

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Pauline June BROWN, Para Hills SA 5096

Details not available at the request of Ms Brown

Mr Dean BURGESS, 1337 Bruce Highway, Yabulu Qld 4818

On the afternoon of 8 June 2005, Mr Burgess rescued an injured man from a burning vehicle on the Bruce Highway north of Townsville.

Mr Burgess was with his wife and friend outside a café when they saw two vehicles collide on a nearby bridge. Mr Burgess and his friend went to the scene and, as they approached, saw smoke and flames coming from the vehicles. They could see flames in the middle section of a campervan which was tilted onto its passenger side door, and immediately checked for occupants. They found an injured man trapped in the passenger seat, so Mr Burgess reached into the broken windscreen and pulled the man through. With the help of his friend he carried the man to safety.

For his actions, Mr Burgess is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Ronald Albert CAMPBELL, 50 Hindle Street, Grovedale Vic 3216

On the evening of 17 October 2004, Mr Campbell attempted to divert traffic around an elderly man who had been struck by a car on the Western Ring Road at Sunshine West in Victoria.

Mr Campbell was a passenger in the car of a companion when an elderly man was thrown into their path after being struck by a car in another lane of the highway. Mr Campbell and his companion pulled over into the emergency lane. He ran into the middle of traffic, travelling at about 100 kilometres per hour, to try to divert vehicles away from the man lying on the road. Whilst attempting to divert oncoming vehicles he saw two more cars and a truck hit the injured man. Mr Campbell's companion backed his land cruiser down the road and parked it with its hazard lights on to gain the attention of approaching motorists. He then used a torch that he had taken from his vehicle to help Mr Campbell wave traffic into the right hand lane. The two men finally managed to divert the traffic for 10 to 15 minutes until police and the ambulance arrived. Sadly, the elderly man died in the accident.

For his actions, Mr Campbell is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Richard John CHAMEN, 'Springsure', Currabubula NSW 2342

On the afternoon of 28 August 2002, Mr Chamen rescued a woman from a burning vehicle after an accident near Binniguy, New South Wales.

Mr Chamen and a colleague were travelling from Moree to Mount Russell when they came across an accident that had just occurred near Binniguy at around 1.15 pm. Mr Chamen noticed that one of the cars was on fire and that a woman was still in the driver's seat. He and his colleague tried to open the driver's side door but found it was jammed. Mr Chamen checked with the woman to determine the extent of her injuries then leaned into the car and pulled her out through the window. The two men then carried the woman a safe distance from the car and left her in the care of other bystanders. Mr Chamen returned to the car, which was well alight, and retrieved as many of its owners' belongings as he could. The car was subsequently completely destroyed by the fire.

For his actions, Mr Chamen is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Daryl William COOPER, 29 Beltana Street, Grovedale Vic 3216

Details not available at the request of Mr Cooper.

Ms Glenys Ruth COULTON, 8 Matilda Street, Peterhead SA 5016

On the afternoon of 19 January 2000, Ms Coulton helped rescue two boys from the surf at Moana Beach, South Australia.

Ms Coulton was at Moana Beach with friends when they heard people calling out for help. They saw two boys being dragged out to sea into very deep water. Ms Coulton and two of her friends ran into the surf and swam out to the boys. Fighting against a very strong undertow and with waves crashing over their heads they managed to push the boys ahead of them towards the shore until they were able to stand up again.

For her actions, Ms Coulton is commended for brave conduct.

Ms Robyn Nell COVERDALE, Point Cook Vic 3030

Details not available at the request of Ms Coverdale.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Ms Natalie Louise DEVLIN, 2/36 Wyena Road, Pendle Hill NSW 2145

On the afternoon of 4 April 1996, Ms Devlin helped rescue a woman from a burning house in Merrylands, New South Wales.

