

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Glendon Leigh AITCHISON, Qld

In the early hours of 13 May 2007, Mr Aitchison helped rescue a bus driver from an armed offender on the Gold Coast, Queensland.

Mr Aitchison boarded a suburban bus service on the Gold Coast to head home. At the early hour of the morning there were some twenty passengers on board. As the bus slowed for a designated stop, it suddenly veered to the left of the roadway and hit a signpost. The bus came to a stop and as Mr Aitchison looked up he could see a man at the front of the vehicle fighting the bus driver. The driver had received a laceration from a knife wielded by the offender and had been punched around the head several times as the attacker attempted to steal a cash box. Mr Aitchison jumped forward and moved to the front of the bus where he could see a knife on the floor. The offender continued to struggle with the driver. Mr Aitchison grabbed the man, and with the help of another passenger, wrestled him to the ground where he continued to struggle to free himself. Mr Aitchison helped restrain the man until security and police arrived at the scene.

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

Sergeant Gary Charles BELING, Queensland Police

In the early morning of 9 October 2004, Sergeant Beling rescued an injured driver from a burning vehicle at Strathgarve, Queensland.

Sergeant Beling was driving to work when he noticed a large cloud of black smoke nearby, and approaching the scene he saw the results of a serious traffic accident involving two vehicles. A utility was on fire and the roof had been forced down into the passenger compartment. The other vehicle, a van, was extensively damaged. Debris littered the road and a person was lying motionless on the ground. As he ran to check the van, Sergeant Beling saw the driver in the burning utility was still alive though the passenger appeared to be deceased. Sergeant Beling assisted the driver from the burning vehicle and carried her to safety. He returned to check again on the passenger and as he attempted to do so the vehicle exploded. Sergeant Beling quickly looked to the condition of the man lying on the road but he was deceased. He returned to the woman he had rescued, checking her vital signs and reassuring her before seeing to the driver of the van who had been flung from his vehicle. Satisfying himself about the condition of the woman trapped in the van Sergeant Beling called for emergency assistance and instructed other motorists to attend and reassure the injured.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Stephen Charles BENNETT, 36 Tinobah Place, Maryland NSW 2287

On the afternoon of 8 June 2007, Mr Bennett assisted with the rescue of a teenage boy from a flooded drain at Maryland, New South Wales.

During heavy rain a teenage boy attempted to cross a flooded roadway and was swept into fast flowing water and carried many metres before becoming entangled and trapped in the limbs of a clump of trees. The boy was up to his neck in freezing water as the floodwaters surged around and over his head. Mr Bennet assessed the scene and with another man grabbed lengths of rope and headed out to the teenager. Mr Bennett made his way through the fast flowing water to the young victim and helped tie the safety rope to him. Despite being almost overcome by fatigue and hypothermia, Mr Bennett helped keep the boy stable until he could be pulled out of the floodwaters to safety.

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

Mr Selwyn John BROWN, Three Peaks, Condobolin NSW 2877

On the night of 2 August 1998, Mr Brown attempted to rescue a man from a burning house at Condobolin, New South Wales.

Mr Brown was alerted to a fire at a house owned by one of his neighbours. He raced to the house concerned that one of the occupants might still be inside. Sections of the building were well alight, and thick acrid smoke was billowing through the surrounding air. Mr Brown entered the house, and on hands and knees began a search of the room. The smoke severely limited his vision and restricted his breathing and, although Mr Brown searched for some time, he was unable to find any occupants and was forced to retreat. Outside he turned his attention to the side of the building. He smashed a bedroom window to encourage the smoke to dissipate, hoping to improve his chances of seeing anyone inside. As Mr Brown began to look for other entry points to check for occupants, fire brigade and police officers arrived at the scene.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Anthony Joseph CAMERON, Grafton NSW 2460

On the night of 20 January 2006, Mr Cameron helped restrain an offender after a man was stabbed at Woolli, New South Wales.

