the burning car when it exploded, knocking him to the ground.

Mr Hughes began to render first aid assistance to the injured driver. As others arrived to help, Mr Hughes attempted to extinguish the fire using equipment from his team's work vehicles, but the fire was too intense to quell. He immediately returned to the injured driver and commenced chest compressions. The driver lost consciousness twice before ambulance crews arrived.

By his actions, Mr Hughes displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Barry Charles JONES, Elizabeth Beach NSW 2428

In the early morning of 18 November 2011, Mr Barry Jones assisted in the rescue of several elderly people from a burning nursing home at Quakers Hill in New South Wales.

Shortly after 5am emergency services were called to the Quakers Hill Nursing Home to extinguish a deliberately lit fire. Mr Jones and other New South Wales Fire and Rescue (NSWFR) firefighters from the Blacktown Station arrived on the scene.

Mr Jones and two colleagues entered the front lobby of the building and they were immediately tasked with fire attack and removal of patients from a wing of the building. At this point the firefighters radioed that the fire was 'ventilating' and that there was also a second fire.

Mr Jones and a colleague entered the wing and observed dense smoke to floor level with zero visibility. The heat was intense and they could hear moaning, coughing and a large fire burning overhead in the roof. Mr Jones and his colleague immediately decided to locate patients by feeling their way along the walls and proceeded to evacuate them by wheeling them out in their beds or by moving them along the ground.

Mr Jones and his colleague repeatedly re-entered the ward to deliver patients to the safety.

By his actions, Mr Jones displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Ms Phoebe Sylvia KAHLO, Queensland

On the evening of 11 July 2015, Ms Phoebe Kahlo rescued an elderly woman from a burning house at Greenslopes in Queensland.

Ms Kahlo and her partner were inside their residence when her partner smelt smoke and, on further investigation, saw that their elderly neighbour's house was on fire. They immediately called 000 before they went to the house and observed significant fire and smoke beginning to engulf the ground floor of the two storey timber Queenslander.

Ms Kahlo entered the front door and, despite the thick toxic smoke, searched the house and found the woman in her bedroom on the second storey. Ms Kahlo alerted the woman to the fire but she was disoriented and resisted her pleas to leave the house. With the smoke intensifying, Ms Kahlo picked the woman up from her bed and began to carry her through the smoke filled house.

Meanwhile, Ms Kahlo's partner had entered the front of the house and encountered Ms Kahlo and the woman in the lounge room. He assisted them both out of the house to safety.

By her actions, Ms Kahlo displayed considerable bravery.

Phone No: Not available

Mr David William McILRATH, Glenhaven NSW 2156

In the early morning of 18 November 2011, Mr David McIlrath assisted in the rescue of several elderly people from a burning nursing home at Quakers Hill in New South Wales.

Shortly after 5am, emergency services were called to the Quakers Hill Nursing Home to extinguish a deliberately lit fire. Mr McIlrath and other New South Wales Fire and Rescue (NSWFR) firefighters from the Blacktown Station arrived on the scene.

Mr McIlrath and two colleagues entered the front lobby of the building and he immediately tasked his colleagues with fire attack and removal of patients from a wing of the building. At this point the firefighters radioed that the fire was 'ventilating' and that there was also a second fire.

Mr McIlrath was instructed to inspect the building to assess the situation and ensure evacuations were being undertaken. The other two firefighters entered the wing and observed dense smoke to floor level with zero visibility. The heat was intense and they could hear moaning, coughing and a large fire burning overhead in the roof. They immediately decided to locate patients by feeling their way along the walls and proceeded to evacuate people by wheeling them out in their beds or by moving people along the ground.

Mr McIlrath moved to the side of the building and noticed signs of active fire within two of the wards. He reported this situation, put on a breathing apparatus, propped open the door, entered the building and rescued a resident via the back exit. Mr McIlrath repeatedly entered the building and was able to rescue more residents until further assistance arrived.

By his actions, Mr McIlrath displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Colonel Michael John McMAHON, 43 Kinloch Circuit, Bruce ACT 2617

On the afternoon of 11 October 2015, Colonel McMahon was involved in the rescue of several people following a fatal helicopter crash in Kabul, Afghanistan.

At about 4.15pm a British Royal Air Force Puma helicopter crashed on a road junction in Kabul in front of Colonel McMahon. He immediately ran towards the downed aircraft along with other civilians. There was a significant amount of aviation fuel pouring from the ruptured tanks and the cockpit had been partially torn open, with one of the two pilots showing signs of life.