Ms Devlin was at home at around 1.30pm when she heard a neighbour scream for someone to ring 000. She ran outside and saw black smoke coming from a house across the road. Another neighbour entered the house through a smashed window and opened the front door. He then went in search for the female occupant. While he was dragging the badly burned woman from the bedroom he collapsed into a coughing fit. Ms Devlin and another neighbour entered the house and carried the woman out the front door where they were assisted by others in carrying her onto the front lawn. Ms Devlin helped to apply first aid to the woman until ambulance officers arrived. Sadly, after a month of medical treatment, the woman died from her injuries.

For her actions, Ms Devlin is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Allan Douglas EATTS, 767 Mt Stanley Road, Lymwood King Island Tas 7256

On the afternoon of 20 March 2005, Mr Eatts helped rescue the occupants of a burning vehicle at Manjimup, Western Australia.

Mr Eatts was driving on the South Western Highway when he saw an overturned vehicle in the bush on the side of the road with steam coming from under the bonnet. He approached the car and found a man and woman hanging upside down in their seatbelts. The man asked him for help in getting out of the vehicle. Mr Eatts and another man who had also stopped tried to open the passenger side doors but found them jammed. He saw black smoke coming from the engine bay and broke off a tree branch to try to beat out the fire. Unable to get to the seat of the fire, he assisted another man, who had broken the passenger side window, and cut the passenger's seat belt. Mr Eatts helped the man from the car, and then helped remove the female driver to safety. The car was subsequently destroyed by the fire and sadly the woman died from her injuries.

For his actions, Mr Eatts is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Chaice GRANT, 8 Giddens Court, North Lake WA 6163

During the early morning of 16 June 2004, Mr Grant helped rescue the crew of a yacht that had run aground on Seringapatam Reef off the coast of Western Australia.

Mr Grant, then 17 years old, was on his first voyage with the prawn trawler, *Titan*, when it received a call to go to the rescue of the crew of a yacht, the *Petama*, which had run aground on the reef during the night. When it arrived at the reef the *Titan* was unable to launch its rescue dinghy because of the conditions so it positioned itself about 150 metres off the reef and encouraged the crew of the yacht to swim to it. The skipper of the yacht paddled a surfboard through a rising swell of 2 – 3 metres to advise the crew of the *Titan* that his crew was exhausted and one of them a poor swimmer. Although aware of the risk of sharks or sea snakes, Mr Grant volunteered to swim back with Mr Brown to help bring the crewmembers to the *Titan*. Wearing only boardshorts and, to protect his feet from the reef, the heavy rubber boots worn on deck on the *Titan*, Mr Grant swam beside the man on the surfboard through the large surf and helped the three yacht crew swim back to the *Titan*, each of them hanging on to the sides of the yacht's inflatable dinghy. It took about 20 minutes to manoeuvre the boat through the surf and all four were then pulled to safety on board the *Titan*.

For his actions, Mr Grant is commended for brave conduct.

Constable David Alexander HALL, Queensland Police

In the early evening of 16 January 2004, Constable Hall rescued a woman from drowning in Appel Channel, Mornington Island, Queensland.

Constable Hall and two other officers were called to a hotel on Mornington Island where a man approached them and told them that his sister was very drunk and trying to start a dispute with some other patrons. The police officers spoke to the woman and found her to be very emotional and showing signs of intoxication. A short time later when security staff tried to evict the woman, she became aggressive and left the hotel. The police officers followed in their vehicle and tried to intercept her as she walked towards the beach. She managed to evade them and walked into the water, removing her shirt and wrapping it around her neck like a noose. While one of the officers returned to the hotel to seek help from the woman's relatives, Constable Hall and his female colleague tried to call her back into shore. The woman did not respond and was now struggling to stay afloat some 100 – 150 metres out in the water. Despite previous reports of crocodiles in that area, strong current and choppy conditions, Constable Hall's colleague removed her utility belt and boots and went into the water. She reached the woman and managed to swim her in closer to shore. Realising that his colleague was tiring, and that the woman was now vomiting and slipping in and out of consciousness, Constable Hall entered the water and went to their assistance. He was able to tow the woman to shore and administer first aid until the ambulance service arrived.

For his actions, Constable Hall is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Samuel Henry HOFBAUER, Melbourne Vic 3000

On the afternoon of 17 August 2005, Mr Hofbauer rescued a woman from drowning in the River Thames in London.

