

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

**Miss Amme Louisa BATSON**, Hastings Vic 3915

On the night of 7 April 2007, Ms Batson assisted in the rescue of a driver from his burning vehicle at Hastings, Victoria.

Late in the evening Miss Batson was at home and heard a loud bang nearby which sounded like the impact of a motor vehicle accident. She left the house with her father to investigate and found a car upside down against a tree and on fire. The driver was trapped and unconscious and with the fire spreading through the vehicle's cabin was in danger of being burned. Miss Batson raced across the road and filled a watering can which her father used in an attempt to douse the flames. Despite the threat of explosion, Miss Batson repeatedly returned to the scene with water. She did so barefoot, dodging broken branches of trees across the road, injuring her feet from shattered glass and other vehicle debris. Because of Miss Batson's swift action, the fire was able to be contained sufficiently for the driver to be cut free and dragged to safety before the car exploded.

For her actions, Miss Batson is commended for brave conduct.

**Senior Constable David BROOKER**, New South Wales Police

During the morning of 19 February 2007, Senior Constable Brooker intervened in an armed robbery at Woolgoolga, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Brooker and his wife, also a member of the New South Wales Police, were off-duty visiting a shopping centre when they saw an offender wearing a balaclava in the vicinity of a bank. The man was holding a pistol and chasing another man, wrestling him for a bag. The victim ran into the bank pursued by the offender. Moments later the offender emerged, the bag in his possession. Senior Constable Brooker intervened to block the armed offender's path and detain him. He ran several steps and ploughed into the offender, tackled the man to the ground and rolled him on to his stomach to immobilise him. Senior Constable Brooker restrained the offender until police arrived at the scene.

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

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### **Mr Patrick Richard BYRNE, Waterloo NSW 2017**

Late on the night of 12 October 2002, Mr Byrne went to the aid of victims following two explosions in the vicinity of the Sari Club, Denpasar, Bali.

Mr Byrne and members of the Coogee Dolphins Rugby League Football Club visited Bali for an end-of-season trip. Early in the evening Mr Byrne and friends attended dinner before visiting the Sari Club to meet up with other football mates. After leaving the club to walk back to his hotel, Mr Byrne heard a huge explosion. He saw a large fireball, and the glass and fittings of nearby shops began to shatter around him. Mr Byrne raced back to the club which was engulfed in flames. Confronted by the devastation and confusion, Mr Byrne anxiously searched the site for his friends. He remained at the scene helping to assist injured victims and searching for bodies. He later attended a nearby temporary casualty station to look for his team mates and remained there for several hours helping distressed victims.

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

### **Mr Roger Roy CULLINAN, 16 Chay Street, Shailer Park Qld 4128**

On 26 July 2001, Mr Cullinan (then an Australian Federal Police Agent serving with UNCIVPOL in East Timor) rescued an elderly woman from a burning hut in the Suai District of East Timor.

Mr Cullinan, on patrol investigating an unrelated incident, was alerted to a fire in a hut in a nearby village. The walls and roof of the simple building were being consumed by fire and an elderly woman was known to be inside. With no breathing apparatus or protective clothing, Mr Cullinan entered the hut to search for the woman. He found her and grabbed her by the shoulders and attempted to move her out of the building. Distressed at having to surrender her few meagre, but precious, possessions to the fire, the woman was distracted and attempted to collect her belongings. Mr Cullinan acted decisively and lifted the woman and carried her to safety.

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

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### **Mr Michael John GREENTREE, New South Wales**

On the night of 30 June 2005, Mr (then Senior Constable) Greentree tackled and detained a man who had threatened to set fire to himself and a house at Casino, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Greentree and his colleagues were notified that a man on an apprehended violence order had returned to his home and was arguing with his wife and children. The offender had poured petrol over one of his daughters and himself and doused several rooms with fuel. Children had run from the house as the police officers positioned themselves outside. Senior Constable Greentree had sight of the rear door where the highly agitated offender began shouting abuse, threatening to ignite the petrol. Senior Constable Greentree directed the offender's wife out of the house and away from her husband, continuing to distract the offender who compounded the situation by smoking a cigarette. An officer who had made his way quietly through the house charged at the offender, tackled him and removed the cigarette. The offender tried, repeatedly, to ignite a cigarette lighter. Senior Constable Greentree moved quickly and helped tackle the offender allowing the lighter to be removed from his grasp.

