

EMERGENCY SERVICES MEDAL (ESM)

NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr Graeme Charles CRAIG, 18/14 Maxim Street, West Ryde NSW 2114

Mr Craig joined the Ryde Unit of the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) in 1993. He immediately demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities which resulted in his appointment to the role of Liaison Officer within his first nine months. He also began training other volunteers in the Basic Rescue skills early in his service, and further developed his skills as a trainer and certified as a nationally recognised Trainer and Assessor. Mr Craig continues to instruct volunteers in the disciplines of General Rescue, operation of Communications Equipment and working in an Operations Centre, and assists the State Training Team with the delivery of the SES Team Leaders course. For the past 10 years, he has served with distinction at all levels of the local Unit, and his skills and determination led to his appointment of Local Controller in 1996. His dedication to the community of Ryde as the Local Controller for Ryde SES has been unquestionable. In recognition of his community service, Mr Craig was awarded the Ryde Young Citizen of the Year in 1997 and was again recognised for his outstanding service by Ryde Council during the International Year of the Volunteer in 2001. In 2004, he was awarded the NSW SES Director General's Commendation.

Mrs Grace Marjorie MATTS, 176 William Street, Bankstown NSW 2200

At the instigation of the NSW Police, members of the Sydney Speleological community set about to form a specialist cave rescue unit in 1974. Mrs Matts was one of the Foundation members of the NSW Cave Rescue Squad which affiliated with the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA) in 1975. While cave rescues requiring a high level of technical support are relatively rare, Mrs Matts has been involved in a number of such operations during her distinguished service, including significant rescues at Jenolan Caves (which she coordinated in conjunction with the Police Rescue Squad), at Bungonia Caves, and a rescue at Black Hands Cave near Lithgow. Mrs Matts was instrumental in the development and delivery of extensive cave rescue training conducted by the NSW Cave Rescue Squad to police, State Emergency Service, ambulance, etc. This training enabled local general rescue units to handle the more routine cave rescue operations. Mrs Matts has been the VRA Treasurer and a member of the VRA Executive since 1982, and has supported a number of major rescue operations conducted by VRA affiliates and assisted them with a wide range of general financial and administrative issues. Mrs Matts also serves the international cave rescue community as Vice-President of the Cave Rescue Commission of the International Union of Speleology.

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Mr Craig James RONAN, 14 Alamein Walk, Bathurst NSW 2795

Mr Ronan joined the (then) Mitchell Division of the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) in 1988 and quickly became an active and vital member of that team. He undertook all the training courses available at the time and advanced through various ranks until he became the Volunteer Division Controller for the (then) Central West Division in 1992. During his tenure as the Division Controller he developed the headquarters and the local units in his area to become one of the leading and most competent Divisions. He created a cohesive team of full-time and volunteer staff and continues to work closely with the rest of the SES to contribute innovative and constructive ideas, as well as loyally supporting the ideals and principles of the Service. Mr Ronan was a Foundation Member of the State Emergency Service Volunteers Association (SESVA) and, after three years as a delegate, was the first elected President. During his tenure as President he oversaw the increase of membership and the development of SESVA's first strategic plan which is still the foundation of many of the activities of the Association today. Additionally, he developed a number of funding processes that helped to establish the Association's financial security. Mr Ronan has always been ready to respond to the challenges of managing serious operations when emergencies or major incidents occur.

Ms Kim SALTON, 35 Schardt Street, Captains Flat NSW 2623

Ms Salton joined the Captains Flat SES Unit in 1997 and has since served as a team member, team leader and unit trainer. She was initially appointed as an Acting Unit Controller in March 1999 and was confirmed in that position in September 2000. She remains in this position today. The Captains Flat SES Unit under Ms Salton's leadership is a strong and active organisation and is well regarded for their work in this small community. The unit membership has consistently been maintained throughout her highly effective leadership in readily winning the respect of those who work around her. Through her personal example and selfless commitment, Ms Salton is able to generate enthusiastic participation in unit activities and the maintenance of high standards in training, administration and operations. The Captains Flat SES Unit has provided much vital assistance to communities in the region during storms, flash floods and bushfires, and also provides First Aid and Land Search capabilities to the community. In recent years, Ms Salton was selected to lead Southern Highlands Region Task Forces for out-of-area storm response assistance in Sydney, Wollongong and Nowra. She proved to be an effective leader and operations manager during these deployments. Additionally, she and her unit members deployed to assist to fight bushfires in the Australian Capital Territory in 2001 and 2003 and to fight the fires which affected most of the Southern Highlands region during the summer of 2003. Ms Salton provided outstanding leadership.