During a break at a caravan park with his wife and children, Mr Cameron was informed late one night that a man had been stabbed and was lying on the ground nearby. Mr Cameron told his wife to get the children inside their van and lock it while he went to investigate. The victim had been stabbed by a woman and was losing a great deal of blood as several people gathered around to administer first aid. Mr Cameron looked up to see the offender walk towards the group and kick the helpless victim. Not aware whether the woman was still armed, Mr Cameron grabbed her and with the help of another man directed her into a nearby amenities block. As he helped restrain the offender it became apparent she was carrying an infant underneath a doona draped around her shoulders. The woman continued to struggle, cursing and kicking Mr Cameron and spitting at him. Careful to ensure that the distressed child was not injured Mr Cameron released his restraint on the woman but carefully monitored her movements and kept her away from the scene of the stabbing until police arrived at the scene. Sadly, the victim died as a result of his injuries.

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

Mrs Helen June COWAN, 12 Ewing Crescent, Dawesville WA 6211

On 22 November 2007, Mrs Cowan assisted in the rescue of her niece who was attacked by dogs at Mandurah, Western Australia.

Mrs Cowan, her sister and niece were concerned for the condition of several dogs at a property. Mrs Cowan's niece entered the unattended property to leave food and water for the dogs. As she attempted to climb back over the fence she was dragged back by four dogs acting in a pack. The animals were too strong for Mrs Cowan and her sister who tried desperately to pull the victim over the fence to safety. The dogs viciously attacked the young woman, dragging her to the ground. Mrs Cowan quickly grabbed a garden hose to spray the animals but the hose was ineffective. Fearing for her niece's life, Mrs Cowan repeatedly screamed out for help and kicked in a side gate to rescue her niece. However the victim was too seriously injured to move. Mrs Cowan remained by her niece, distracting the dogs. The animals turned their attention to Mrs Cowan who stood her ground calling for help. By doing so she was able to keep the dogs' attention diverted until a neighbour arrived to assist.

For her actions, Mrs Cowan is commended for brave conduct.

Mr Stephen James COWARD, WA

Details not available at the request of Mr Coward

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Chief Petty Officer Gary Roderick DHU, Edmonton Qld 4869

On the night of 28 May 2006, Chief Petty Officer Dhu fought a fire onboard a fishing vessel and searched for a missing crew member.

Chief Petty Officer Dhu, a member of the Royal Australian Navy, was on post as a technical adviser to the Republic of Palau. As an engineering adviser he was embarked on a Palauan patrol boat which was ordered to escort an illegal foreign fishing vessel to port. Late at night Chief Petty Officer Dhu was alerted that the fishing vessel was on fire. As flames began to consume the main structure of the vessel, the fishermen had gathered at its bow screaming for help. Chief Petty Officer organised the patrol boat's fire-fighting team and directed the fire hoses to create a water barrier between the burning vessel and the crew to protect them as rescue operations began. Chief Petty Officer Dhu boarded the burning vessel, broke into the engine room ventilation and directed water into the area to contain the fire while he searched for a fisherman reported missing. However Chief Petty Officer Dhu was forced to retreat the scene because of intense heat and the highly toxic fumes. Returning to the patrol boat he directed the evacuation of the remaining fishermen. Some time later the illegal vessel was fully engulfed in fire and sank.

For his actions, Chief Petty Officer Dhu is commended for brave conduct.

Senior Constable Paul James DOHERTY, New South Wales Police

On the evening of 9 June 2007, Senior Constable Doherty helped rescue a man from a burning unit at Mayfield, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Doherty and a colleague attended a burning block of units. Flames had engulfed the roof cavity and smoke was billowing from windows and doorways. Senior Constable Doherty was advised that a man refused to evacuate his unit and had earlier threatened assault against an off duty police officer who had tried to persuade him to leave. Senior Constable Doherty entered the unit and joined his colleague who had found the occupant who was intoxicated and highly aggressive, and refused to budge despite fire taking hold of the unit. The man continued to resist reason and put up a struggle. Both officers could wait no longer and dragged the man away from the unit to the front lawn. Despite the fact that fire was consuming the apartment, Senior Constable Doherty re-entered the building and conducted a thorough search for other occupants until he was satisfied that no one else was present. Returning outside, he grabbed a garden hose to restrict the fire until the fire brigade arrived.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Peter Henry DUBOIS, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

On the morning of 20 November 2007, Mr Dubois pulled a man from a burning vehicle at Coffs Harbour, New South Wales.

