

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Senior Constable William Robert ATWOOD, Queensland Police

Senior Constable William Atwood displayed considerable bravery during the attempted rescue of a man in Bowen, Queensland on 12 December 2015.

In the early evening, a triple 0 call was received from a man who said that his home unit was full of gas and he was threatening to ignite it. Senior Constable Atwood, then a Constable, and another officer were despatched to the block of home units.

On reaching the front door of the man's unit, the officers detected the smell and sound of gas being released from a cylinder inside the unit. Senior Constable Atwood and his colleague issued verbal commands to the man to turn off the gas and come outside.

With the man refusing to leave the unit, Senior Constable Atwood forced entry by kicking the front door and the officers entered. Without warning, a large explosion occurred, and Senior Constable Atwood and his colleague were thrown backwards by the force.

Regaining their feet, and despite their injuries, Senior Constable Atwood's colleague then re-entered the unit telling the man to get out as fire began to take hold. Due to the heat the officer had to exit the unit. Senior Constable Atwood then re-entered the unit to remove the man, but also had to leave.

Both officers then evacuated the other units in the complex. The badly injured man emerged from the unit and was taken to hospital for treatment, but sadly, he did not survive his injuries.

Senior Constable Atwood and his colleague were also taken to hospital and treated for second degree burns caused by the explosion.

Sergeant Clint William DREW, Queensland Police

Sergeant Clint Drew displayed considerable bravery during the rescue of people from a burning vehicle on Palm Island, Queensland on 27 December 2017.

At about 6.30am, a vehicle containing three people collided with a power pole and burst into flames. The vehicle had been severely damaged, trapping the occupants inside. Sergeant Drew, then a Senior Constable, and other officers arrived at the scene and approached the burning vehicle.

Sergeant Drew approached the vehicle and, together with another officer, managed to free one of the occupants through the rear window, and remove him to a safe distance. He then called for bystanders who had gathered to source water to help douse the growing flames.

He returned to the vehicle to assist another officer who was trying to remove the two remaining occupants trapped by crumpled vehicle panels. They worked together in an attempt to extricate one of the occupants, but he was unable to be freed from the wreckage. Sergeant Drew and the other officer were then directed to move away from the vehicle as the flames and smoke were intensifying.

Emergency services arrived and extinguished the flames. Sergeant Drew assisted with the removal of the remaining two occupants and all three occupants were taken to the hospital for treatment. Sadly, one of the occupants died at the scene.

Sergeant Drew also proceeded to the hospital where he was treated for smoke inhalation.

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Senior Constable Dylan Michael MAESTRI, Queensland Police

Senior Constable Dylan Maestri displayed considerable bravery during the rescue of people from a burning vehicle on Palm Island, Queensland on 27 December 2017.

At about 6.30am, a vehicle containing three people collided with a power pole and burst into flames. The vehicle had been severely damaged, trapping the occupants inside. Senior Constable Dylan Maestri, then a Constable, and other officers arrived at the scene and approached the burning vehicle.

Senior Constable Maestri alerted other emergency services and requested their attendance. He approached the vehicle and, together with another officer, managed to free one of the occupants through the rear window, and remove him to a safe distance.

He noticed another occupant in the front of the vehicle who was unresponsive. He attempted to remove the person but they were trapped by crumpled vehicle panels.

Another officer then joined him and they worked together in an attempt to extricate the other occupant, but he was also unable to be freed from the wreckage. Senior Constable Maestri and the other officer were then directed to move away from the vehicle as the flames and smoke were intensifying.

Emergency services arrived and extinguished the flames. Senior Constable Maestri assisted with the removal of the remaining two occupants and all three occupants were taken to the hospital for treatment. Sadly, one of the occupants died at the scene.

Senior Constable Maestri also proceeded to the hospital where he was treated for smoke inhalation.

Senior Constable Daniel Peter MURPHY, Western Australia Police

Senior Constable Daniel Murphy displayed considerable bravery during the rescue of a person from a burning vehicle in Margaret River, Western Australia on 6 July 2019.

Just after midnight, Senior Constable Daniel Murphy, then a First Class Constable, and another officer were on patrol when they came across a vehicle that had crashed into a tree on Wallcliffe Road. The vehicle was on fire and there was an unconscious male trapped in the vehicle.

Senior Constable Murphy and the other officer attempted to extricate the driver but, due to the intense heat and smoke, they were forced back.

With flames consuming the vehicle, and the imminent danger of an explosion from burning petrol, both officers made several attempts to remove the trapped man. They were eventually able to release the man's legs and drag him from the burning vehicle. Moments later, the vehicle exploded.

Emergency services arrived and conveyed the driver, who had suffered serious burns, by rescue helicopter to hospital in Perth.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Senior Constable Kimberley Jayne MURPHY, Queensland Police

Senior Constable Kimberley Murphy displayed considerable bravery during the attempted rescue of a man in Bowen, Queensland on 12 December 2015.

