

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Andrew John BARTLEY, Qld

Details not available at the request of Mr Bartley.

Mr Stephen Wayne BATES, 6 Bluff Road, Emerald Beach NSW 2456

On the afternoon of 11 September 2004, Mr Bates assisted in a rescue from rough seas at Red Rock, New South Wales.

Mr Bates was spending time on the beach at Red Rock when he was informed that two people were caught in a rip in the sea. He scanned the scene for the swimmers and was able to sight them drifting in the distance. Mr Bates retrieved a small boogie board from another swimmer and headed into the surf. Keeping the victims in sight he swam through the rough waters and found a man in distress holding up a woman who appeared unconscious. Mr Bates grabbed the woman and with the help of another rescuer swam her back to the beach. Mr Bates remained at the scene to make the victim comfortable, but sadly, she died as a result of her ordeal.

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

Mr Ivor BRICE, Kincumber NSW 2251

Details not available at the request of Mr Brice.

Mr Travis James BROWN, Centenary Suburbs Qld 4076

Late on the night of 25 December 2006, Mr Brown attempted to rescue a woman from her car which was submerged in the Brisbane River at Jindalee, Queensland.

Mr Brown and a group of his friends spent the late afternoon fishing from a pontoon at Jindalee. The friends had been enjoying a barbeque when they saw a car head down the nearby boat ramp and slowly enter the river. One of the people in the group called out that a woman was trapped inside. Without hesitation, Mr Brown jumped onto the roof of the vehicle and tried to open the door but it wouldn't budge. He continued to yell at the woman to unlock her door but she could barely respond. Eventually, despite the enormous pressure of the water, Mr Brown and a friend were able to prise it open. The river current was strong and visibility was very poor in the darkness. Mr Brown attempted to move the woman from her seat but she was restrained by her seatbelt. The woman was disoriented and unable to help herself despite Mr Brown repeatedly yelling at her to undo the seatbelt. The vehicle had quickly filled with water and was sinking, taking Mr Brown with it. He managed to free himself and, distressed at realising he could do nothing else at this point to save the woman, swam back to the safety of the boat ramp.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

MR ANTHONY JOHN BRUNTON, C/- Post Office, Tathra NSW 2550

On the morning of 16 April 2006, Mr Brunton helped rescue a family after their boat capsized at Kianinny Bay, New South Wales.

Mr Brunton was at Kianinny Bay checking on conditions for a swim, when he learnt that a boat had capsized, throwing its occupants into treacherous waters. Not believing anyone could survive the dangerous conditions, he watched as a person attempted a rescue by towing a group of people on a surfboard. He saw the rescuer try to swim the people back through the crashing waves but he was being repeatedly drawn back towards rocks. Mr Brunton grabbed a couple of life jackets and swam out towards the group to assist the rescue attempt. He held one of the victims, a young boy, put him on his shoulders and, despite the powerful current, managed to swim him to a nearby boat. Mr Brunton turned and swam back into the sea to help the remainder of the group. He got in behind the victims, pushing them on a surfboard while his friend towed in front. Together they swam the two adults to the safety of a boat which brought them into the jetty.

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

Mr Simon James BURNUP, 19 Foursomes Road, West Busselton WA 6280

On 3 October 2005, Simon Burnup assisted in rescuing his sister from a crocodile attack at Doubtful Bay, Western Australia.

Simon Burnup, aged 14, joined his father, his younger sister and a family friend onboard his father's catamaran to sail from Broome to Port Douglas. After enjoying sightseeing along the Sale River, the vessel anchored as the group set off in a dinghy for the freshwater reaches of the river. Simon and his father went for a swim and were later joined by Simon's sister. Within minutes she was having difficulty in the water, her hand outstretched and her face under the surface. After hearing calls for help from his father, Simon, who had swam to shallow waters, re-entered the deeper water and saw that a crocodile had hold of his sister. Despite the frightening circumstances, Simon ducked under the water, confronted the crocodile and punched it until it released its grip. Simon's sister was brought back safely to the shore where her father administered first-aid. Simon raced off for help and his sister was later airlifted to a nearby property for medical assistance.

For his actions, Simon Burnup is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Paul CARSTAIRS, Vic

On the night of 23 May 2007, in Flinders Street, Melbourne, Mr Carstairs helped subdue an armed attacker.

Mr Carstairs was walking in the Melbourne Central Business District when he heard a man crying out for help. Arriving at the scene he saw two men fighting and a third who had called for assistance. Mr Carstairs then noticed that the attacker was holding some form of metal blade. He was concerned about how best to intervene as two members of the public were already attempting to break up the fight. Mr Carstairs saw an opportunity in an ensuing struggle to wrest the blade from the attacker. As he attempted to do so, the object fell to the ground, and he kicked it away from the area. Mr Carstairs quickly retrieved the blade and, after conferring with another man at the scene who had raised the initial alarm, ran to a nearby police booth and informed officers about the incident.