As he prepared to climb into the passenger compartment, fire extinguishers were activated, releasing intensely noxious fumes and smoke. Anyone near the aircraft was forced to withdraw until the fumes subsided. He then assisted with the removal of the injured from the aircraft and their transport to the Role 1 Medical Centre.

By this time a large crowd began to assemble, impeding rescue activities. Colonel McMahon immediately assumed the role of command and control, establishing an initial cordon and checking surrounding buildings and moving all non-essential persons outside of the perimeter. He also established communication links with, and facilitated the arrival on site of, Royal Air Force personnel to switch off the helicopter's batteries and remove the potential of ignition of the leaking fuel.

Colonel McMahon remained at the crash site and advised Medical Centre staff regarding the casualties being extracted, and ensuring the resupply of medical items to the team treating the injured.

By his actions, Colonel McMahon displayed considerable bravery.

Mr David NIXON, New South Wales

On the afternoon of 20 January 1985, Mr (then Constable) David Nixon apprehended a man armed with a rifle at Sutton in New South Wales.

Queanbeyan Police were notified that an armed man was attempting to light a fire on Macs Reef Road and had pointed his firearm at a property owner. Constable Nixon arrived at the scene along with another police vehicle and he parked within 15m of the offender's vehicle. The offender and a youth could be seen standing near their vehicle. As Constable Nixon got out of his vehicle the offender picked up a rifle and pointed it towards him. The offender instructed the youth to leave the scene whilst continuing to point the gun in the direction of the Constable Nixon.

As he removed his service revolver from its holster, Constable Nixon instructed the offender to drop the rifle. When the offender didn't comply, he fired a shot in the direction of the man before taking cover in the cabin of his vehicle. Almost instantaneously shots were fired by the offender in his direction, hitting the vehicle and causing the window to shatter.

Constable Nixon slid out of the vehicle, holstered his service revolver, and encouraged the man to put the rifle down so they could talk. He edged slowly away from the protection of the police vehicle at which point the offender put down the rifle and also sheathed a large knife on his belt.

There was a brief conversation before the offender ran towards the rifle on the ground. He was 1.5 metres away from the weapon when Constable Nixon tackled him and they both fell to the ground, struggling. Shortly afterwards other police officers assisted with the arrest of the offender.

By his actions, Constable Nixon displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Mr Joseph Mark NUGENT, 5 Coastal Court, Dalmeny NSW 2546

In the early afternoon of 3 April 2015, Mr Joe Nugent assisted in the rescue of several people after a boat capsized at the Narooma Bar in Narooma, New South Wales.

Mr Nugent and four friends were surfing at South Bar Beach, Narooma and witnessed a small fishing boat attempting to cross the Narooma Bar. The swell was around 3 metres high. A wave coming from behind the vessel swamped it, causing it to capsize and throw all five passengers overboard. Two were thrown clear of the boat, one was clinging to the front of the vessel and two were trapped underneath the upturned boat.

Mr Nugent and two of his friends quickly located a passenger in the water and he was assisted to shore by one of the surfers. Mr Nugent and his friend could hear screaming coming from underneath the bow of the boat. They both swam under the vessel and located a young female who was trapped in an air pocket and, due to her life jacket inflating, was unable to escape. Mr Nugent and his friend repeatedly went under the boat to try to rescue the victim. On about their sixth attempt they were able to grab her, pulling her down and out from under the vessel. Mr Nugent and his friend then assisted her to shore.

The other two surfers located another passenger hanging onto the front of the capsized vessel and two other passengers in the surf nearby. Together they guided the three victims back to shore and with the help of other bystanders they observed and supported the passengers until emergency services arrived.

By his actions, Mr Nugent displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Warren Gregory POLINI, Canning Vale WA 6155

On the evening of 29 April 2013, Mr Warren Polini assisted in apprehending a man who had fatally stabbed a woman at Canning Vale in Western Australia.

Mr Polini and a friend were watching television when Mr Polini's partner heard screaming outside. Mr Polini opened the front door and saw his young neighbour shouting that her mother was hurt. He quickly followed her back to her house and went inside the front hallway. He saw a woman on the floor who was bleeding heavily after being stabbed.

His attention was then drawn to a physical confrontation happening between the injured woman's husband and son, who was attempting to prevent his father from further attacking his mother. He immediately intervened to restrain the man and managed to separate the pair.