Mr Dubois drove his tow truck to attend the scene of a two vehicle accident and as he approached the vehicles, one of the cars sped away. Mr Dubois attempted to follow the vehicle and some time later found the car had hit a highway embankment. Although the vehicle was unable to move, the driver continued to apply the accelerator. At this point fire erupted in and around the vehicle but the driver couldn't move. Mr Dubois ran to the vehicle and instructed the driver to get away from the car. The driver refused to budge, and as Mr Dubois attempted to remove him, the driver resisted, throwing punches and swinging his arms about wildly. Although the fire was spreading, Mr Dubois remained calm and persisted with his rescue attempt, leaning into the vehicle, freeing the driver and carrying him to safety. The victim was a diabetic who had suffered from a severe hypoglycaemic attack and was unable to make rational decisions at the time.

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

Mr Brent Craig ECCLES, WA

Details not available at the request of Mr Eccles

Mr Samuel William EDWARDS, 60 Witty Road, Bellbowrie Qld 4070

In the early hours of 9 September 2007, Mr Edwards attempted the rescue of two children from a house fire at Bellbowrie, Queensland.

Mr Edwards was awoken by the sound of a smoke alarm and immediately stirred a friend asleep in the same room. The two men raced downstairs and could see flames consuming the laundry area. Mr Edwards yelled to four children who had been sleeping in the rumpus room. Two of the children were able to react to the alert and ran past Mr Edwards and out of the house. Mr Edwards tried to reach the other two children but visibility was limited and he was forced back by thick toxic smoke. Concerned also for the two children who had escaped, he raced outside to check they were safe. Mr Edwards re-entered the house in a desperate attempt to find the two missing children. But again he was forced back by the sheer volume of smoke and the intense heat as the house became fully engulfed by fire. Mr Edwards retreated, and outside he tried smashing a downstairs window to reach the children. As he did so he was forced away by fierce flames pouring through the opening. Mr Edwards then ran to a neighbour's house to call emergency services.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Paul Anthony FITZGERALD, ACT

On the night of 30 April 2006, Mr Fitzgerald rescued a woman from a burning house at Conder, Australian Capital Territory.

Mr Fitzgerald was travelling through the suburb of Conder late in the evening when he noticed smoke nearby. He tracked down a house on fire and found an elderly man wandering on the driveway. He requested the man to keep at a safe distance and call '000'. The man then informed him that a woman was still inside the house. Mr Fitzgerald entered the front of the building calling out for the woman. The roof was well alight as he began to search inside. Mr Fitzgerald found an elderly woman in her bedroom and quickly guided her out of the house. Moments later she turned and hurried back into the burning building to retrieve her dog. Mr Fitzgerald instructed her to leave and join her husband outside. He again quickly made his way to the rear of the house but locked doors barred his way. He then smashed a sliding glass door, entered one of the bedrooms to locate the woman's pet, and was able to escape the scene, carrying the dog to safety.

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

Miss Jane Cristy FLAVEL, 9 Baltic Avenue, West Beach SA 5024

On the morning of 30 November 2006, Miss Flavel rescued a man who was in difficulty in Moonta Bay, South Australia.