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

Mr Stephen Maxwell DOWEY, Booral NSW 2425

During the afternoon of 17 February 2006, Mr DoweY assisted in the rescue of a man from a burning vehicle at Limeburners Creek, New South Wales.

Mr DoweY stopped at the scene of a motor vehicle accident where a van had collided with a tree and fire was beginning to spread from underneath the vehicle. Mr DoweY ran to assist several people who were trying to get the driver out of the wreckage. Despite flames spreading through the cabin of the vehicle, Mr DoweY helped make several attempts to free the driver whose feet were caught between the pedals and his seat. While the fire continually threatened their efforts, Mr DoweY and others struggled on to free the driver. Having successfully dragged the driver to safety, Mr DoweY stayed with the victim monitoring his vital signs until ambulance officers arrived.

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

Mr Douglas Kenneth FINUCANE, 3 Milloo Close, Windella Downs NSW 2320

On the night of 4 September 2004, Mr Finucane assisted the victim of a house fire at Windella Downs, New South Wales.

Mr Finucane was one of the first people on the scene at a neighbour's house which was on fire. Sections of the building were well alight, and he found his neighbour on the front lawn suffering from severe burns. Mr Finucane checked for other victims and discovered that a woman was unaccounted for. He entered the building and located the woman in a very poor state. While he was attempting to assist her, two police officers had also entered the house and encouraged him to leave the building because of the imminent danger. Although reluctant to give up his efforts to assist the victim, Mr Finucane was persuaded to leave.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Senior Constable Christopher John FOWLER, New South Wales Police

On the night of 4 September 2004, Senior Constable Fowler assisted in the rescue of a woman from a burning house at Windella Downs, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Fowler attended a call out to a house fire and on arrival called for immediate paramedic assistance. At the scene dense, black smoke was pouring out of the building. He provided first aid to a male victim who was severely burnt and checked on the condition of other occupants of the house. After Senior Constable Fowler consulted with a colleague who had helped rescue two victims from the fire, he entered the burning house to search for other occupants. As visibility was very poor he felt his way through the building and checked several rooms to ensure there were no more people trapped inside. Unable to continue as breathing was very difficult he made his way out of the house.

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

Mr Andrew Robert GORDON, Port Macquarie NSW 2444

On the afternoon of 19 April 2005, Mr Gordon attempted to rescue a man caught in rough seas at Port Macquarie, New South Wales.

A young man was surfing near a breakwall at the entrance to the Hastings River when the leg rope attached to his surfboard became entangled in rocks. Mr Gordon was alerted to the situation and paddled his board towards the man to attempt a rescue. As he approached the victim Mr Gordon relinquished his board so he could better manoeuvre through the surf. However the current was so strong that he could not swim against it and he was swept past the victim into the mouth of the river. Mr Gordon recovered his position and returned to the sea, swimming back towards the victim, grabbing him for a second rescue attempt. Mr Gordon was again taken by the strong current and a crashing wave broke his grip on the victim. He scanned the scene again from a breakwall and saw that the victim had been dislodged from the rocks and was floating face down in the river. The man was retrieved by a nearby fishing boat, but sadly, he died as a result of his injuries.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Sergeant Glenn Stanley GORICK, New South Wales Police

In the early hours of the morning of 24 June 1993, Sergeant Gorick rescued a man who was in difficulty in the Georges River, Illawong, New South Wales.

Sergeant Gorick and a colleague were pursuing an offender who had escaped custody and entered thick bushland adjacent to the Georges River. Unable to locate the offender at first, Sergeant Gorick widened the search to the river. In the limited moonlight he could see the wanted man clinging to the front of a boat moored two hundred or more metres from shore. He was in difficulty and had slipped into the water, desperately calling out for help. Even though there was poor light and freezing conditions, Sergeant Gorick removed his clothing and jumped into the river to attempt a rescue. He located the offender who was now unconscious, snagged on the rudder of the boat. Struggling with the dead weight of the man, Sergeant Gorick managed to lift him onto the boat, yelled to his colleague to call for an ambulance, and immediately administered CPR to revive the victim.

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

Mr Rodney Anthony GRAY, Illawong NSW 2234

During the evening of 9 December 2003, Mr Gray, who was an Inspector of New South Wales Police at the time, helped search for occupants during a house fire at Sylvania Waters, New South Wales.