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Mr Steven Garry STRANKS, 61 Horsley Road, Revesby NSW 2212

Mr Stranks has given exemplary service to the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association (AVCGA) as Squadron Administration Commodore and Secretary of the NSW State Council. In these positions, his contribution to the efficient management of marine rescue has been invaluable. Throughout his 27 years' service with the AVCGA, Mr Stranks has given his personal time to assist all formations throughout the Squadron when needed, involving many hours in both assistance and travel well beyond the duties required of his position. His assistance has been given freely, without complaint, and exemplifies his outstanding character and personal dedication to the continued success of both the AVCGA and Volunteer Marine Rescue.

Mr Wilfred John THOMPSON, 1/59 The Peninsula, Corlette NSW 2315

Mr Thompson is currently operational with the Port Stephens Division of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol. His career in the Coastal Patrol began in 1968 when he joined Broken Bay Division and he has since performed many roles of significance, including Divisional Commander of Broken Bay, Divisional Commander of Port Stephens, AND Regional Captain North, which at the time included the coastline from the Hawkesbury River to Tweed Heads and all of Queensland. Mr Thompson was Deputy Officer Commanding from 1983 to 1995 and then became the Flag Officer Commanding until 1997. He was then a director of the Coastal Patrol for three years, and a member of many committees. Mr Thompson epitomises the skill, dedication and generosity in personal time, effort and expense of the emergency service volunteer.

VICTORIA

Mrs Gayle Maree HUGHES, 290 Hughes Lane, Eurobin Vic 3739

Mrs Hughes has provided outstanding and consistent service to the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) and the wider community for over 16 years. She is an exceptional and dedicated person who has been a leader in a range of activities. Mrs Hughes has been a key player in the training of volunteers in the necessary skills to allow them to carry out the functional activities of VICSES in an operational context to the highest possible standard. Her knowledge base of training and management and how to apply it effectively is legendary. Her tireless and continuing efforts to achieve excellence in training and operational activities have earned her the respect of not only VICSES but also other emergency service organisations.

EMERGENCY SERVICES MEDAL (ESM)

Mr Murray Vincent KELSON, 47 Mitchell Street, Cobden Vic 3266

Mr Kelson has served the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) and the wider community with distinction for in excess of 28 years. He is an exceptional and dedicated person who has consistently displayed leadership in a wide range of activities. Mr Kelson has been a stalwart in his community through VICSES, Apex and bushwalking organisations. His tireless and continuing efforts to achieve excellence in operational activities have earned him the respect of not only VICSES but also other emergency service organisations.

QUEENSLAND

Mr Graeme Andrew CHEAL BM, 145 Clarkes Road, Beerwah Qld 4519

Mr Cheal has provided outstanding service to the Queensland State Emergency Service/Emergency Management Queensland and to the Glass House Mountains community. He has been involved in rescues from the Glass House Mountains since he was a young man, initially with friends then later as a member of Scouting Queensland, which had the responsibility for vertical rescue activities at that time. Since 1980, Mr Cheal has been a member of the Queensland State Emergency Service Glass House Mountains Group. He was appointed Group Leader in 1983, a position he still holds. His outstanding leadership qualities and dedication to the community are evident in the stability of the Group, high quality of training standards, members' camaraderie, inter-agency training and commitment to community support activities in the Glass House Mountains area. Through his dedication and courageous and inspirational leadership, Mr Cheal has established the Group as a leader in 'on mountain' rescue and inter-agency vertical rescue operations. In addition, under his leadership, the Group has actively supported the Queensland Cancer fundraising campaign for over 23 years.