In the early evening, a triple 0 call was received from a man who said that his home unit was full of gas and he was threatening to ignite it. Senior Constable Murphy, then a Constable, and another officer were despatched to the block of home units.

On reaching the front door of the man's unit, the officers detected the smell and sound of gas being released from a cylinder inside the unit. Senior Constable Murphy and her colleague issued verbal commands to the man to turn off the gas and come outside.

With the man refusing to leave the unit, Senior Constable Murphy's colleague forced entry and the officers went inside. Without warning, a large explosion occurred, and Senior Constable Murphy and her colleague were thrown backwards by the force.

Regaining their feet, and despite their injuries, Senior Constable Murphy re-entered the unit telling the man to get out as fire began to take hold. Due to the heat, Senior Constable Murphy had to exit the unit. The other officer then re-entered the unit, but also had to leave.

Both officers then evacuated the other units in the complex. The badly injured man emerged from the unit and was taken to hospital for treatment, but sadly, he did not survive his injuries.

Senior Constable Murphy and her colleague were also taken to hospital and treated for second degree burns caused by the explosion. She was later airlifted to Townsville hospital for further treatment.

Senior Constable Andrew Christopher SLEE, Western Australia Police

Senior Constable Andrew Slee displayed considerable bravery during the rescue of a person from a burning vehicle in Margaret River, Western Australia on 6 July 2019.

Just after midnight, Senior Constable Andrew Slee and another officer were on patrol when they came across a vehicle that had crashed into a tree on Wallcliffe Road. The vehicle was on fire and there was an unconscious male trapped in the vehicle.

Senior Constable Slee and the other officer attempted to extricate the driver but, due to the intense heat and smoke, they were forced back.

With flames consuming the vehicle, and the imminent danger of an explosion from burning petrol, both officers made several attempts to remove the trapped man. They were eventually able to release the man's legs and drag him from the burning vehicle. Moments later, the vehicle exploded.

Emergency services arrived and conveyed the driver, who had suffered serious burns, by rescue helicopter to hospital in Perth.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Sergeant Martin STAGG

Sergeant Martin Stagg displayed considerable bravery during the rescue of a person from treacherous surf at Stockton Beach near Newcastle, New South Wales on 26 March 2016.

In the early evening, Army Sergeant Martin Stagg was exercising on Stockton Beach when he was approached by a concerned couple who advised a woman had been missing in the water for 20 minutes.

Sergeant Stagg approached and spoke to the missing woman's distressed husband. On scanning the horizon the woman was located about 300 metres from shore, and caught in a strong rip.

Despite the hazardous conditions, including 2 metre high waves, Sergeant Stagg entered the water and began to swim to the woman. After swimming for 10 minutes he reached the exhausted woman, who was now about 500 metres from the shore.

He held the woman in his arms and began to swim back to shore. After 15 minutes of swimming he reached the safety of the beach and helped the woman to a vehicle while they waited for an ambulance.

Mr Roland TAN, SA

Mr Roland Tan displayed considerable bravery during the rescue of a group of girls from treacherous surf at Glenelg Beach, South Australia on 10 December 2017.

At about 5.30pm, Mr Tan was on the beach at Glenelg with family members when a distressed man approached him asking for assistance. The man pointed out to sea where Mr Tan noticed arms flailing in the water.

Mr Tan entered the water and swam towards the distressed swimmers who were located past the end of the breakwater where the tide was high and water rough. As he approached he could see five girls - one floating face down, two close by and two a little further out.

Mr Tan reached out and attempted to grab two of the girls, the second of whom lunged and climbed onto him, forcing him under the water. When he re-surfaced, he grabbed one of the girls by the arm and swam back to shore where he was assisted by other members of the public to drag her onto the beach.

Shortly after, three of the swimmers were rescued with the assistance of surf lifesavers and others.

Sadly, the body of the remaining swimmer was not recovered until the next morning.

BRAVERY MEDAL (BM)

Mr Anthony WALKER, Seven Hills NSW 2147

Mr Anthony Walker displayed considerable bravery during the rescue of a man from difficult seas near Broome, Western Australia on 12 November 2018.

At about 2pm, Mr Anthony Walker became aware of a man struggling in deep water at Gantheaume Point Cliffs in Broome, Western Australia. The man had jumped off the high cliffs and was unable to swim back to the rock face. Waves were breaking over him and he was struggling to keep his head above water as the current swept him out to sea.

Mr Walker jumped into the surging water and swam 150 metres to the distressed swimmer and helped to keep him afloat. They were not able to make any headway to return to the shore due to the heavy swell and were tiring.

At this time, police officers arrived at the scene and two swam out to Mr Walker and the distressed swimmer to assist. Another officer located a stand-up paddle board and also made his way out to the group. Mr Walker, the distressed swimmer, and the officers were able to cling to the paddle board to stay afloat, until local sea rescue vessels arrived and returned them to shore.

Mr Walker is also receiving a Group Bravery Citation for this incident.