Inspector Gray and his colleagues attended the scene of a house fire and were informed by onlookers that they believed the owners were trapped inside. Inspector Gray attempted to kick in the front door but it was deadlocked. He used a crowbar to smash in the door and was joined by a colleague to search for victims. Crawling on their hands and knees through several rooms, they called out for the occupants. Visibility was very poor because of the dense smoke, and movement was restricted because of the flames and heat. The officers could hear a male voice and thinking it came from inside the building, continued their search through to the rear of the house. Inspector Gray and his colleague searched two other rooms but they could not find any occupants. As the house became engulfed by flames, Inspector Gray was forced to retreat from the building.

For his actions, Inspector Gray is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Timothy Daniel GURRY, Bardon Qld 4065

Late on the night of 25 December 2006, Mr Gurry attempted to rescue a woman from her car which was submerged in the Brisbane River at Jindalee, Queensland.

Mr Gurry and a group of his friends spent the late afternoon fishing from a pontoon at Jindalee. The friends had been enjoying a barbeque when they saw a car head down the nearby boat ramp and slowly entered the river. Mr Gurry was concerned that the driver was not attempting to get out of the car, and without hesitation, he ran into the water to attempt a rescue. Mr Gurry made his way through the water to the driver's side window and found a disoriented woman in the driver's seat. With the assistance of a friend they were eventually able to prise open her door. Water quickly filled the car and the woman was unable to be moved because of her fastened seatbelt. Although the car was gradually sinking into the river, Mr Gurry dived into the murky water to release the belt but was unable to do so. As he attempted to surface, part of his body became wedged in the door opening as pressure increased from the water. The car was now angled into the river and the water had risen,. Mr Gurry managed to free himself and, distressed at realising he could do nothing else at this point to save the woman, he swam back to the safety of the boat ramp.

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

Mr Joe Benjamin HANSEN, Red Rock NSW 2456

On the afternoon of 11 September 2004, Mr Hansen assisted in a rescue in rough seas at Red Rock, New South Wales.

Mr Hansen was with his family on the beach at Red Rock when he saw a number of people yelling and pointing out to sea. Spotting a man and a woman in difficulty in the rough water off the adjacent headland, he raced towards the surf club to raise the alarm. He was advised that a rescue was about to be launched, and waited at the beach for help to arrive. However, seeing another bystander take a boogie board out into the water, he ran back to the surf club and on the way his wife gave him a flotation device. Mr Hansen headed out into very rough seas and swam to the scene to find another person attempting a rescue. He took hold of an unconscious female swimmer and with help of the other rescuer, swam her through big seas and pounding waves to the shore. Sadly, the victim died as result of her ordeal.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Detective Senior Constable Alan Joseph HODGE, Northern Territory Police

During the early morning of 26 August 2006, Detective Senior Constable Hodge assisted in the rescue of two people trapped inside a burning vehicle at Karama, Northern Territory.

Detective Senior Constable Hodge and police colleagues attended the scene of a motor vehicle accident to find a car collided with a tree and on fire. The two occupants of the vehicle were unconscious, strapped to their collapsed seats. Fire had taken hold in the cabin as Detective Senior Constable Hodge and other police grabbed the passenger and struggled to get him out of the vehicle. Detective Senior Constable Hodge returned to the vehicle and attempted to free the driver but his legs were trapped. Another police officer cut away the driver's seat belt, allowing Detective Senior Constable Hodge and police to free the driver, dragging him away from the vehicle. Moments later the wreckage was entirely engulfed in flames. Sadly, both occupants of the vehicle died as a result of their extensive injuries.

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

Constable Amanda Louise HOLLOWAY, New South Wales Police

Around midnight on the 21 April 2005, Constable Holloway assisted in the rescue of a teenage boy from a house fire at Bossley Park, New South Wales.

Constable Holloway and colleagues attended a call out to a house fire, where the front of the building was well alight and parts of the house had collapsed. Constable Holloway was informed that a teenage boy was trapped inside. She attempted to enter the building but was driven back by thick, black smoke which made visibility impossible. Constable Holloway made a second attempt to gain access to the inside of the house, crawling on hands and knees into a room but again she was forced back by the smoke. Climbing halfway through a window opening with a colleague, she saw another police officer and a civilian dragging a boy towards them. Constable Holloway helped retrieve the boy and carried him to safety.

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

Mr Paul Lindon HOYLE, Eltham Vic 3095

During the morning of 15 December 2005, Mr Hoyle helped remove a man from his burning vehicle at Eltham, Victoria.

Mr Hoyle was alerted to a vehicle on fire in a restaurant car park and ran to the scene, finding a man slumped across the centre console of the car. Flames were rising from under the car and entering the driver's compartment. Mr Hoyle tried unsuccessfully to open the driver's side door. He yelled to a bystander to call for emergency services and made another attempt to access the car, through the rear driver's side door, but it was locked. Mr Hoyle smashed in a vent window and with the help of another bystander the back door was able to be opened. Despite the advancing fire, Mr Hoyle helped lift the driver clear of the vehicle and carried him to safety. Mr Hoyle located a fire hose and extinguished the burning vehicle before fire authorities arrived.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Andrew Fredrick JOHNSON, 21 Panamuna Road, Tathra NSW 2550

On the morning of 16 April 2006, Mr Johnson helped rescue a family after their boat capsized at Kianinny Bay, New South Wales.