Mr Wayne Douglas COUTTS, PO Box 242, Cairns Qld 4870

Mr Coutts has been a State Emergency Service (SES) volunteer in Queensland for over 30 years. He has progressed from volunteer in the Malanda SES, to District Training Officer, to Operations Officer, to District Manager, and to Regional Director of Emergency Management Queensland for the Far Northern Region. Throughout, he has taken training to an extremely high level. As a volunteer he ensured that the District Support Unit delivered quality training and he also built up the capability of fellow trainers and volunteers. Mr Coutts has also worked with the Regional Planning and Coordination Team to ensure that Queensland communities have an emergency service that is effective and efficient and will meet the needs of their community. His exceptional leadership skills have ensured the Far Northern Region sets the standard in many fields. He led the way during the response and recovery efforts around Cyclone Larry and ensured that the communities were responded to effectively by the emergency services and through Disaster Management Groups, a whole of government approach.

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Mr Douglas William LADNER, 8 Kehl Street, Ingham Qld 4850

Mr Ladner is currently the Local Controller, Hinchinbrook Shire State Emergency Service (SES), Ingham, and was also a Foundation Member of the Ingham Cadet Unit formed in 1995. He has served as the Chairman of the Local Cadet Advisory Committee. During his long term as a dedicated member of the SES in Ingham, Mr Ladner has led his team of volunteers in responding to many flooding events, organised rescues from these floods, and coordinated the rotary wing response to the many rescues, re-supplies and inspections of the flooded communities in his area of responsibility. Mr Ladner also continues to participate in the Ingham Cadet Unit by providing training assistance and completes the administration for the Unit. He is one of the senior Local Controllers in the Northern Region and sets a fine example for others to follow in his dealings with members of his unit, his local government and Emergency Management Queensland. All these aspects exemplify Mr Ladner's outstanding commitment to his fellow citizens.

Mr Peter John SMITH, 25 Townsend Street, Brighton Qld 4017

Mr Smith joined the Redcliffe Flotilla of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard in 1985, and undertook training in all available courses. He rose through various operational positions to become an Offshore Skipper, taking command of the primary rescue vessel. Mr Smith also undertook many support and administrative roles including appointment as Flotilla Staff Officer, and was elected to the position of Deputy Flotilla Commander in 1987. In 1991 he readily accepted appointment to the newly created position on the Queensland State Council of the Association where he undertook many projects and tasks which have greatly benefited the Association and the boating public of Queensland. In the training field, Mr Smith has been the State Training Registrar and was an integral member of the team that introduced Competency Based Training and the TDM package to Coast Guard operations. Mr Smith is currently the State Manager, with the rank of Administration Commodore, a position he has undertaken on a dedicated and full-time basis since 1994. In addition to his Coast Guard commitments Mr Smith serves on many committees, including the Emergency Services Advisory Committee and the Emergency Services Cadet Steering Committee.

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Mr Keith Irwin SHADBOLT, 38 Belhus Drive, Trigg WA 6029

Mr Shadbolt has displayed a passion for the marine environment throughout his career, both from a search and rescue perspective, and from an ecological point of view. He was instrumental in establishing Volunteer Marine Rescue Shark Bay and continues to take a keen interest in the group's activities. His ongoing interest in marine rescue led him to become the State President of the Volunteer Marine Rescue Association of Western Australia, giving him the opportunity to continue the revitalisation and relevancy of the Association for all Volunteer Marine Rescue Groups throughout Western Australia. In this position he has contributed significantly to the overall direction of marine rescue in Western Australia by assisting in the reunification of the two Volunteer Marine Rescue Associations. He also made a substantial contribution, as a member of the steering committee, to the inaugural statewide Volunteer Marine Rescue Conference that was acknowledged by Volunteer Marine Rescue Groups, the Western Australia Police Service and local industry as a huge success. Mr Shadbolt recently retired from the position of Deputy Chair of the Volunteer Marine Rescue Service Consultative Committee.

Ms Joyce Mary WHITE, 61 Lullfitz Drive, Broome WA 6725

Ms White is a long serving member of the Broome State Emergency Service and her outstanding contribution to the communities in the Broome area and West Kimberley Region is immeasurable. Her quiet and well-spoken manner encourages the best from people. She believes that all Fire and Emergency Service Authority (FESA) staff and volunteers must act in a professional manner at all times, and her self discipline and initiative in maintaining her own professionalism encourages others to follow. Ms White has a remarkable affinity with people, particularly with young people, and is always supportive and encouraging. As a well loved primary teacher for many years, now retired, she has become a well respected member within the Broome community and is greatly liked by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people alike. Ms White's community service has been recognised by the presentation of the James E Richardson Award (Lionesses) and the Boulevard Community Contributors Award, and she was also selected to represent Broome as a torch bearer for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Ms White has made an outstanding contribution and has served with distinction in promoting the FESA in the West Kimberley Region.