Mr Hofbauer, then aged 60, was a passenger on board a tourist boat on the Thames when he saw a woman jump from a bridge into the water. Mr Hofbauer jumped fully clothed into the fast-flowing water and, as the current carried the woman towards him, grabbed hold of her and swam her towards a buoy, which supported them both until a rescue craft arrived.

For his actions, Mr Hofbauer is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Gavin Francis HUGHES, 40 Stokes Street, Manjimup WA 6258

On the afternoon of 20 March 2005, Mr Hughes helped rescue the occupants of a burning vehicle at Manjimup, Western Australia.

Mr Hughes was driving to work on the South Western Highway when he noticed smoke and saw that a vehicle had overturned on the side of the road. He pulled over and dialled 000 on his mobile phone. He went to investigate and found two people trapped in the car, hanging upside down from their seatbelts. Another man had managed to smash the passenger side window and pull the passenger out of the car. Mr Hughes noticed that a fire had started in the engine block of the car so he returned to his car to look for some water. Not finding any, he returned to the crashed car and helped pull the female driver from the car and carry her away to safety. The car was subsequently destroyed by the fire and sadly the woman died from her injuries.

For his actions, Mr Hughes is commended for brave conduct.

Mr David Murray HUTCHINSON, 7/12 Raymond Street, Yokine WA 6060

On the morning of 3 April 2005, Mr Hutchinson rescued a woman and assisted in the rescue of a man from a burning block of units at Yokine, Western Australia.

At about 6.20am, Mr Hutchinson heard a loud explosion. He ran outside and saw debris flying through the air from a block of units across the road. He ran to the back of the units and found that it had been substantially damaged in the explosion and fire had broken out. He looked through a window and saw a woman lying in bed with a brick wall leaning over her. He called to her to get out but the woman was disoriented and unable to move. Mr Hutchinson jumped through the broken window into the room and carried the woman out of the building. He then heard someone screaming and returned to the burning building to find a man trapped under rubble and part of a brick wall. Mr Hutchinson removed some of the rubble and tried to move the man. Unable to do so because the man was in too much pain from his injuries he doused a small fire burning beside the man and stayed with him offering comfort until the fire brigade officers arrived.

For his actions, Mr Hutchinson is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr John-Paul JONES, Loganlea Qld 4131

On the morning of 17 June 2005, Mr Jones entered a burning townhouse in search of occupants in Sunnybank Hills, Queensland.

Mr Jones, an employee of Energex, was working when he and his workmate noticed smoke coming from a nearby townhouse. Believing that they could assist the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority with electrical isolation, they went to the scene of the fire. As emergency service personnel had not yet arrived and the upper storey of the townhouse was well alight, Mr Jones and his workmate isolated the electricity supply to the building and then attempted to fight the fire using a garden hose. They were unsuccessful in kicking the front door in, so broke it down with a sledgehammer. Joined by another man who had been driving past, Mr Jones and his workmate entered the townhouse and, in spite of thick smoke, intense heat and the risk of the building collapsing on them, searched for any occupants. They found a man and assisted him to exit by a side door and, after searching as far as they were able for any other occupants, left the building. The townhouse was destroyed in the fire.

For his actions, Mr Jones is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Sean Graeme KEELER, 106 Verbena Road, Tamborine Qld 4270

On the afternoon of 18 October 2004, Mr Keeler rescued his neighbour who was being attacked by a bull.

Mr Keeler was in his front yard when he heard screams coming from a neighbouring property. He immediately went to investigate and saw a bull attacking his neighbour. Mr Keeler jumped the fence and ran to his neighbour's assistance, throwing whatever he could find at the bull. He hit it repeatedly with a large stick for about ten minutes until the bull eventually retreated. When Mr Keeler's wife arrived in a four-wheel drive, Mr Keeler drove the vehicle at the bull and pushed it away from his neighbour. He then helped his wife to move the seriously injured man into the vehicle and administered first aid until paramedics arrived.