Both men continued to scuffle as Mr Polini called out to his partner across the street to phone the police. At this point, Mr Polini's friend ran across the street to assist. Both men then dragged the offender outside before the friend re-entered the house, locked the front door, and began assisting the injured woman.

Meanwhile, Mr Polini was attempting to calm the offender when he took off and ran to the back of the house and gained entry. Mr Polini called out to his friend inside who unlocked the front door allowing Mr Polini to join him.

The offender began running through the house armed with a large piece of timber attempting to attack his son. Mr Polini and his friend quickly grabbed hold of the offender and removed him to another room where they remained with him until police and ambulance personnel arrived.

By his actions, Mr Polini displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Mrs Tammy Louise REILLY, South Australia

On the evening of 2 July 1987, Mrs Tammy Reilly, (then Gandolfi), went to assist her wounded mother after a shooting in Mount Gambier, South Australia.

Mrs Reilly, her mother, and her mother's partner had finished dinner at the Globe Hotel and headed to the carpark at the rear of the hotel. On reaching their vehicle the offender approached them carrying a double barrel shot gun. The offender then fired at Mrs Reilly's mother's partner, as he was attempting to flee the scene.

The offender then aimed the gun at Mrs Reilly, who quickly took cover behind a vehicle. She heard the gun discharge and raised her head to see her mother lying on the ground. Without consideration for her own safety, as the armed gunman was standing just 5 metres away, she immediately went to her mother and saw that she had been shot and proceeded to comfort her. The gunman then reloaded the gun and shot himself.

By her actions, Mrs Reilly displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Daniel SIMPSON, Central Tilba NSW 2546

In the early afternoon of 3 April 2015, Mr Daniel Simpson assisted in the rescue of several people after a boat capsized at the Narooma Bar in Narooma, New South Wales.

Mr Simpson and four friends were surfing at South Bar Beach, Narooma and witnessed a small fishing boat attempting to cross the Narooma Bar. The swell was around 3 metres high. A wave coming from behind the vessel swamped it, causing it to capsize and throw all five passengers overboard. Two were thrown clear of the boat, one was clinging to the front of the vessel and two were trapped underneath the upturned boat.

Mr Simpson and two of his friends quickly located a passenger in the water and he was assisted to shore by one of the surfers. Mr Simpson and his friend could hear screaming coming from underneath the bow of the boat. They both swam under the vessel and located a young female who was trapped in an air pocket and, due to her life jacket inflating, was unable to escape. Mr Simpson and his friend repeatedly went under the boat to try to rescue the victim. On about their sixth attempt they were able to grab her, pulling her down and out from under the vessel. Mr Simpson and his friend then assisted her to shore.

The other two surfers located another passenger hanging onto the front of the capsized vessel and two other passengers in the surf nearby. Together they guided the three victims back to shore and with the help of other bystanders they observed and supported the passengers until emergency services arrived.

By his actions, Mr Simpson displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Mr Shane Colin TAWSE, Slacks Creek Qld 4127

On 24 December 2015, Mr Shane Tawse entered a burning home to rescue a woman in Kingston, Queensland.

Mr Tawse noticed smoke billowing from a home in Poinciana Street, Kingston and proceeded to drive into the street, stopping his vehicle on the opposite side of the road to the burning home. He noticed that the 2nd floor of the building was fully ablaze and a woman in the driveway attempting to extinguish the ferocious flames with a garden hose.

When neighbours realised that the occupant of the home was not accounted for, Mr Tawse, without any thought for his own safety, left his car and ran across the road towards the burning residence. He tried unsuccessfully to enter the front of the house but the front door was locked and he couldn't get in through the windows. After several attempts he quickly moved to the back of the property and found the occupant and her three dogs inside the house. He dragged the elderly occupant clear of the home just as fire engulfed the building.

By his actions, Mr Tawse displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Michael Andrew WATTS-SEALE, 222 Richmond Road, Blacktown NSW 2148

In the early morning of 18 November 2011, Mr Michael Watts-Seale assisted in the rescue of several elderly people from a burning nursing home at Quakers Hill in New South Wales.

Shortly after 5am, emergency services were called to the Quakers Hill Nursing Home to extinguish a deliberately lit fire. Mr Watts-Seale and other New South Wales Fire and Rescue firefighters from the Blacktown Station arrived on the scene.

Mr Watts-Seale and two colleagues entered the front lobby of the building and they were immediately tasked with fire attack and removal of patients from a wing of the building. At this point the firefighters radioed that the fire was 'ventilating' and that there was also a second fire.