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mr Roger Kenneth MURDOCH, Warooka SA 5577

Mr Murdoch has been a Founding Member of the Warooka Unit of the South Australian State Emergency Service (SASES) since 1969. He was appointed as Deputy Unit Manager in 1997 and then Unit Manager in 1999. Under his outstanding leadership the Warooka Unit has obtained a high standard of service delivery and training, allowing the Unit to meet broad operation requirements. Mr Murdoch was instrumental in the acquisition of vehicles and the development of buildings and extensions. His involvement in the coordination and promotion of SASES with other emergency service organisations ensures that effective inter-service relationships are developed, in turn providing a holistic approach to community safety. Mr Murdoch consistently trains to improve his own skills and knowledge and has excelled in vertical rescue. He has also devoted many hours to the training and development of other members throughout South Australia.

TASMANIA

Mr Paul Sidney DARBY, 90 Purtons Road, North Motton Tas 7315

Mr Darby was employed as a permanent officer with the Tasmanian State Emergency Service (SES) for 13 years, originally in Hobart then in the North West Region as a Training Officer; unfortunately, for health reasons he had to take early retirement. He remains, however, an active volunteer with the Central Coast SES Unit and, until recently, acting as the Manager of the Regional Search and Rescue Team. He is a qualified Trainer/Assessor and assists regional staff on a regular basis with training duties and assessments. His experience and counsel are often sought, and very much valued. Mr Darby has acted with distinction as a team leader in countless search and rescue operations in some of the remotest parts of Tasmania. He epitomises the volunteer ethos; he always responds to requests for assistance, contributes to the workings of the SES, and never seeks reward apart from the personal satisfaction of knowing the task at hand has been completed effectively and successfully.

EMERGENCY SERVICES MEDAL (ESM)

Mr Claus WILKENS, Blue Rocks, Flinders Island Tas 7255

Mr Wilkens is a tireless, competent and extremely dedicated member of the emergency service community on Flinders Island, an area he has been involved in for many years. He has diligently served as a volunteer with the Tasmanian State Emergency Service (SES) since 1989 and as the Unit Manager of his unit since 1997. More recently he extended his contribution to the community by joining the Tasmanian Ambulance Service where he has been an accredited member since 2003. Mr Wilkens has attended every call out the Flinders Island SES has had to respond to since 1989. His operational dedication also extends to roles traditionally performed by other services; for example, major bushfires. He provides the nucleus and direction for the Flinders SES Unit, and his outstanding enthusiasm for the service has been primarily responsible for the unit's continued operation. He regularly attends Unit Manager meetings, and is never backward in calling either Council, regional staff, SES executives or political representatives in an attempt to further the cause of the emergency service volunteers. He also regularly attends Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee meetings and is a solid support for the Local Coordinator on Flinders Island.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Mr Graham Gary IBLE, 19 Seymour Place, Kambah ACT 2902

Mr Ible has demonstrated a passion and commitment to serving the community of the Australian Capital Territory through the ACT State Emergency Service (SES) since 1988. Initially he was instrumental in establishing a quality training system within a Unit of some 60 members and, due to his significant military service, imparted much of his operational and technical expertise to all members. Following a military posting to New South Wales, he returned to the ACT and gained full-time employment with the SES as the Operations Officer. He has brought to that role a depth of SES operational and technical expertise that is highly valued and which he willingly imparts to the volunteers. He regularly sacrifices much of his own time to organise, participate in and assess volunteer training activities that allow members to gain nationally recognised accreditation. Mr Ible has also organised numerous on-the-job training exercises and simulations for local Units, coordinated SES involvement in national counter-terrorism exercises, improved the operational preparedness and capability of the SES through the development of protocols and procedures, designed and assisted in the implementation of technical information communications technology into the SES, and developed the capability of the emergency services across the ACT. Mr Ible is extremely well regarded by the volunteers and staff of the SES due to his personable nature and willingness to assist the volunteers regardless of the circumstance. His effective communication and negotiation skills allow him to resolve issues of concern or complaint at the volunteer level. He provides sound advice and assistance across the Department during any form of emergency and is regularly contacted by other members of staff in relation to their operational challenges.