Mr Johnson was at Kianinny Bay and saw a boat capsize in massive swells, throwing a family of three overboard into the treacherous waters. Without hesitation, he paddled out on his surfboard to attempt a rescue. He found a woman clinging to the boat's propeller shaft and passed her a lifejacket. Her son was already fitted with a jacket but screamed that his father was drowning. Mr Johnson paddled some 50 metres to the man and gave him a life jacket although it was under-sized and could provide only limited support. He placed the man onto his board, attached a leg-rope to himself and towed him back to the boat. Mr Johnson instructed the family to cling to the surfboard and had almost towed them to safety when crashing waves dragged them back into difficult waters. He was joined in the rescue attempt by another man. This man grabbed hold of the boy and swam him to shore while Mr Johnson began again to tow the two adult victims back to the shore. He was then joined again by the man and they swam the victims into calmer waters where a boat towed the group to the jetty.

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

Mr Evan Alexander JONES, St Peters NSW 2044

During the night of 23 October 2003, Mr Jones assisted in the rescue of a driver from a burning vehicle at Mascot, New South Wales.

Driving through Mascot, Mr Jones and his wife stopped at the scene of a motor vehicle accident to offer assistance. A car had crashed into a tree and was on fire. Flames were spreading through the vehicle as Mr Jones leant into the car and, with the assistance of others, helped pull the man clear of the wreckage. At this point he realised that the victim was deceased. Mr Jones had noticed a baby capsule in the back of the car and returned to check for a child but was unable to do anymore as the vehicle was now engulfed by fire. Thinking the car might explode, Mr Jones was concerned for bystanders who had gathered at the scene and instructed them to move away from the vehicle and wait for emergency services to arrive.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Nikolas KOKOTOVICH, 18 Blueberry Grove, Glenwood NSW 2768

Around midnight on 21 April 2005, Mr Nikolas Kokotovich, who was a Constable in the New South Wales Police Force at the time, assisted in the rescue of a teenage boy from a house fire at Bossley Park, New South Wales.

Constable Kokotovich and colleagues attended a call out to a house fire, where they found the front of the building well alight and parts of the house collapsed. Constable Kokotovich was informed that a teenage boy was trapped inside. Constable Kokotovich entered the building and began a systematic search of several rooms. He eventually found a police colleague and a civilian dragging a boy from a burning bedroom. Constable Kokotovich helped pass the boy through a window to safety. Moments later the roof above the bedrooms began to collapse. Constable Kokotovich helped comfort the victim until paramedics arrived on the scene.

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

Mr Neil Ian LEVISTON, Vic

On the afternoon of 30 November 2006, Mr Leviston stopped an out-of-control truck on the Monash Freeway, Ferntree Gully, Victoria.

Mr Leviston was heading home on the Monash Freeway and was caught up in traffic that had ground to a halt. While waiting, Mr Leviston looked to the opposite lanes and could see a motorcycle police officer holding back the flow of traffic. Ahead of the officer was an out-of-control truck which was intermittently hitting concrete barriers and veering from lane to lane. Mr Leviston could see that the driver looked unconscious and had no control of his vehicle. Mr Leviston ran from his car, jumped across a concrete barrier into the lanes and chased the truck. The vehicle had slowed enough for Mr Leviston to grab hold of timber stored on the tray and pull himself up onto the moving vehicle. He ran forward to the cabin, negotiated his way in through the driver's window, climbed over the driver and was able to disengage the gear shift as the vehicle came to a halt.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Detective Senior Constable Richard William LISTON, New South Wales Police

On the night of 2 June 1995, Detective Senior Constable Liston restrained a hostile, armed man at Revesby Railway Station, New South Wales.

Detective Senior Constable Liston, then a Probationary Constable, was travelling home by train from duty. In his carriage he could hear people acting disorderly and, approaching the group, identified himself and instructed them to show restraint. Some time later the same people created a further disturbance and were requested by rail staff to leave the carriage. Soon after leaving the train, one of the men began shouting threats whilst brandishing a large chef's knife. Detective Senior Constable Liston stepped from the carriage and ordered the man to lower the knife at which point the offender moved towards the police officer and threatened him. Despite the unpredictable situation, Detective Senior Constable Liston maintained his composure and attempted to reason with the offender. A struggle ensued and the man was disarmed. He attempted to run from the scene but Detective Senior Constable Liston tackled the offender and restrained him until additional police arrived.

