

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Nicholas ATKINS, 12 Loch Street, Yarraville Vic 3013

On 22 September 2003, Nicholas Atkins assisted his mother who was injured by flying debris during a severe storm at Kerang, Victoria.

Nicholas Atkins, then aged 15, was visiting a friend's country property with his mother and young sister. A severe windstorm moved across the property tearing corrugated iron from the roof of the house. A section of the flying debris struck Nicholas' mother, knocking her to the ground, causing severe head injuries and serious lacerations to her upper body. The property owner dragged Nicholas' mother back into the house where her son made her comfortable. Despite the distress of seeing his mother so badly injured, Nicholas remained calm, calling emergency services. He then returned out into the storm, waiting in the dangerous conditions at the highway to direct the ambulance officers to the unmarked property. Before they could arrive, he flagged down passing motorists who raced to the house where vital first aid was administered. Although alarmed for his mother's condition, Nicholas remained at the highway in the storm until emergency services arrived. He then returned to the house and kept watch over his young sister while his mother was being treated before being taken by ambulance to hospital.

For his actions, Nicholas is commended for brave conduct.

Senior Constable Martin Graham CLIFTON, South Australia Police

On 16 July 2006, Constable (now Senior Constable) Clifton rescued a man from waters off Port Noarlunga, South Australia.

During gale force winds and inclement weather, a young child had been blown off a jetty into the water at Port Noarlunga. The child's father entered the water and was able to bring the boy close to shore where he was assisted by a bystander. While his son was rescued, the strong current hampered the father's ability to get out of the water and he was being swept away from the jetty. Constable Clifton arrived at the scene, and was advised from police communications that the child's father was a poor swimmer and was being swept out to sea. The victim could be seen in the distance trying to keep his head above water and was pleading for help. Realising that every minute was critical; Constable Clifton instinctively attempted a rescue. He removed most of his clothing, tied a rope to his waist with the assistance of a bystander and swam out into the ocean until he located the disoriented man who was exhausted and unable to support himself against the strong current. With the assistance of the rope which had been hauled from the shore, he was able to swim while supporting the man back to land where he helped make the victim warm and comfortable until first aid could be administered.

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

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Ms Helen Elizabeth CONDIE, 12 Nurla Avenue, Little Bay NSW 2036

On the afternoon of 27 March 2002, Ms Condie assisted police officers who were attempting to apprehend armed offenders at Hillsdale, New South Wales.

Ms Condie stopped her vehicle in a suburban street where she witnessed police struggling to detain two armed offenders who were attempting to escape in a stolen vehicle. The offenders' vehicle suddenly reversed and collided into Ms Condie's stationary car, barring their escape. Ms Condie left her vehicle and ran towards one of the police officers who was attempting to disarm an offender in the car ahead. A gun was thrown from the vehicle and, despite the volatile situation Ms Condie had the presence of mind to offer assistance to the officer. She called "Triple 0" and ran back to her car to warn another motorist to head away from the danger. She remained in the vicinity until the arrival of police reinforcements.

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

Mr Michael William FRANCIS, Windsor NSW 2756

On the evening of 20 July 2004, Mr Francis assisted in restraining an armed offender at licenced premises, Windsor, New South Wales.

Mr Francis, the manager of the licenced premises, was attending to paperwork when he was verbally confronted by an offender armed with a gun. As they moved into the gaming area the offender ordered Mr Francis to lie face down on the floor. Shortly afterwards he was removed at gunpoint towards the hotel safe in another area of the premises. During a commotion in the gaming area, Mr Francis was returned to the room, his neck in a head lock and a gun pointed at his temple. A shot was discharged into the floor and two off-duty detectives charged the gunman. Mr Francis, who was sandwiched between the gunman and one of the officers, tried to grab the gun. They continued to struggle and a second shot was fired. Mr Francis assisted the officers to subdue the offender who was then restrained until police reinforcements arrived at the scene.

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

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Ms Parinda KRAIWIT,

19/92 Soi Satreewittaya 2 School Ladprow, Bangkok 10230, Thailand

On the afternoon of 25 December 2004, Ms Parinda Kraiwit went to the rescue of a woman struggling in water at Mackenzie Falls, The Grampians, Victoria.

Ms Kraiwit was visiting the Mackenzie Falls area with friends when she saw a woman struggling to keep afloat after slipping into a hazardous rock pool. There were frantic calls at the water's edge from family and friends as several swimmers were in distress or appeared to have drowned. Although not an experienced swimmer, Ms Kraiwit acted promptly, removed some of her clothing and jumped into the water. Against a strong undertow current, she managed to swim to the female and drag her back to the bank. With the assistance of some bystanders she was able to get the woman up on to the rocks and administer first aid. As a result of her efforts, the victim survived. Sadly four other people drowned in the incident.

For her actions, Mr Kraiwit is commended for brave conduct.

