

## **COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT**

### **Mr Bassam ABOUCHROUCHE, NSW**

On the night of 15 June 2008, Mr Abouchrouche took actions to help detain an armed robber at his supermarket at Annandale, New South Wales.

During a quiet period in his supermarket and prior to closing, Mr Abouchrouche and members of his family and staff were cleaning the store and repacking shelves. A man entered the store, his face masked by sunglasses and a scarf. He approached the cash registers and drew out a gun, demanding cash from the shop assistant. Mr Abouchrouche's son placed himself between the gunman and the registers. A standoff ensued as the offender threatened to shoot the younger Mr Abouchrouche. The gunman moved towards the store exit and as he stepped onto the footpath, tripped against a bucket of flowers. He turned to run but in the confusion collided with a bus seat and fell to the ground. Mr Abouchrouche, assisted by one of his staff, raced to help his son wrestle the offender to the ground. Mr Abouchrouche assisted in subduing the armed robber although the offender attempted repeatedly to fire the gun. The robber was soon after arrested by police.

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

### **Mr Darin Daniel ALLEN, Cranbourne Vic 3977**

On the morning of 8 November 2005, Mr Allen attempted the rescue of a victim from a burning house at Cranbourne, Victoria.

While travelling to work Mr Allen drove past a house when he saw smoke pouring out around the eaves and roof. He stopped at the property and, as the only person at the scene, quickly jumped a tall fence and raced to the front door. Mr Allen banged repeatedly to try to rouse any occupants but was unsuccessful. As the smoke grew in intensity, Mr Allen ran to adjacent houses to get help and with the assistance of a neighbour, returned to the burning property, locating the source of the fire towards the rear of the house. Smashing glass panels on a sliding door, Mr Allen directed a garden hose to try to douse the flames. Despite the effects of smoke and flames which had taken hold of the room, Mr Allen remained at the scene attempting to extinguish the fire. Believing he could see a victim on the floor he tried to move into the house but visibility was negligible and his attempts proved futile as the heat and flames intensified. Mr Allen continued to direct water into the room until fire fighters arrived at the scene. Sadly, a deceased elderly woman was later located in the house.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Justin Luke ANDREWS**, Wangan Qld 4871

On the afternoon of 3 January 2009, Mr Andrews rescued a boy from drowning at Josephine Falls, near Miriwinni, Queensland.

A number of people including Mr Andrews and a younger friend were swimming at Josephine Falls when a large flood of water surged into a rock slide section of a water pool creating a strong current and undertow. Mr Andrews and his friend were overcome and swept downstream over submerged rocks. The young boy was pushed hard against a large boulder where he clung to prevent himself plunging four metres to a pool below. As he struggled to hold fast, he signalled for help from Mr Andrews who swam over to rescue his friend. As he made his way across rocky outcrops, Mr Andrews was swamped by the continuing surge. He grabbed his young friend and steadied himself to ensure neither tumbled over the edge as the water rushed around them. Mr Andrews swam him out to an exposed boulder, pushing his friend on to the top so that he was safely out of the water and could regain his strength. Both boys held on until they and the other swimmers were able to be pulled from the pool by a professional rescue team.

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

### **Mr Scott Alfred BAILEY**, Vic

During the morning of 30 October 2002, Mr Bailey assisted in reassuring a pilot and containing the situation following the crash of an aircraft onto the roof of a building at Barwon Heads airfield, Victoria.

Mr Bailey and several members of a skydive team training at Barwon Heads airfield, witnessed a light aircraft crash onto the roof of a building and an adjoining hangar. The pilot was injured, trapped inside the aircraft as it hung suspended above the hangar, fuel leaking heavily from its damaged wings. Mr Bailey and a companion climbed onto one of the buildings and across to the roof of the hangar to reassure the pilot. The damaged tail of the aircraft was bouncing around in strong winds; repeatedly hitting the building, creating the potential for sparks to ignite the leaking fuel. Despite the apparent dangers, Mr Bailey remained on the hangar to comfort the injured pilot and secure the badly damaged aircraft as best he could while waiting for specialist rescue equipment to arrive. Before a rescue could be attempted, emergency services were forced to spray the scene with a toxic fire retardant, some of the contaminant drifting onto Mr Bailey as he remained on the roof for up to an hour to ensure the pilot was protected and safe.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Michael John BETHUNE**, Penrith NSW 2750

On the morning of 21 July 2008, Mr Bethune helped rescue an elderly woman who had jumped into the Clarence River at Grafton, New South Wales.