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

Mr Paul Stephen LODGE, NSW

On the night of 16 May 2004, Mr Lodge attempted to stop a man armed with a knife from leaving the scene of a robbery at Lewisham, New South Wales.

Mr Lodge was making a phone call from a public box outside a service station kiosk when he was alerted to a robbery in progress inside. The offender, armed with a knife, had emptied the till and was about to make his way through the front doors. Mr Lodge called police from the phone and, despite the unpredictable behaviour of the offender, went to help another person who was holding the doors shut to bar the offender's escape route. Moments earlier the offender had thrust a knife through the gap in the door and injured the other man at the scene. Mr Lodge retrieved the blade of the broken knife and remained to help keep the doors closed. Seeing his way barred, the offender smashed a window in the kiosk and made good his escape. Mr Lodge took the injured man to his adjacent home and provided emergency first aid until police and ambulance arrived at the scene.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Ms Roslyn McMASTER, Brighton-Le-Sands, NSW 2216

During the evening of 22 February 2005, Ms McMaster went to the assistance of man being attacked at a hotel in Sydney, New South Wales.

Ms McMaster was enjoying a social drink in the company of friends at a bar in a central Sydney guest hotel. Without provocation, a man nearby was viciously attacked by a group of men gathered at an adjacent table. They bashed the victim and continued to pursue him as he tried to escape. Several other men joined in the attack, one of them stabbing the victim in the neck with a broken bottle. The man fell to the ground where he was again brutally punched and kicked by his attackers. Ms McMaster put herself in harm's way by stepping in front of the offenders, yelling at them to stop attacking the victim. As a result of her actions, the victim was able to retreat and hide in another area of the bar. Although the offenders adopted a threatening stance and faced off against Ms McMaster, she continued to stand her ground before the men finally escaped the scene.

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

Constable Lauren Anne McNEICE, New South Wales Police

During the evening of 9 December 2003, Constable McNeice (then Probationary Constable) helped search for occupants during a house fire at Sylvania Waters, New South Wales.

Constable McNeice and her colleagues attended the scene of a house fire and were informed by onlookers that they believed the owners were trapped inside. Constable McNeice climbed through a window and attempted to get to the front door to unlock it for other police officers. She was overcome by smoke and heat and was forced to return to the window several times for fresh air. Despite the increasing danger, she made a final attempt for the front door but it was deadlocked. She called out to the occupants and hearing no response continued to search the house until overcome by flames and smoke. Constable McNeice returned to the window to find the surrounding curtains alight which she stamped out as best she could, retreating from the house with her boots on fire.

For her actions, Probationary Constable McNeice is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Senior Constable Andrew James MAGRATH, Northern Territory Police

During the early morning of 26 August 2006, Senior Constable Magrath assisted in the rescue of two people trapped inside a burning vehicle at Karama, Northern Territory.

Senior Constable Magrath and police colleagues attended the scene of a motor vehicle accident to find a car collided with a tree and on fire. The two occupants of the vehicle were unconscious, strapped to their collapsed seats. Fire had taken hold in the cabin as Senior Constable Magrath and other police grabbed the passenger and managed to get him out of the vehicle. Senior Constable Magrath returned to the vehicle and attempted to free the driver but his legs were trapped. He cut away the driver's seat belt and, with other police, freed the driver, dragging him away from the vehicle. Moments later the wreckage was entirely engulfed in flames. Sadly, both occupants of the vehicle died as a result of their extensive injuries.

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

Mr Francis Lorn MILLS, Nambucca Heads NSW 2448

Around midday on 15 May 2004, Mr Mills assisted in the rescue of two people after a boat overturned at Nambucca Heads, New South Wales.

On the day in question, swell conditions at Shelly Beach were in excess of 2.5 metres and a strong current was running. Seeing a runabout vessel overturn, throwing out its two occupants, Mr Mills and another bystander raced into the water to attempt to rescue the victims who were caught in a strong rip. Mr Mills swam to the scene, grabbed hold of one of the victims whom he knew and indicated he would roll him over so he could tow him back in. On the swim back to the shore, Mr Mills continued to reassure the victim until he got him to the safety of the beach where he was helped by an onlooker. Hearing his co-rescuer call out for help, Mr Mills helped drag the second victim up to the beach where he was placed in a recovery position. CPR was administered to both victims until ambulance officers arrived at the scene. Sadly, two weeks later one of the victims passed away as a result of the incident.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Glenn John MITCHAM, 129 Mann Street, Nambucca Heads NSW 2448

Around midday on 15 May 2004, Mr Mitcham assisted in the rescue of two people after a boat overturned at Nambucca Heads, New South Wales.