For his actions, Mr Keeler is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Rodney William KINGSTON, Washington, United States of America

On the afternoon of 28 August 2002, Mr Kingston helped rescue a woman from a burning vehicle after an accident near Binniguy in New South Wales.

Mr Kingston and a colleague were travelling from Moree to Mount Russell when they came across an accident that had just occurred near Binniguy at around 1.15 pm. Mr Kingston and his colleague noticed that one of the cars was on fire and that a woman was still in the driver's seat. He and his colleague tried to open the driver's side door but found it was jammed. Mr Kingston's colleague checked with the woman to determine the extent of her injuries then leaned into the car and pulled her out through the window. Mr Kingston then helped his colleague carry the woman a safe distance from the car. The car was subsequently completely destroyed by the fire.

For his actions, Mr Kingston is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Helmut KIRCHMANN, Para Hills SA 5096

Details not available at the request of Mr Kirchmann.

Mr Robert Arthur LACEY, 10 Gladiator Street, Raby NSW 2566

On the afternoon of 18 December 2001, Mr Lacey assisted in the rescue of a man from a burning building at Cooks River, New south Wales.

Mr Lacey, a signalman at the Cooks River Signal Box, was changing shifts when he and another signalman heard an explosion. They immediately went to investigate and found that a garage opposite the signal box was on fire and, knowing that an elderly man lived there, quickly ran to the house. Although flames had already completely engulfed one side of the building, and it was rapidly filling with smoke, the men entered the garage by a roller door and found the man inside in a state of shock. While his colleague dragged a gas cylinder away from the flames and into a nearby laneway, Mr Lacey grabbed hold of the man and attempted to pull him back towards the doorway. Flames were blocking the doorway so Mr Lacey dragged the man towards a rear door and outside to safety. Once outside, whilst Mr Lacey began to search in the smoke for a hose, the man wandered back into the blazing building and Mr Lacey had to enter it a second time to bring him out again.

For his actions, Mr Lacey is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Christopher Paul LANEY, 2/51 Anzac Avenue, Maroochydore Qld 4558

On the morning of 17 June 2005, Mr Laney entered a burning townhouse in search of occupants in Sunnybank Hills in Brisbane.

Mr Laney, an employee of Energex, was working when he and his workmate noticed smoke coming from a nearby townhouse. Believing that they could assist the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority with electrical isolation, they went to the scene of the fire. As emergency service personnel had not yet arrived and the upper storey of the townhouse was well alight, Mr Laney and his workmate isolated the electricity supply to the building and then attempted to fight the fire using a garden hose. They were unsuccessful in kicking the front door in, so broke it down with a sledgehammer. Joined by another man who had been driving past, Mr Laney and his workmate entered the townhouse and, in spite of thick smoke, intense heat and the risk of the building collapsing on them, searched for any occupants. They found a man and assisted him to exit by a side door and, after searching as far as they were able for any other occupants, left the building. The townhouse was destroyed in the fire.

For his actions, Mr Laney is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Paul MIRAGLIOTTA, 35 Parkfield Way, Australind WA 6233

On the afternoon of 20 March 2005, Mr Miragliotta helped rescue the occupants of a burning vehicle at Manjimup, Western Australia.

Mr Miragliotta was travelling on the South Western Highway when he saw an overturned and extensively damaged car with smoke coming from it. He pulled over and found that two people were trapped in the car, hanging upside down from their seatbelts. Asked by another man to smash the rear window to release the smoke that was building up in the car, Mr Miragliotta did so, using a rubber mallet, while the other man reached into the car and cut the passenger's seat belt. Mr Miragliotta helped remove the passenger from the car and walk to the side of the road. Mr Miragliotta then returned to the car and helped carry the female driver to the edge of the road. The car was subsequently destroyed by the fire and sadly the woman died from her injuries.

For his actions, Mr Miragliotta is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mrs Nicole Marie NEWELL,

25 Laurence Street, Manly, Whangaparaoa, Auckland, New Zealand

In the early hours of the morning of 15 December 2002, Mrs Newell went to the aid of a colleague who was being assaulted by a man at Toongabbie, New South Wales.