Mr Watts-Seale and a colleague entered the wing and observed dense smoke to floor level with zero visibility. The heat was intense and they could hear moaning, coughing and a large fire burning overhead in the roof. Mr Watts-Seale and his colleague immediately decided to locate patients by feeling their way along the walls and proceeded to evacuate people by wheeling them out in their beds or by moving people along the ground.

Mr Watts-Seale and his colleague repeatedly re-entered the ward to deliver patients to the safety.

By his actions, Mr Watts-Seale displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Sergeant Paul David WILLIAMS, Queensland Police

In the early afternoon of 2 November 1998, Sergeant (then Senior Constable) Paul Williams assisted in the removal of a suspected explosive device from an offender at Logan, Queensland.

A man, who appeared to be affected by alcohol, entered the Logan Central Police Station on a personal matter. When the police checked their records they found an outstanding warrant for his arrest. As an officer approached the man he became extremely agitated, pulled what appeared to be a home-made explosive device from his briefcase, and threatened to 'take out' as many as he could.

Other police officers immediately lunged at the offender and a struggle ensued. Senior Constable Williams went to assist, and despite being warned that explosives were present, grabbed the briefcase from the offender's lap. Another officer managed to wrest the device from the offender's hands and ran to a nearby park. Senior Constable Williams also ran to the park with the briefcase and kept watch over it. The officer holding the device had a ballistic vest placed on him until the Bomb Squad experts arrived and determined that the device would not detonate.

On examining the briefcase that Senior Constable Williams had removed from the offender, Bomb Squad experts determined that it contained four primed IED pipe bombs and a quantity of ammunition. Subsequently all devices were disarmed and destroyed.

By his actions, Sergeant Williams displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Marcus WILSON NSC, Kenmore Qld 4069

On the afternoon of 11 October 2015, Mr Wilson was involved in the rescue of several people following a fatal helicopter crash in Kabul, Afghanistan.

At about 4.15pm a British Royal Air Force Puma helicopter crashed on a road junction in Kabul. Mr Wilson ran towards the downed aircraft to assist. There was a significant amount of aviation fuel pouring from the ruptured tanks and the cockpit had been partially torn open, with one of the two pilots showing signs of life.

As an Australian Army Officer prepared to climb into the passenger compartment, fire extinguishers were activated, releasing intensely noxious fumes and smoke. People near the aircraft were forced to withdraw until the fumes subsided. Mr Wilson approached the scene and entered the wreckage as the injured were slowly being extracted and treated.

Mr Wilson began to treat and recover some of the injured as a large crowd began to assemble, impeding rescue activities. At this point the Australian Army Officer assumed the role of command and control, establishing an initial cordon and moving all non-essential people outside of the perimeter.

Despite the threat posed by leaking fuel, the possible detonation of explosives, and the noxious gas from the fire retardant system, Mr Wilson remained inside the fuselage triaging the injured and assisting with their treatment and evacuation.

By his actions, Mr Wilson displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Mr Corey John ZARTH, Cranbourne Vic 3977

On the evening of 14 November 2013, Mr Corey Zarth and another man rescued a baby from a burning vehicle at Aratula in Queensland.

Mr Zarth was driving his truck on the Cunningham Highway at Mount Edwards when the prime mover truck in front of him collided with a sedan, pushing it 95 metres along the road. The truck driver was able to climb out of his damaged vehicle before it caught fire. The female driver of the sedan was unconscious in the front seat of the vehicle, and her nine month old daughter was in the rear.

Mr Zarth got out of his truck and ran to assist. Another truck driver had also stopped, and both men approached the damaged vehicles. They saw flames coming from the engine bay of the sedan and also from the truck. The truck's fuel tank had ruptured spilling a considerable amount of diesel fuel over the roadway.

On opening the rear door of the sedan Mr Zarth and the other man discovered a baby in a booster seat. The other man leaned inside the sedan and removed the infant from her harness. At this point the flames had spread over the front of the car and the diesel fuel from the damaged truck was now ankle deep. Mr Zarth then managed to obtain a fire extinguisher and attempted to put out the flames.

Another motorist, who had stopped to render assistance, tried to open the driver's door but was forced back by the heat. The infant was taken to safety to await the arrival of emergency services personnel. Sadly, the female driver did not survive the accident.

By his actions, Mr Zarth displayed considerable bravery.