Miss Flavel and her children, together with other members of her family were fishing at Moonta Bay when they heard cries for help from a nearby group of overseas students. One of the young men was in great difficulty in the water, barely conscious. Miss Flavel dived off the jetty and swam to the victim. Miss Flavel turned him over and kept his head above the surface and thought she might attempt to swim him back to the jetty but because of the choppy conditions, the distance was too far. Miss Flavel instead made for a semi submerged pole where a friend of the victim was holding on. Although exhausted by the ordeal, Miss Flavel held the victim until help arrived, and then swam back to the jetty alone where she received medical attention. Because of her efforts, the young victim survived the incident.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Mark David FLETT, ACT

On the night of 3 June 2004, Mr Flett disarmed and helped apprehend a man armed with a knife at Canberra, Australian Capital Territory.

Mr Flett was on duty as a security officer at a gaming venue when he heard a woman's screams coming from nearby female toilets. As he entered the toilets to check the commotion, he was immediately confronted by a man who lunged at him with a knife, swinging it around the vicinity of Mr Flett's chest. A female victim was nearby, bleeding profusely from the head and had sustained a knife wound to her stomach. As Mr Flett moved to shield himself from the knife attack, he was punched solidly by the offender. Mr Flett grabbed the man, spun him around and forced him against a wall. He quickly pulled an arm behind his back and grabbed the offender's wrist, forcing it against the wall. As he screamed to the offender to drop the knife, Mr Flett continually banged the man's hand against the wall to encourage the offender to release the weapon. Mr Flett succeeded in disarming the attacker and was quickly joined by colleagues who helped him restrain the offender until police and ambulance arrived at the scene.

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

Mr Charlie Ricky GAFA, 10 Hinkler Avenue, Sebastopol Vic 3356

On the night of 11 February 2005, Mr Gafa rescued two people from a burning house at Sebastopol, Victoria.

Mr Gafa heard the sound of smashing glass and found that his neighbour's house was on fire. He quickly asked his wife to ring '000' and raced across the road. Fire had engulfed a front bedroom of the house and flames were pouring through a window, incinerating surrounding vegetation. Mr Gafa heard a man calling from inside the home so he dashed into the house, grabbed the man and led him quickly outside to safety. Moments later Mr Gafa heard a female calling out for help. He called back to reassure the woman, and waiting for the fire to momentarily recede from the doorway, raced back into the house. The woman handed him a dog which he grabbed and quickly removed to safety. Mr Gafa re-entered the house and grabbed the woman by the arm and raced her outside. Mr Gafa then grabbed a garden hose and began spraying the interior of the house until the fire brigade arrived.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Mathew Peter HOBSON, North Lambton NSW 2299

On the afternoon of 8 June 2007, Mr Hobson assisted with the rescue of a teenage boy from a flooded drain at Maryland, New South Wales.

During heavy rain a teenage boy attempted to cross a flooded roadway and was swept into fast flowing water. Mr Hobson, then 16 years of age, saw the younger teenager being swept away and quickly entered the water to attempt a rescue. Both of the youths were swept some metres through the torrent until the two became entangled in the limbs of a clump of trees. The younger boy was trapped in an awkward position, barely able to keep his head above the freezing waters. Although his own circumstances were difficult, Mr Hobson remained at the scene reassuring the victim and helped him keep his head above the water. Several police and civilians arrived and together were able to bring the rescue to a successful conclusion. Both Mr Hobson and the younger teenager were conveyed to hospital suffering severe hypothermia.

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

Ms Siobhan JACKSON, 849 High Street, Thornbury Vic 3071

In the late afternoon of 10 January 2007, Ms Jackson assisted in the rescue of two girls from a rip at Pebbly Beach, New South Wales.

Ms Jackson was visiting a beach with her two young daughters and nieces. Two of the girls headed into the water to swim while Ms Jackson looked on. Moments later both girls were in trouble, caught in a rip and disappearing under the surface. As she ran towards the water, Ms Jackson frantically called for help although few people appeared to be in the vicinity. As she reached the girls both were exhausted and struggling, being pulled under the water by the current. Ms Jackson tried desperately to hold the girls above the surface and to reassure them as she attempted to swim with them out of the rip. She remained with the girls until help arrived from two men with surfboards who were able to paddle the group back to shore.