Mrs Newell and a male colleague were called to assist a girl with a broken finger at a residence in Toongabbie. When they arrived, Mrs Newell sat the injured girl in the ambulance. Two men then walked towards the ambulance yelling aggressively and one of them climbed into the ambulance. Mrs Newell and her colleague attempted to calm the man down, but he punched Mrs Newell's colleague, hit him over the head with a torch, kicked him when he was on the ground and verbally abused him. Mrs Newell held his head, which was bleeding from a head wound, and asked the attacker to leave him alone. The man resumed yelling abuse at the girl in the ambulance and Mrs Newell tried to radio for help. The man grabbed the radio from her and chased her out of the ambulance, again kicking the male ambulance officer. Mrs Newell attempted again to administer first aid to her colleague and to get him off the ground, but while she was doing so the man returned and repeatedly kicked the injured officer in the head. Mrs Newell and some bystanders put themselves between the injured man and his attacker who continued to be abusive. During the attack, Mrs Newell was pushed and kicked by the man while attempting to help her colleague. Police and other ambulance officers eventually arrived and the man fled.

For her actions, Mrs Newell is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mrs Mary Ann NICDAO, 54 Lalor Road, Quakers Hill NSW 2763

On the morning of 19 July 2003, Mrs Nicdao helped to apprehend an armed robber at a newsagency in Annandale, New South Wales.

Mrs Nicdao was working in a shop when she heard a male screaming for someone to call the police. With others from her shop, Mrs Nicdao went outside and saw the owner of the newsagency lying on the footpath holding another man to prevent him from leaving. She heard him say that the man had a gun. Mrs Nicdao and one of her colleagues helped restrain the man until the police arrived.

For her actions, Mrs Nicdao is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Brian Gregory NICHOLLS, 13 Chloris Crescent, Caulfield South Vic 3162

On the morning of 11 January 2005, Mr Nicholls helped an elderly woman trapped on a balcony during a house fire in Caulfield, Victoria.

Mr Nicholls, a builder, was driving to an appointment when he saw a first floor unit on fire and a distressed elderly woman trapped on the balcony. Mr Nicholls stopped and took a small extension ladder from his van. He found the six feet high gate to the premises locked, so he climbed over the fence, leaned his ladder against the balustrade, and climbed up onto the balcony. He attempted to get the woman to climb over the balustrade and go down the ladder but she was unable to do so because the ladder was too short. Mr Nicholls closed the balcony door to try to stop the smoke from flowing out but it continued to pour out of the windows and the heat was quite intense. He asked bystanders to get a wet blanket and when one arrived he put the woman into a corner of the balcony and covered her with it. He then remained with her offering comfort and reassurance until the fire brigade arrived.

For his actions, Mr Nicholls is commended for brave conduct.

Mr John NORTH,
84 Fulbrook Road, Wood End, Coventry CV2 1FL, England, United Kingdom

On the afternoon of 8 June 2005, Mr North helped rescue an injured man from a burning vehicle on the Bruce Highway north of Townsville, Queensland.

Mr North was with friends outside a café when they saw two vehicles collide on a nearby bridge. Mr North and his friend went to the scene and, as they approached, saw smoke and flames coming from the vehicles. They could see flames in the middle section of a campervan which was tilted onto its passenger side door, and immediately checked for occupants. They found an injured man trapped in the passenger seat, so Mr North's friend reached into the van through the broken windscreen and pulled the man through. Mr North then helped him to carry the man to a safe place away from the fire.

For his actions, Mr North is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Senior Constable Charles Thomas ORTLIPP, Northern Territory Police

On the evening of 31 December 2004, Senior Constable Ortlipp rescued two men after their boat sank in Buffalo Creek, Northern Territory.