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

### **Mr Tommy Raymon HAIR, Cheltenham Vic 3192**

During the afternoon of 10 January 2007, Mr Hair chased and detained an armed offender after an attempted robbery at a service station at St Albans, Victoria.

A man entered a service station store armed with a knife, removed an item from a shelf and walked behind the counter. The offender was challenged by one of the staff who then fled the scene for help. The offender attempted to open the cash register before stealing packets of cigarettes. Mr Hair, who was in an adjacent shop, heard the sales assistant's calls for help, and learned that the offender was carrying a knife. Mr Hair grabbed a cricket bat from his car, and joined another bystander to chase the offender, pursuing him to a vacant lot. The offender's behaviour was erratic and the men were unable to reason with him. Brandishing the knife, the offender swung wildly, stabbing one of the men. Mr Hair used his bat and a metal rack to deter the offender and grab the knife. As the offender made to escape, Mr Hair followed him through several side streets until police arrived to apprehend the man.

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

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### **Senior Constable Michael Douglas McCORMACK**, New South Wales Police

On the night of 30 June 2005, Senior Constable McCormack tackled and detained a man who had threatened to set fire to himself and a house at Casino, New South Wales.

Senior Constable McCormack and his colleagues were notified that a man on an apprehended violence order had returned to his home and was arguing with his wife and children. The offender had poured petrol over one of his daughters and himself and doused several rooms with fuel. Children had run from the house as the police officers positioned themselves outside. Whilst his colleagues distracted the offender at the rear of the house, Senior Constable McCormack entered the front of the building, moving through the rooms until he had clear sight of the offender. The smell from the petrol-soaked carpets and kitchen floor was overpowering. The offender lit a cigarette, threatening to set fire to himself and the building. Senior Constable McCormack acted quickly and charged the offender, tackling him against a wall and stubbing out the cigarette. Another officer came to his assistance, also tackling the man who was trying desperately to ignite a cigarette lighter. The officers restrained the man and removed the lighter from his grasp.

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

### **Ms Maria Ivy MANGCOY**, New South Wales

During the evening of 11 June 2006, Ms Mangcoy helped prevent an attempted robbery by a woman armed with a syringe at a music store in Sydney, New South Wales.

A young woman entered a music store in the Sydney Central Business District and challenged the sales assistant, Ms Mangcoy, with an uncapped syringe, claiming it was infected with the AIDS virus. Fearing for her health, Ms Mangcoy, who had no protection, acted quickly and grabbed the offender's hand to move the syringe away. She screamed for help from the owner of the store and a co-worker. Ms Mangcoy maintained her hold of the intruder and during the struggle the syringe was dislodged and became embedded in a chair. The offender attempted to escape the scene but Ms Mangcoy continued to hold the offender as she was being dragged through the doorway onto the footpath. Ms Mangcoy's co-workers came to assist and forced the offender back into the store, detaining her until police arrived at the scene.

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

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**Mr Thomas MITCHELL**, deceased, Late of Berrima NSW 2577

On morning of 31 March 2004, Mr Mitchell took actions to protect his cousin from the repeated attacks of a rogue ram at Berrima, New South Wales.

Mr Mitchell, then aged 67, was being assisted by his cousin to feed stock on his farm when a ram charged at them. His cousin attempted to fend off the animal by hitting it with a pipe and a bucket, calling to Mr Mitchell for help. Despite the aggressive behaviour of the ram, Mr Mitchell distracted the animal, enabling his cousin to escape the scene and retreat through a gate. The animal turned on Mr Mitchell and rammed him in the chest, knocking him to the ground. Despite further violent attacks, in the back and again on the chest, Mr Mitchell struggled to the safety of his car. Sadly, once in his car Mr Mitchell suffered a heart attack and died.

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

**Mr Brett Edward NICHOLLS**, Queensland

During the afternoon of 10 January 2007, Mr Nicholls chased and helped detain an armed offender after an attempted robbery at a service station at St Albans, Victoria.