Mr Bethune witnessed a young lad jump into the Clarence River in an attempt to save an elderly woman who was face down in the water. Another person at the scene raised the alarm and called police. Although suffering a significant medical condition, Mr Bethune ran underneath the bridge and jumped into the water to help. The woman was a non-swimmer, and the combination of her dead weight and thick outcrops of water reeds hampered the rescue. Mr Bethune and his companion were exhausted as they attempted to hold the victim's head above water and bring her closer to shore. Distressed that their attempts to complete the rescue were being thwarted by the freezing and difficult conditions, Mr Bethune and his co-rescuer screamed for help as they struggled to keep the woman afloat some metres from shore. Police had arrived at the scene, and pushing their way through the thick tangle of reeds out into the water, helped Mr Bethune and the other teenager drag the woman to the river bank to waiting paramedics.

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

### **Sergeant Richard James CLAYTON**, Victoria Police

During the early hours of 11 December 2008, Sergeant Clayton helped rescue two children held captive in a burning house at Dandenong, Victoria.

Sergeant Clayton and colleagues questioned a man at his home about an earlier alleged domestic violence issue, anxious also to check the safety of his two children. The man refused to cooperate, and the police became very concerned on seeing smoke billowing from the eaves and detecting the smell of fuel. The police attempted repeatedly to negotiate the release of the children but the offender refused. In response, Sergeant Clayton broke through a security shutter to get inside but was forced back by flames. He and his colleagues then smashed another window, seeing the man barricaded inside a bedroom, holding his children and refusing to release them. Sergeant Clayton hurriedly climbed into the burning house and wrestled with the man. As he attempted to detain the offender, another police officer was able to grab the children and hand them through the window to police outside. Ensuring the children were now safe, the officers struggled with the offender and forced him through the window where he was immediately secured. The children were physically unharmed, and soon after were reunited with their mother.

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

## **COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT**

### **Mr Julian Gaitan de TOURETTES, NSW**

During the evening of 29 January 2005, Mr de Tourettes assisted in the rescue of a woman and a man from a rip at Windang Beach, New South Wales.

Mr de Tourettes, his friend and another man became aware from a group of people sharing the beach that one of their party had been swept out to sea in a rip. Mr de Tourettes and the others immediately raced into the water, swimming out to the victim who was now motionless, face down in the water. Mr de Tourettes turned the woman over, and prepared to swim her back to shore. He faced strong ocean swells and crashing waves as he attempted the rescue. He was also anxious for his friend who had swum out with him to help but was trying to rescue a man who had also got into considerable difficulty in a rip. Despite the dangerous conditions and his state of exhaustion, Mr de Tourettes single-handedly swam the victim to safety. Back on the beach he ensured the victim was placed in the recovery position and monitored her condition until she began to breathe unaided.

For his actions, Mr de Tourettes is commended for brave conduct.

### **Mr Michael John DUCKWORTH, NSW**

On the afternoon of 18 June 2008, Mr Duckworth intervened to stop an assault on a man at Newcastle, New South Wales.

Mr Duckworth stopped near the scene of an incident unfolding on a footpath, concerned for a man and a six-year old girl who were surrounded by three young males. While Mr Duckworth ran to assist the man, the young males had begun assaulting the victim, punching and kicking him as he fell to the ground. As the fighting continued the young girl was hysterical, screaming frantically for the assailants to stop hurting her father. Mr Duckworth stepped forward and shouted to the youths to move. All but one of the offenders moved away. However, the third offender had immobilised his bleeding victim in a headlock, punching him repeatedly in the head. Mr Duckworth intervened physically until the offender backed down and moved out of the way. The young males began to walk away but continued to make verbal threats and gloat about their actions. This prompted Mr Duckworth to stand as a barrier between them and their victim to ensure there was no repeat attack, enabling the man and his daughter to leave the scene without further injury.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Senior Constable Scott Andrew FORD, New South Wales Police**

Late on the night of 2 March 2006, Senior Constable Ford (then Constable) helped rescue an elderly woman from a burning house at Bradbury, New South Wales.

While on a routine patrol, Constable Ford and a colleague located a house on fire. The front of the building was almost entirely engulfed in flames, and it was learnt that a woman was trapped inside. Racing to the rear of the house, Constable Ford and his colleague attempted to smash their way through a kitchen window but were forced back by the intense heat and flames. With the assistance of a fire brigade officer, the police forced open a wire door. The fireman donned breathing apparatus and entered the house, followed by the police. Despite the dangerous conditions and the lack of any protective clothing or respirators of their own, Constable Ford and his colleague searched in almost complete darkness, confronted throughout by intense heat and thick black smoke. A female victim was located on the floor in a semi-conscious state and was able to be dragged outside to safety by Constable Ford and his partner. Constable Ford then assisted a second victim in a very serious condition, placing him in the recovery position and helping ambulance until the man could be transported to hospital.