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

Mr Charles LAKEY, Vic

On the night of 10 December 2006, Mr Lakey assisted in the rescue of a man from a burning vehicle at Mount Macedon, Victoria.

Mr Lakey heard a loud bang on the roadway near his home and could see that a large station sedan had crashed, flipped over on its passenger side and was wedged between two trees. Heading to the crash site to see what assistance he could offer, Mr Lakey saw his neighbour attempting to get through the driver's side window into the cabin to rescue the driver. The driver was unable to move by himself as his leg was pinned by the wrecked dashboard. Smoke began pouring in the cabin and the engine bay was on fire. Mr Lakey assisted his neighbour who was struggling to free the man. Together the two men dragged the driver from the vehicle and carried him to safety.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Ms Judith Rae McALPINE, Dawesville WA 6211

On 22 November 2007, Ms McAlpine assisted in the rescue of her daughter who was attacked by dogs at Mandurah, Western Australia.

Ms McAlpine was concerned for the welfare of several dogs at an unattended property that appeared to have no food or water. With her daughter and sister she returned to the property to assist the animals, and attempted to rescue puppies from the scene. As Ms McAlpine's daughter was climbing the fence to leave the yard, she was attacked by one of the dogs who dragged her back onto the ground. There she was viciously mauled by several dogs. Fearing for her daughter's life, Ms McAlpine kept her composure and raced off in search of help. She returned to the property, grabbing a hose to spray her daughter to relieve her pain and to distract the animals. A neighbour then came to assist and Ms McAlpine remained at the scene to reassure and protect her daughter until police and medical assistance arrived.

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

Senior Constable Daniel James McARTHUR, New South Wales Police

On the afternoon of 8 June 2007, Constable McArthur helped rescue two people trapped in cyclonic flood conditions at Narara, New South Wales.

On the day in question, the Central Coast and Hunter Regions of New South Wales experienced cyclonic storm conditions to the extent that a 'State of Emergency' was declared. Constable McArthur and police colleagues as well as other emergency service personnel were called to assist two people trapped in rapidly rising flood waters. A man and his daughter were standing on the roof of their car, the vehicle submerged to the roofline, buffeted by a strong current and rising waters filled with debris. The young girl was hysterical as torrential rain continued to fall. Constable McArthur and a colleague donned life vests, attached safety lines and headed out to the victims to attempt a rescue. In chest high, fast flowing water, both men were thrown about by the surging conditions and several times were knocked over, struggling to regain their foothold. Meanwhile a neighbour launched a boat to assist the rescue but its motor failed. However the officers were able to secure the craft and drag it to the stranded victims and pull them to safety.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Constable Ray Peter NOFFKE, New South Wales Police

On the afternoon of 8 June 2007, Constable Noffke assisted with the rescue of a teenage boy from a flooded drain at Maryland, New South Wales.

During heavy rain a teenage boy attempted to cross a flooded roadway and was swept into fast flowing water. The boy was swept many metres through the torrent until he became trapped in amongst a small clump of trees. The boy was pinned in an awkward position, barely able to keep his head above the freezing waters which were surging around and over his head. Police were alerted to the situation and as Constable Noffke arrived, he could see the teenager and two other rescuers who were screaming out for help. Assessing the need for immediate action, Constable Noffke raced into the water fully clothed. His first action was to take over holding the teenager's head above the swirling waters. In freezing conditions, Constable Noffke maintained his calm, offering reassurance to the group until police and other civilians were able to assist and make a successful rescue.

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

Mr Gary Edward PEARCE, 21 Alwinton Street, Maryland NSW 2287

On the afternoon of 8 June 2007, Mr Pearce assisted with the rescue of a teenage boy from a flooded drain at Maryland, New South Wales.