At 8.20pm Senior Constable Ortlipp and a colleague were tasked to conduct a search for two men whose boat had sunk as it entered the mouth of Buffalo Creek. The two police officers took a dinghy with search and rescue equipment to the boat ramp at Buffalo Creek. They were hampered in launching the boat by the low tide but managed to do so at around 9.45pm. In heavy wind and rain, Senior Constable Ortlipp drove the boat while his colleague used the spotlight to guide him. Once beyond the mouth of the creek, the two police officers encountered swells between 2.5 and 3 metres and their visibility was severely hampered. At one point their dinghy was struck by a series of waves that partially filled the vessel and almost washed Senior Constable Ortlipp's colleague off the bow. They took shelter in a sandbar and reported conditions to police communications. Before heading back out, and while they waited for the rain to ease, they pumped water out of the dinghy. At about 11.45pm, Senior Constable Ortlipp and his colleague located the men clinging on to mangroves and were able to manoeuvre their boat close enough to pull the men on board. They returned through adverse conditions and brought the men to safety at the Buffalo Creek boat ramp.

For his actions, Senior Constable Ortlipp is commended for brave conduct.

Senior Constable Gregory Robert PAYNE, New South Wales Police

At around midnight on 10 April 2003, Senior Constable Payne helped rescue an unconscious man from a burning house at Tarro, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Payne and a fellow officer were patrolling the Pacific Highway at Heatherbrae when they were asked to respond to a house fire in Tarro. When they arrived they found the house well alight and fire fighters in attendance. Senior Constable Payne went to the rear of the house and was told by a colleague who was coming out of the building and evidently suffering from exposure to heat and smoke, that another police officer was still inside and needed help. Senior Constable Payne ran into the burning building and found the officer dragging an unconscious man down the hallway. He grabbed the man's hands and assisted the officer in removing him from the house. Once outside, he placed the man in the recovery position and sat with him until ambulance officers took over.

For his actions, Senior Constable Payne is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Sergeant Sean Francis PHILLIPS, New South Wales Police

On the afternoon of 22 June 2004, Sergeant Phillips used his own body to shield a victim from further gunshots at Warrawong, New South Wales.

Sergeant Phillips and two colleagues were called to attend a shooting incident in a residential area. They cordoned off the area with their police vehicle and were informed by a passerby that a man had been shot. Believing that the gunman was still armed and in a house 50 metres away and directly in line with the victim who was lying on the road, Sergeant Phillips directed his colleagues to take shelter behind a nearby tow truck and provide him with cover while he attended to the victim. He then placed himself between the wounded man and the house to shield the man from further gunfire. He remained there, providing reassurance, until more police officers arrived and positioned their vehicle to provide further protection.

For his actions, Sergeant Phillips is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Justin Paul TAYLOR, 4 Valetta Street, West Wollongong NSW 2500

On the afternoon of 1 January 2005, Mr Taylor took action to save members of his extended family when a boat exploded and caught fire on Lake Conjola, New South Wales.

Mr Taylor, an off-duty fire-fighter, was with a party of seven people from his family (three adults and four children) on a ski boat when it exploded. The explosion engulfed several of the party in flames and Mr Taylor himself sustained burns. In spite of this, he ensured members of the party were fitted with life jackets and assisted them to jump from the boat so they could swim to shore. He then jumped himself and started to swim before he realised that one of the children, a 3½-year-old boy, was still on the boat. Mr Taylor returned to the boat, removed the child and swam with him to safety.

For his actions, Mr Taylor is commended for brave conduct.

Mrs Elaine Norma TOWNSHEND, 211 Parramatta Road, Annandale NSW 2038

On the morning of 19 July 2003, Ms Townshend helped to apprehend an armed robber at a newsagency in Annandale, New South Wales.

Ms Townshend, owner of a bridal and wedding dress shop in Parramatta Road, was working in her store when she heard someone outside screaming for help. She went to look and saw the owner of a nearby newsagency wrestling with a man on the footpath. She heard him say that the man had a gun. She directed one of her employees to phone the police, then, with another employee, she went and assisted the newsagent by helping to restrain the man until police arrived.

For her actions, Ms Townshend is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mrs Gemma Kathleen TUNKS, 34 Turvey Crescent, St Georges Basin NSW 2540

On the afternoon of 4 April 1996, Mrs Tunks helped rescue a woman from a burning house in Merrylands, New South Wales.