Constable Mathew Thomas McDOUGALL, New South Wales Police

On the morning of 26 July 2006, Constable McDougall assisted in the rescue of a boy trapped in a house fire at Kingswood, New South Wales.

Constable McDougall went to investigate smoke billowing from a two storey townhouse and was informed that a child was trapped in an upstairs bedroom. He attempted to access the upper level of the house from the ground floor but was forced to retreat because of the intensity of flames, heat and thick smoke. Searching for alternative access, Constable McDougall climbed onto the upper level exterior of the house with the assistance of an off-duty fire officer who had arrived. Crawling across the roof on his hands and knees Constable McDougall checked on the condition of the boy's mother who was crouching outside the room where her son was believed to be trapped. Constable McDougall remained on the roof and smashed the window of the burning room. He leaned through the opening to move obstacles out of the way to help the off-duty fire officer gain better access. Constable McDougall remained in position, supporting the fireman's retrieval of the child from the burning room. Constable McDougall then lowered the child to waiting medical assistance.

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

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Constable Rob McMAHON, New South Wales Police

On the morning of 16 January 2005, Constable McMahon assisted in the rescue of a man trapped in a house fire at Koonawarra, New South Wales.

Constable McMahon and a colleague responded to a call to a unit fire and on arrival they were informed that a person was still inside the burning home. The fire was well advanced and smoke was billowing from the building. With only wet towels for protection, Constable McMahon and his colleague entered the unit. Visibility was zero because of thick, black smoke. Constable McMahon advanced further into the burning unit to support his colleague. Fearing for the life of his companion who was attempting to find the victim and alarmed that he may have become disoriented, Constable McMahon repeatedly yelled out his position. By doing so he was able to guide his colleague to an exit from inside the house and together they dragged the man to safety. Constable McMahon provided emergency first aid to the victim until ambulance officers arrived.

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

Mr Robert Allen MATULICK, Leigh Creek SA 5731

On 16 July 2006, Mr Matulick assisted in the rescue of a young boy from the waters of Port Noarlunga, South Australia.

During gale force winds and very cold weather, Mr Matulick saw that a child had been blown from a jetty into choppy seas at Port Noarlunga. The young boy was clearly panicking in the water although his father had jumped from the jetty to rescue him. Mr Matulick responded to the father's calls for help. Leaving his own family on the jetty Mr Matulick jumped into the water and swam towards the man and boy who had now been dragged much further from shore by the strong current. Mr Matulick reached the victims and was able to retrieve the boy. Although almost overcome by exhaustion in the rough conditions Mr Matulick was able to grab hold of fishing line and rope thrown out to him by onlookers and swim the child back to safety.

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

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Mr Aaron James SCOTT, Willunga SA 5172

In January 2006, Mr Scott attempted to save his father after a sailing misadventure at Lake Alexandrina, South Australia.

Whilst sailing their trimaran on Lake Alexandrina, blustery conditions sprang up in the late afternoon and the vessel began to break up and eventually submerge. Mr Scott and his father managed to cling to the upturned hull. Diving under the boat and retrieving a rope, Mr Scott tied himself to his father for mutual safety. Both men were now in shock, shivering constantly and becoming exhausted trying to resist the high winds and cold water. At this point they decided to swim away from the boat hoping to make land. They drifted and swam for most of the night. During the ordeal, Mr Scott's father was showing clear signs of distress and exhaustion. Mr Scott continued to rally his father's spirits. With the onset of sunrise Mr Scott was still swimming towards land, supporting his father who was by now quite disoriented. Despite his own advanced state of exhaustion, Mr Scott continued to tow his father, eventually making it into the reedy shoreline. Distressed by the significant deterioration in his father's physical condition, Mr Scott tried to make him as comfortable as possible before setting off on foot to find assistance. After stumbling through difficult terrain for hours, stopping occasionally to regain his strength, Mr Scott finally located a property owner who alerted emergency services. Sadly, Mr Scott's father died as a result of the incident.

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

Mr Robert Angus SCOTT, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand

On the afternoon of 25 December 2004, Mr Scott attempted to save the lives of several people trapped in a rock pool at Mackenzie Falls, The Grampians, Victoria.

Whilst visiting Mackenzie Falls, Mr Scott was alerted by the frantic calls of a family group concerned about several people in a rock pool who appeared to be drowning. Mr Scott plunged into the water in an attempt to locate the victims. He found the men who were, by this time, submerged. He dragged one of the victims to the bank of the rock pool and into the care of onlookers. He swam out into the pool again towards the other victim and was forced to dive a metre or two under the water as a strong current was pulling the victim down and towards a waterfall. Despite his exhaustion, Mr Scott managed to grab the man and swim back to the banks where distressed family members tried to resuscitate the victims until emergency services arrived. Sadly, as a result of the tragedy, both victims were unable to be revived.

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