During heavy rain a teenage boy attempted to cross a flooded roadway and was swept into fast flowing water. The boy was swept many metres through the torrent until he became trapped in a clump of trees. An older teenager swan out to rescue him; however was unsuccessful as the boy was pinned in a difficult position, barely able to keep his head above the freezing waters which were surging around and over his head. Mr Pearce entered the water and swam out to the boys and took hold of the trapped teenager and held his chin above the swirling waters. Although exhausted by the strength of the current, Mr Pearce kept his composure, reassuring the boy, and calling out for help. Police and other civilians arrived at the scene and were able to take over from Mr Pearce and complete the rescue.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Jeffrey PIEFKE, 197 Forrest Street, Dampier WA 6713

On the night of 10 January 2006, Mr Piefke rescued two of his step children from their burning house at Dampier, Western Australia.

Mr Piefke was awoken by the sound of a smoke alarm in his house and saw flames coming from one of his step children's bedrooms. Two other step children were in a second bedroom but the room couldn't be reached through the house. The fire was gaining in intensity and plastic floor protectors were melting. Mr Piefke found one of the children in the bathroom and led her away to the rear of the house. Outside he quickly ripped of the security screen from a window and carefully smashed the glass to avoid injuring the children inside. The bedroom was filled with smoke and extremely hot as Mr Piefke repeatedly called out to the children. He couldn't raise a response, so he instructed his step daughter to continue calling out to them as he raced off to grab a garden hose. He re-entered the house to contain the fire but the volume and pressure of the water was ineffective. Mr Piefke returned to his step daughter who could hear the children calling out. Leaning through the bedroom window Mr Piefke was able to pull the children, one by one, to safety.

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

Constable Benjamin Geoffrey RADCLIFFE, New South Wales Police

On the evening of 9 June 2007, Constable Radcliffe helped rescue a man from a burning unit at Mayfield, New South Wales.

Constable Radcliffe and a colleague attended a burning block of units. The entire roof cavity was alight when they arrived, and thick smoke was billowing from doorways and windows. Constable Radcliffe learnt that a man inside one of the units was refusing to leave. Constable Radcliffe entered the unit and tried to negotiate with the man. However the occupant was intoxicated and highly agitated, and pushed the officer out of the way. Constable Radcliffe was joined by a colleague and together they instructed the man to leave the burning unit, but again he refused. The unit was being consumed by fire and breathing was severely impaired by thick smoke. The officers were forced to drag the man from the apartment during which he continued to be uncooperative. Once the situation was contained and fire fighters had arrived, Constable Radcliffe assisted in traffic control duties to ensure safety was maintained in the surrounding vicinity.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Duncan James RAYWARD, Lord Howe Island NSW 2898

On the night of 19 May 2007, Mr Rayward rescued a man from a house fire on Lord Howe Island.

Mr Rayward was at home when he was alerted by a woman to a nearby house fire. He ran to the neighbouring worker's cottage, sections of which were well alight and the entry way on fire. The occupant was still inside the building. Unable to get through the doorway, Mr Rayward ran to the back of the property and looked for another entry but wasn't able to gain access. He tried a window and could see the woman inside trying to coax the male occupant to leave. However the man was intoxicated and angry, and refused to move. Mr Rayward pulled himself through the window and made repeated attempts to reason with the man to get out. Again he refused to budge. Mr Rayward grabbed the man by the shirt and dragged him to the window, pushing him through the opening. Mr Rayward escaped the fire himself and raced to a well for water to contain the fire but the pump wasn't functioning. He returned to the man who was propped up by the side of the building and dragged him away to safety.

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

Chief Inspector David Kenneth ROBINSON, New South Wales Police

On the afternoon of 8 June 2007, Chief Inspector Robinson helped rescue two people trapped in cyclonic flood conditions at Narara, New South Wales.