Mrs Tunks was at home at around 1.30pm when she smelled smoke and, on investigating, saw thick black smoke and flames coming from a bedroom window in a neighbour's house. Knowing that a female occupant of the house was an invalid, Mrs Tunks ran back to her house screaming for help. She returned to the burning house where other neighbours were gathering and starting to organise hoses. Her uncle had entered the house through a smashed window, opened the front door and began searching for the female occupant. While her uncle was dragging the badly burned woman from the bedroom he collapsed into a coughing fit. Mrs Tunks and another neighbour entered the house and carried the woman out the front door where they were assisted by others in carrying her onto the front lawn. Mrs Tunks then helped to apply first aid to the woman until ambulance officers arrived. Sadly, after a month of medical treatment, the woman died from her injuries.

For her actions, Mrs Tunks is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Christopher Edwin WAINWRIGHT

43 Kendal Crescent, Wheeler Heights Qld 2097

On the morning of 17 June 2005, Mr Wainwright entered a burning townhouse in search of occupants in Sunnybank Hills in Queensland.

Mr Wainwright was driving along a road when he saw smoke in a nearby building. He drove to the building and discovered no emergency service personnel yet in attendance and the upper storey of a townhouse well alight. Two Energex workers who had been working nearby isolated the electricity supply to the building and broke down the front door with a sledgehammer. Mr Wainwright then entered the building with them and, in spite of thick smoke, intense heat and the risk of the building collapsing on them, searched for any occupants. They found a man and assisted him to exit by a side door and, after searching as far as they were able for any other occupants, left the building. The townhouse was destroyed in the fire.

For his actions, Mr Wainwright is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mrs Gail Patricia WALLACE-SMITH, 135 Bawtree Road, Leopold Vic 3224

On the morning of 19 November 2004, Mrs Wallace-Smith helped rescue a woman from a car in the Barwon River in Geelong, Victoria.

Mrs Wallace-Smith was walking her dog near Queen's Park Bridge when she saw a car floating in the middle of the river. She went to a small jetty where an older woman told her a man had managed to remove a female driver from the car but was now in need of help to get her to shore. Mrs Wallace-Smith swam out to the car fully clothed and helped the man to talk to the driver who was insisting that she wanted to go down with the car. Mrs Wallace-Smith and the man kept the woman afloat and talked to her for about ten minutes before they succeeded in convincing her to let them swim her back to the shore. There she again refused to leave the water and Mrs Wallace-Smith and the man remained with her in the mud and chest deep water among the reeds until police arrived and helped them to drag her onto the bank.

For her actions, Mrs Wallace-Smith is commended for brave conduct.

Senior Constable Gary Bernard WENCK, Northern Territory Police

On the evening of 31 December 2004, Senior Constable Wenck rescued two men after their boat sank in Buffalo Creek, Northern Territory.

At 8.20pm Senior Constable Wenck and a colleague were tasked to conduct a search for two men whose boat had sunk as it entered the mouth of Buffalo Creek. The two police officers took a dinghy with search and rescue equipment to the boat ramp at Buffalo Creek. They were hampered in launching the boat by the low tide but managed to do so at around 9.45pm. In heavy wind and rain Senior Constable Wenck used the spotlight to guide them while his colleague drove the boat. Once beyond the mouth of the creek, the two police officers encountered swells between 2.5 and 3 metres and their visibility was severely hampered. At one point their dinghy was struck by a series of waves that partially filled the vessel and almost washed Senior Constable Wenck off the bow. They took shelter in a sandbar and reported conditions to police communications. Before heading back out, and while they waited for the rain to ease, they pumped water out of the dinghy. At about 11.45pm, Senior Constable Wenck and his colleague located the men clinging on to mangroves and were able to manoeuvre their boat close enough to pull the men on board. They returned through adverse conditions and brought the men to safety at the Buffalo Creek boat ramp.

For his actions, Senior Constable Wenck is commended for brave conduct.

Mr David Parry WILLIAMS, Wandana Heights Vic 3216

Details not available at the request of Mr Williams.