Mr Mitcham was with a friend at Shelly Beach observing the conditions of the swell for the following day's fishing trip. He watched as a boat attempted to steer its way through the channel but became concerned as he saw a large swell building up behind the vessel. Moments later the boat was overturned and its two occupants thrown into the water. Seeing a hand signal of distress from one of the victims, Mr Mitcham raced into the water to attempt a rescue. He and another rescuer reached the men, one of whom was floating on his back and did not appear to be breathing. Mr Mitcham called to a couple of spearfishermen to retrieve the stricken boat, and taking one of their dive floats, placed it under the victim's neck to keep his head out of the water. Moments later a large wave hit the men and the float was dislodged. Mr Mitcham maintained his hold on the victim and swam him back to shore where he called for help and commenced CPR until ambulance arrived. Sadly, two weeks later one of the victims passed away as a result of the incident.

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

Mr Kirk Scott MUIR, 8 Karamea Close, Gladstone Qld 4680

During the evening of 24 June 2006, Mr Muir helped rescue a woman from a burning vehicle on the Warrego Highway, Dalby, Queensland.

Mr Muir was travelling on the Warrego Highway with a companion when their four wheel drive vehicle was involved in a two vehicle accident. Both vehicles caught alight on impact and had ignited the grass nearby.. Mr Muir looked at his companion and saw that she was unconscious. He opened his door and, in attempting to unbuckle himself from his seat, fell out onto the ground because of arm and leg injuries he had sustained in the accident. Fearing that the fire would spread and ignite gas in the vehicle, Mr Muir dragged himself back into the vehicle and attempted to pull his companion free. Unable to move her, Mr Muir called for the assistance of another person at the scene who was able to carry the woman to safety.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Keith David O'BRIEN,

34 Hindley Road, Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancashire RL5 2JS United Kingdom

During the early hours of 24 June 2000, Mr O'Brien assisted in the rescue of a young woman from a fire at the Palace Backpackers Hostel, Childers, Queensland.

Mr O'Brien was awoken from sleep by the sound of windows smashing and doors banging at a backpackers hostel. Rousing himself, he saw flames around the sides of the building. He woke another occupant of the room, got her out of bed, and led her into the corridor. Smoke had filled the old building, making visibility very poor, and in the confusion and panic, people could be heard screaming. Although disoriented by the thick smoke, Mr O'Brien led his companion into an adjacent bathroom where the smoke was less apparent, and shut the door. Desperate to find a suitable exit, Mr O'Brien went back to his bedroom to check its condition, returned for his friend and led her back to their room. With the assistance of others outside, Mr O'Brien pushed the young woman through a gap in the barred window, then followed, making their way safely to the street.

For his actions, Mr O'Brien is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Tim PICKWORTH, Blue Haven NSW 2262

On the afternoon of 19 April 2005, Mr Pickworth attempted to rescue a man caught in rough seas at Port Macquarie, New South Wales.

A young man was surfing near a breakwall at the entrance to the Hastings River when the leg rope attached to his surfboard became entangled in rocks. The man was in great difficulty being battered by successive waves. Mr Pickworth had been surfing by himself in the area and was alerted to the incident by calls for help. He hurriedly paddled his board toward the victim who was waving his hand in distress and yelling out for assistance. Mr Pickworth attempted to paddle to the victim; however he was caught up in a wave and was pushed onto the breakwall, injuring his arms and legs. He clung to the rocks and managed to climb up away from the breaking waves. Mr Pickworth gave his board to another man at the scene who attempted another rescue. Sadly, the victim later died as a result of his injuries.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr John Edward PURCELL, NSW

During the early afternoon of 13 December 2005, Mr Purcell (then Constable of the New South Wales Police force) assisted in the rescue of a man from a block of home units at Cabramatta, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Purcell and a colleague were carrying out bicycle patrol duties in Cabramatta when they were alerted to a nearby home unit fire. Assessing the scene on arrival, the police called for assistance and systematically banged on doors, yelling out for the occupants to evacuate the building. Senior Constable Purcell moved quickly to the unit on fire at the top of the three storey building. He called out and heard a person inside who was clearly in distress. He made repeated attempts to kick in the door and once open he could see an elderly man inside lying on the floor. Senior Constable Purcell entered the unit which was then well alight and engulfed with toxic black smoke. Despite the poor visibility and his difficulty in breathing, Senior Constable Purcell lifted the victim with the assistance of another police officer and removed him to safety.

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

Mr John Bruce ROBINSON, deceased, Late of Moree NSW 2400

On the afternoon of 23 January 2005, Mr Robinson attempted the rescue of a woman from the Gwydir River at Pallamallawa, New South Wales.