The Central Coast and Hunter Regions of New South Wales were experiencing cyclonic storm conditions to the extent that a 'State of Emergency' was declared. Chief Inspector Robinson and police colleagues as well as emergency service personnel were called to assist two people stranded in rapidly rising flood waters. A man and his daughter were clinging on the roof of their car, the vehicle submerged to the roofline. The car was being buffeted by a very strong current with rising waters filled with debris. The young girl was hysterical as torrential rain continued to fall. Chief Inspector Robinson and a colleague donned life vests, attached safety lines and headed out to the victims to attempt a rescue. In chest high, fast flowing water, both men were thrown about by the surging conditions and several times were knocked over, struggling to gain a foothold. Meanwhile a neighbour launched a boat to assist the rescue but its motor failed. However the officers were able to secure the craft and drag it to the stranded victims and pull them to safety.

For his actions, Chief Inspector Robinson is commended for brave conduct.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mr Michael Donald ROGAN, 228 Dobie Street, Grafton NSW 2460

On the night of 20 January 2006, Mr Rogan helped restrain an offender after a man was stabbed at Wooli, New South Wales.

Mr Rogan and his family were staying at a caravan park and had returned during the evening after dinner with friends. Nearby they saw that a man was lying in a pool of blood. Mr Rogan quickly grabbed some fresh towels and joined others at the scene to render first aid. While he was attending to the victim the female offender returned to the scene and kicked the victim yelling at him. Not knowing whether a weapon was still present, Mr Rogan signalled to a friend to assist him. Together the two men guided the woman away from the victim to an amenities block and kept watch over her. The offender was highly agitated and hurled abuse and kicked and spat at Mr Rogan's companion. Whilst others at the scene came over to assist in keeping the offender away from the victim, Mr Rogan raced off for a first aid kit and then helped administer CPR to the victim until ambulance arrived. Sadly, the man died as a result of his injuries.

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

Senior Sergeant Garry John SMITH, Northern Territory Police

In the early hours of 10 March 2007, Senior Sergeant Smith attempted to rescue the occupant of a burning house at Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

Senior Sergeant Smith was performing Watch Commander duties when he was alerted to a house fire. Attending the scene, he saw that the building was engulfed in flames and billowing with thick black smoke. He quickly checked the safety of a neighbour who was trying to cool down gas cylinders at the side of the house, and instructed the man to leave, fearful the cylinders might explode. As Senior Sergeant Smith hosed down the cylinders he felt his skin burning and was having difficulty breathing because of the smoke. Concerned that there may be occupants still in the house, Senior Sergeant Smith made his way to the rear of the building, checking the backyard then looked for an entry into the house. Flames and thick, acrid smoke continued to pour from the building. Senior Sergeant Smith attempted to get into the building by smashing a window with his torch, but he was immediately engulfed in black smoke. He began to pull away shards of glass from the window to get better access, calling out repeatedly but couldn't raise a response. Senior Sergeant Smith climbed halfway through the window but was forced to retreat because of the toxic smoke. He was overcome by serious smoke inhalation and collapsed, and was later taken to hospital for treatment.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Senior Constable John Robert SMITH, New South Wales Police

On the night of 15 December 2004, Senior Constable Smith (then Constable) attempted to rescue three children from a house fire at Dubbo, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Smith and colleagues attended the scene of a house fire and were confronted by a building engulfed in flames, billowing with thick black smoke. Senior Constable Smith learnt from a bystander that children were trapped inside the building. He quickly grabbed a towel and tried to enter the rear of the house but was almost instantly repelled by the heat and smoke. Senior Constable Smith raced to the front of the building and questioned a woman about the number of children inside and their location. Three children were trapped but their exact whereabouts were not known. Senior Constable Smith wet the towel and made his way through the rear of the house again searching for the children. But the heat and smoke was so intense that he had to abandon his efforts. As he retreated from the house to regain his breath, fire fighters wearing breathing apparatus and protective clothing made their way into the building and brought out the three children. Sadly all three children died as a result of their injuries.

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

Mr Michael Thomas SYDES, 317 Crown Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010

On the night of 2 November 2004, Mr Sydes rescued a man from a house fire at Florey, Australian Capital Territory.