A man entered a service station store armed with a knife, removed an item from a shelf and walked behind the counter. The offender was challenged by one of the staff who then quickly fled the scene for help. The offender attempted to open the cash register before stealing packets of cigarettes. Mr Nicholls was outside a nearby shop when he heard the sales assistant's calls for help and learned that the offender was carrying a knife. Mr Nicholls joined another bystander to chase the offender, pursuing him to a vacant lot. Brandishing the knife, the offender lunged several times at the men. Mr Nicholls tried to reason with the man whose behaviour was increasingly irrational. Again he made several swings with the knife, stabbing Mr Nicholls on the back of his shoulder. The other man was able to chase the offender and eventually detain him. Because of his injuries, Mr Nicholls was forced to leave the scene and return to nearby shops where he received help until ambulance officers arrived at the scene.

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

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### **Mr Joel Leslie POOLE**, New South Wales

On the afternoon of 25 October 2004, Mr Poole rescued a man from Seven Mile Beach, Shoalhaven Heads, New South Wales.

Mr Poole was swimming at Seven Mile Beach with his two brothers. As conditions in the surf began to deteriorate the brothers decided to swim back to shore, but on the way encountered a rip. Mr Poole and one of his brothers had crossed the rip when they saw their brother, Kenneth, caught in an undertow. Mr Poole swam back to help his brother as the third sibling who was experiencing an asthma attack returned to the beach. Mr Poole yelled to the beach for help as both men were pulled under the water. Mr Poole tried to reassure his brother and allay his panic although their situation was desperate. The boys' father saw his sons in difficulty and swam out to help, however as the seas had roughened, he started to return to shore. Mr Poole attempted to resuscitate his unconscious brother, however the seas worsened and Mr Poole lost hold of him when hit by a large wave. Mr Poole, seeing his father struggling to swim back to shore, swam to help him. A surfer found Mr Poole's brother and paddled him back to the beach where resuscitation was commenced. Sadly, Mr Poole's brother, Kenneth was unable to be revived.

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

### **Mr James RIVERS**, New South Wales

On the morning of 1 September 2004, Mr Rivers assisted a female bank employee escape from an offender involved in an attempted bank robbery at Neutral Bay, New South Wales.

Two intruders had made their way into a bank by smashing an opening through an adjacent building, and lay in wait for bank staff to arrive at work. The men detained the first two staff members as they entered the bank, demanding the codes to the safe as they ripped out cables from the closed circuit television system. A third staff member arrived at work to see customers, including Mr Rivers, queuing outside the bank. The teller tried to locate her colleagues inside, but one of the intruders intercepted her. As she attempted to retreat the masked intruder grabbed her. Despite the volatile situation and uncertainty as to whether firearms were present, Mr Rivers rushed through the front door to the teller's aid, struggling with the offender. As Mr Rivers wrestled with the intruder, the man freed his grip, enabling the bank teller to escape to safety. The intruder motioned that he was armed, and threatened Mr Rivers to back off or be shot. The intruder then retreated from the scene and escaped.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

**Mr Elias Touma RIZKALLA**, 79 The Avenue, Coburg Vic 3058

In the early hours of 16 December 2005, Mr Rizkalla assisted in the rescue of an elderly man from a house fire at Coburg, Victoria.

Mr Rizkalla was travelling home from work in the early hours of the morning when he saw a house on fire. Reporting the incident to emergency services he went to investigate and saw an elderly man in a distracted state stumble from the building. Moments later the man turned back into the house. Mr Rizkalla clambered over obstacles in his path at the front door and entered the blazing house to try to locate the man. Suddenly the elderly man appeared at Mr Rizkalla's side in a confused state with blood streaming from his face. Mr Rizkalla helped the man out of the house, asking him several times if anyone else was inside. The building was almost engulfed in flames as fire services arrived at the scene. Sadly, an elderly woman was not able to be rescued from the house and died as a result of her injuries.

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

**Constable Robert Lawrence SASAGI**, New South Wales Police

On the morning of 22 October 2004, Constable Sasagi disarmed an offender following a stabbing incident on a passenger train in New South Wales.

Constable Sasagi was off-duty when he noticed a scuffle between a man and a woman on the platform as the train he was travelling in pulled into the station. The male pushed the woman aside as he stepped onto the train with his female companion and a baby. The woman remained behind and continued to exchange heated abuse with the couple as the train began to depart. Constable Sasagi was unaware that the woman had hurriedly joined the train until he heard the sounds of scuffling and heated arguing in the carriage vestibule. The man screamed that he had been stabbed and was seen clutching his bloodied arm. A woman brandishing a knife was yelling abuse as terrified passengers hurried away from the scene. Constable Sasagi lunged forward and grabbed the woman's wrist, pushed her off balance and repeatedly banged her hand against a window bar until the weapon was released. Constable Sasagi detained the struggling, abusive woman until police arrived and removed her from the train.