In the heat of the afternoon, a woman was cooling off in water at the edge of the Gwydir River at Pallamallawa near Moree. As she moved she lost her footing on rocks and fell into the river and drifted beyond the shallows. She became almost fully immersed in the water and could not touch the bottom. The woman could not swim, and yelled for help. Alerted to her distress, Mr Robinson removed his shoes and hat, and jumped into the water to attempt a rescue. Despite his valiant attempts to swim against a very strong undercurrent, Mr Robinson also got into difficulty and sadly, drowned as a result of the incident.

For his actions, Mr John Robinson is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Constable Louie SAYSON, Northern Territory Police

During the early morning of 26 August 2006, Constable Sayson assisted in the rescue of two people trapped inside a burning vehicle at Karama, Northern Territory.

Constable Sayson and a colleague attended the scene of a serious motor vehicle accident. The vehicle had collided with a tree and was on fire. Constable Sayson went to assist one of the occupants of the vehicle who had been dragged away from the vehicle by other police and placed the victim in the recovery position. Constable Sayson then joined his colleagues who were attempting to free another victim from the car. At this point the vehicle cabin was beginning to be engulfed with flames so Constable Sayson leant into the vehicle and grabbed the victim by the wrist, helping a colleague to drag the driver to safety. Moments later the car was entirely consumed in flames and parts of the vehicle exploded. Sadly, both occupants of the vehicle died as a result of their extensive injuries.

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

Mr Aleksander John SEARLE, Eltham Vic 3095

During the morning of 15 December 2005, Mr Searle helped remove a man from his burning vehicle at Eltham, Victoria.

Mr Searle was alerted to a vehicle that was on fire in a restaurant car park. He ran to the scene and found a man slumped across the centre console of the car. The vehicle was rolling slowly backwards until it stopped abruptly against a kerb. At this point, flames were rising from under the car entering the front passenger side of the cabin. The first attempts to open the vehicle to rescue the driver were unsuccessful as the doors were locked. Mr Searle raced off and found a rubber mallet from a nearby vehicle which was used to smash in one of the car windows, enabling him to unlock a door. Despite the spreading fire, Mr Searle and another bystander helped lift the driver clear of the vehicle and carried him to safety.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr David Wayne SMITH, 14 Higgins Street, Coonabarabran NSW 2357

On the night of 21 April 2005, Mr Smith apprehended a man armed with a block splitter at Coonabarabran, New South Wales.

A mentally ill offender armed himself with a heavy block splitter and began rampaging through a suburban street, damaging properties and motor vehicles indiscriminately. He yelled threats to frightened residents and attempted to gain entry to several homes by wielding the block splitter against doors and windows. The offender set upon Mr Smith's home and began smashing the front of his house. Mr Smith was concerned not only for his own property but also, because of the overtures in the offender's verbal abuse, for young girls living next door. He told a visitor to his house to stay inside and then confronted the offender at the front of his house. After a lengthy struggle, he wrestled the offender to the ground and kept him immobilised for ten minutes until police arrived at the scene.

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

Mr Andrew David TURNBULL, Cairns Qld 4870

On the early afternoon of 6 August 1998, Mr Turnbull rescued one person and attempted the rescue of another from the surf at The Spit on the Gold Coast, Queensland.

Mr Turnbull had been surfing with a group of friends and returned to the beach after snapping his leg rope. Whilst waiting for his companions he was alerted to two people in the water in difficulty. Mr Turnbull grabbed his surfboard and paddled out to the victims, a boy and his uncle. He assessed the condition of the boy who confirmed he was in reasonable spirits but exhausted from trying to swim against the rip. Mr Turnbull gave his board to the youngster and turned his attention to the boy's uncle who was stationary, half submerged in the water. It was apparent to Mr Turnbull that the man was probably deceased, so he focussed his attention on the boy and paddled him back to shore. Mr Turnbull sought out his surfing companions to retrieve the other victim, and immediately phoned 'Triple Zero' for assistance. Soon afterwards he assisted his friends and a lifeguard carry the victim up the beach to a waiting ambulance. Sadly, the man drowned as a result of the incident.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Detective Sergeant Edmund Leonard TURNER, Northern Territory Police

During the early morning of 26 August 2006, Detective Sergeant Turner assisted in the rescue of two people trapped inside a burning vehicle at Karama, Northern Territory.

Detective Sergeant Turner and a colleague attended the scene of a serious motor vehicle accident where a car had collided with a tree. The vehicle was on fire and its two occupants appeared to be unconscious. Together with other police on the scene, Detective Sergeant Turner struggled to free the trapped passenger, eventually dragging him out of the car and away to safety. Flames were spreading throughout the vehicle's cabin as Detective Sergeant Turner went back to the car to help free the driver. He leant into the burning vehicle and, with the assistance of other police, dragged him to safety. Moments later the car was entirely consumed in flames and parts of the vehicle exploded. Sadly, both occupants of the vehicle died as a result of their extensive injuries.