Mr Sydes was awoken by the sound of screaming from one of his housemates. He ran to an adjacent bedroom which was on fire and found his housemate standing in the room in a state of great distress. Mr Sydes quickly woke another housemate and returned to the burning room where the occupant continued to scream. As Mr Sydes phoned for emergency services, his housemate had passed out on the floor. Mr Sydes grabbed the man and dragged him out of the room to a safer part of the house. With the help of another housemate, Mr Sydes carried the man into the yard. Mr Sydes returned to the house to rouse a fourth flatmate and began moving belongings away from the fire, switched off the electricity supply and waited for fire and ambulance services to arrive at the scene.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Ms Sarah Leone THOMPSON, "Nathans Valley", Lord Howe Island NSW 2898

On the night of 19 May 2007, Ms Thompson helped rescue a man from a house fire on Lord Howe Island.

Ms Thompson was visiting a relative's house when she saw a plastic bottle filled with petrol on fire at the entry to the building. She attempted to extinguish the fire but was unable to do so and quickly ran to a neighbouring property to raise the alarm. Returning to the house to check on the male occupant, Ms Thompson climbed through a window into the building, which was by now on fire. She made repeated attempts to persuade the occupant to leave with her but he was intoxicated and angrily refused to do move. A neighbour arrived at the scene and also attempted to convince the occupant to leave, but again he refused to comply even though the fire continued to spread throughout the cottage. The neighbour forcibly removed the man from the house and Ms Thompson then assisted in dragging him to safety. The house was entirely consumed by fire and could not be saved.

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

Mr Marc William TUCKER, NSW

On the afternoon of 8 June 2007, Mr Tucker assisted with the rescue of a teenage boy from a flooded drain at Maryland, New South Wales.

During heavy rain a teenage boy attempted to cross a flooded roadway and was swept into fast flowing water and carried many metres before becoming entangled and trapped in the limbs of a clump of trees. The boy was up to his neck in freezing water as the floodwaters surged around and over his head. Mr Tucker assessed the scene and with another man grabbed lengths of rope and headed out to the teenager. Mr Tucker made his way through the fast flowing water to the young victim and helped tie the safety rope to him. Despite being almost overcome by fatigue and hypothermia, Mr Tucker helped keep the boy stable until he could be pulled out of the floodwaters to safety.

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

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Ms Catherine Odette VINCENT, Emerald Qld 4720

On the night of 31 July 2007, Ms Vincent rescued her two children from a house fire at Emerald, Queensland.

At around midnight, Ms Vincent was awoken by a fire which was spreading through her house. She raced downstairs and made her way to a bedroom where her two young daughters were sleeping. As she did so she sustained significant burns to her body. Despite the smoke and flames, Ms Vincent found her daughters, woke them and led them from the house to safety. Because of her quick thinking and action, neither child was injured as they retreated from the building guided by their mother. Although already seriously burnt, Ms Vincent raced to a flat at the rear of her home and woke the occupant, alerting him to the fire. Ms Vincent suffered significant burns to her body and was flown to intensive care in Brisbane.

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

Ms Kelsie Roze ZOSARS, 28 Rosedale Drive, Urunga NSW 2455

On the afternoon of 11 February 2006, Ms Zosars assisted three boys from a swimming hole at Urunga, New South Wales.

Ms Zosars visited a local swimming hole and noticed three boys swinging from a rope attached to the branch of a gum tree at the edge of the water. As she was about to enter the water she heard the branch snap, hitting the boys as it fell into the river. Ms Zosars raced over to the boys and saw that only two had surfaced. One of the boys was covered in blood so she quickly helped him out of the water, showing him how to administer first aid to his bleeding head. Remaining calm, Ms Zosars re-entered the water and found another boy under the surface, his foot trapped by the fallen branch. Ms Zosars dived down to free his foot and helped swim him to shore with the assistance of another young bystander. She instructed others at the scene how to monitor the boys' condition while she raced off to the nearest house for help.

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