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

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### **Sergeant Christopher Daniel SHAW**, Queensland Police

On the night of 8 December 2004, Sergeant Shaw intervened to resolve a siege situation at Bellbird Park, Queensland.

Sergeant Shaw and a colleague were despatched to check the condition of a man at his home who had taken a quantity of anti-depressants and had slashed his wrists. Initially compliant with police instructions, the man began to threaten the officers with a steel-spiked mace and a sword. As the police were not wearing body armour they were forced to retreat from the house, followed by the offender who struck out repeatedly towards Sergeant Shaw. The offender then armed himself with a double barrel shotgun and, keeping the officers at bay, doused the police van with petrol. Running a fuel trail back to his house he incinerated the vehicle. The offender then turned his attention to the officers, searching for them and discharging numerous rounds of ammunition. Unexpectedly, a woman drove into the street within sight and range of the armed man. Despite the threat to his life, Sergeant Shaw broke cover and moved the woman to safety. He did so under the glare of street lighting, exposing his position to the armed offender. Sergeant Shaw maintained a watch on the situation until he was joined by other police. Some time later, a safe surrender was negotiated.

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

### **Mr John Miller SIM**, Australian Capital Territory

During the early morning of 18 October 2004, Mr Sim rescued a victim from a burning vehicle at West Pymble, New South Wales.

Mr Sim was driving to work in wet weather when he came across the scene of an accident – a passenger car had crossed a median strip and collided with an oncoming prime mover. Mr Sim raced to the car which was on fire and checked the condition of the driver who was barely conscious. Mr Sim tried to open the driver's door but it was badly buckled. He inserted his fingers between the top of the door frame and the body of the car, and with enormous effort, was able to wrench the door frame down sufficiently to break the window and get access to the driver. Mr Sim's first attempt to remove the driver was unsuccessful as he was restrained by a seatbelt, with his hand and arm caught between the handbrake and seat. Mr Sim made another attempt and was able to release the seatbelt and free the driver's hand. With the help of another person, Mr Sim pulled the driver through the window and carried him to the safety of the roadside. Moments later the cabin of the vehicle caught fire. Mr Sim stayed with the victim and provided first aid until ambulance officers arrived at the scene.

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

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**Mr Michael Jason THOMPSON**, Moranbah Qld 4744

On the morning of 2 November 2006, Mr Thompson jumped onto a moving truck which was veering out of control on Wollombi Road, Bellbird, New South Wales.

Mr Thompson was travelling to work on Wollombi Road, Bellbird, when he notified emergency services that a semitrailer was veering dangerously, travelling in the opposite direction. The driver was slumped at the wheel and the vehicle had a line of traffic caught in behind. Mr Thompson pulled over his car and raced across the road to the heavy vehicle and mounted its running board. He quickly reached in through the cabin and pulled on the handbrake, bringing the truck to a halt at a road intersection. Mr Thompson contacted the owner of the truck who was able to inform him that the driver was a diabetic. He rendered first aid to the driver and remained with him until ambulance officers arrived at the scene to treat the victim.

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

**Mr John Andrew TIMOS**, Lewins Rail Avenue, South Morang Vic 3752

In the early hours of 16 December 2005, Mr Timos attempted to find and rescue an elderly woman from a house fire at Coburg, Victoria.

Mr Timos was working in the early hours of the morning and while driving through Coburg noticed a house fire. He checked with a member of the public at the scene and confirmed that the fire brigade had been alerted. On learning that an elderly woman was still inside the house he raced to the rear of the building. Mr Timos attempted to gain access to the house through the back door but visibility was limited. Having barely made his way into the building Mr Timos was forced to retreat because of thick smoke and flames. Grabbing a length of wood he smashed a window but access was blocked by debris inside. Mr Timos shattered other windows while yelling to rouse the woman. The house was now engulfed by fire and with the arrival of fire officers he was ordered to leave the scene. Sadly, the elderly woman was not able to be rescued from the house and died as a result of her injuries.

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