For his actions, Detective Sergeant Turner is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Nigel Ray WADE, 12 Fawcett Street, Kyogle NSW 2474

On the afternoon of 26 January 2004, Mr Wade confronted and apprehended an armed offender during a break-and-enter at a home unit at Kirribilli, New South Wales.

Mr Wade was approached by a neighbour who alerted him to what seemed to be a robbery in progress at an adjacent home unit. He looked through the window of the unit in question and saw a man, in an agitated state, rifling through the contents of a bedroom. Another neighbour knocked on one of the doors to the unit and demanded to know what was happening inside. Moments later the intruder attempted to leave the unit but seeing Mr Wade, quickly returned inside. He reappeared and, brandishing a knife, confronted Mr Wade, lunging at him cutting his face and wrist. Mr Wade maintained his stand, struggling with the offender who lost his grip on the knife. With the help of a neighbour, he wrestled the intruder to the ground and detained him until police arrived at the scene.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Warren Malcolm WILKES, Caringbah NSW 2229

During the evening of 9 December 2003, Mr Wilkes (then Senior Sergeant of the New South Wales Police) helped search for occupants during a house fire at Sylvania Waters, New South Wales.

Senior Sergeant Wilkes and his colleagues attended the scene of a house fire and were informed by onlookers that they believed the owners were trapped inside. Senior Sergeant Wilkes attempted to kick in the front door but it was deadlocked. A crowbar was used to smash the front door, and Senior Sergeant Wilkes joined a police colleague to search for victims, crawling on hands and knees through the rooms, calling out for the occupants. Visibility was very poor because of the dense smoke, and movement was restricted because of the flames and heat. The officers could hear a male voice and, thinking it came from inside the building, continued their search through to the rear of the house. Senior Sergeant Wilkes and his colleague searched two other rooms but could not find any occupants. Because of the intensity of the heat and the effect of the thick smoke on his breathing Senior Sergeant Wilkes was forced to retreat the scene.

For his actions, Senior Sergeant Wilkes is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Evan Keith WINSTANLEY, Everton Park Qld 4053

During the night of 23 October 2003, Mr Winstanley assisted in the rescue of a driver from a burning vehicle at Mascot, New South Wales.

Mr Winstanley was driving through Mascot and was alerted to a vehicle accident a short distance away – a car had crashed into a tree and was on fire. Mr Winstanley ran to the wreckage to help other people who were attempting to free the driver. Fire was spreading quickly through the cabin of the car, and the rescue attempt was further hampered by toxic black smoke billowing from the vehicle. Mr Winstanley assisted others make repeated attempts to rescue the driver, eventually dragging him clear of the car. Shortly afterwards, parts of the wreckage exploded. Sadly, the driver died as a result of his injuries.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Senior Constable Leanne Joy WOOLSEY, New South Wales Police

During the afternoon of 17 February 2006, Senior Constable Woolsey assisted in the rescue of a man from a burning vehicle at Limeburners Creek, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Woolsey, an off-duty police officer, stopped at the scene of a motor vehicle accident where a van had collided with a tree and fire was beginning to spread from underneath the vehicle. Senior Constable Woolsey found an unconscious man trapped inside the van and yelled for help from her husband, also an off-duty police officer. Despite the spreading flames and smoke, she attempted to free the victim but his feet were caught in amongst the damage to the cabin floor. As fire began to fill the van, Senior Constable Woolsey worked together with her husband and made further attempts to free the driver with the help of passing motorists who had stopped at the scene. The driver was successfully freed from the van which moments later became entirely engulfed in flames. The victim was airlifted to hospital but sadly he later died as a result of his extensive injuries.

For her actions, Leading Senior Constable Woolsey is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Stahy ZOGRAPHAkis, Annandale NSW 2038

During the afternoon of 13 December 2004, Mr Zographakis rescued an elderly man from a burning house at Lake Conjola, New South Wales.

Mr Zographakis was watching the spectacle of an electrical storm from his house when he heard what he thought was a nearby lightning strike. Minutes later he saw smoke billowing from a neighbouring house. He immediately called 'Triple Zero', and ran to his neighbour's house. The doors of the building were locked so he climbed through an open window and was confronted by thick black smoke. Mr Zographakis shouted out and heard a voice call back from an adjoining room. He crawled along the floor searching until he found his elderly neighbour slumped in a chair holding a hose he had used to extinguish a fire at a computer terminal. Fearing that his neighbour might be electrocuted, Mr Zographakis rescued the elderly man who was clearly suffering the effects of severe smoke inhalation. After making him comfortable, Mr Zographakis switched off power to the house to avert further danger.

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