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

### **Mr Andrew James FORSDIKE OAM, 9 Edward Street, Vincentia NSW 2540**

On the night of 23 May 2002, Mr Forsdike took actions to assist the victims of a two-car collision at Vincentia, New South Wales.

Mr Forsdike witnessed a head-on collision between two cars in very dark and rainy conditions. He raced to one of the vehicles to find a small fire in its engine bay. The car's horn continued to blare and the ignition wasn't able to be switched off. The female driver was injured but not trapped, although the front doors of the car were jammed shut. Calmly assessing the scene and reassuring the conscious driver, Mr Forsdike moved to the second vehicle where the male driver, who had sustained serious head injuries and was pinned against the steering wheel. He monitored the man's very weak pulse but was unable to assist him. Mr Forsdike checked the condition of four passengers who were lying on the ground before returning to the first vehicle to ensure the fire had been extinguished by the rain and no longer posed a threat to the life of the female driver. Mr Forsdike remained at the scene to reassure the injured until police and emergency services arrived.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Senior Constable Andrew Maxwell GAUNT, New South Wales Police**

Late on the night of 2 March 2006, Senior Constable Gaunt helped rescue an elderly woman from a burning house at Bradbury, New South Wales.

While on a routine patrol, Senior Constable Gaunt and a colleague located a house on fire, the front of the building almost entirely engulfed in flames. Learning that a woman was trapped inside the house, the officers raced to the rear of the building. In poor light, Senior Constable Gaunt and his colleague smashed a kitchen window to gain entry to the house but were forced back by the intense heat and flames. The police turned their attention to a wire door, and with the help of a fire brigade officer forced it open. The fireman donned breathing apparatus and entered the house, followed by the police. Despite the dangerous conditions and the lack of any protective clothing or respirators of their own, the police searched in almost complete darkness, confronted by intense heat and thick black smoke. A barely conscious woman was located on the floor and was able to be dragged to safety by Senior Constable Gaunt and his partner. Despite suffering considerable smoke inhalation, Senior Constable Gaunt stayed at the scene to fulfil his duties until fellow officers arrived to assist. He was later admitted to hospital for treatment.

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

### **Mr Justyn Robert GIBSON, Qld**

On the afternoon of 16 September 2008, Mr Gibson assisted in protecting students and a teacher from youths armed with a knife at Marymount Catholic College, Burleigh Heads, Queensland.

Mr Gibson and a couple of workmates were at the college, laying a surface for the long jump track. Returning to the site after lunch, Mr Gibson saw five males, aged in their late teens, gathered on the school oval. One of the strangers had produced a knife, menacing a small group of students while a body of 200 or so students kept back at a small distance. Mr Gibson saw that a lone female teacher had arrived at the scene and had pulled a student out of the way of the knife-wielding offender. However, she was unprotected and the only person of authority facing off the armed man. Fearing for the safety of the teacher and students, Mr Gibson and one of his workmates armed themselves with a star picket and a shovel and made their way over to the group to help defuse the situation. Despite the considerable tension and the belligerent nature of the offenders, Mr Gibson and his workmate joined the teacher and stood their ground, instructing the youths to leave the college grounds. Reluctantly, the offenders retreated, and no one sustained serious injuries.

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

## **COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT**

### **Mr Daniel Thomas GREEN, WA**

Mid morning on 1 October 2006, Mr Green rescued a man caught in a rip at Yallingup beach, Western Australia.

A young man was body boarding at Yallingup beach when he was swept some 200 or more metres offshore. With the beach closed and in difficult conditions, the man had become exhausted, fighting a losing battle with heavy seas and struggling to stay afloat. Mr Green quickly grabbed a surfboard from a friend's house, and sprinted down along the beach. Mr Green paddled the board out to the struggling victim to see that the man had turned blue and was spluttering, taking on a quantity of water. He was barely able to keep his chin and nose out of the water, repeatedly pummelled by the heavy swell. Mr Green reassured the victim and dragged him onto the surfboard and swam him through the rough seas back to shore.

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

### **Mrs Marita-Jane HALLETT, Qld**

On the morning of 20 November 2008, Mrs Hallett rescued an elderly man from a submerged vehicle trapped in floodwater at Forest Hill, Queensland.

Mrs Hallett witnessed a vehicle being swept by floodwaters from a small bridge and plunge into a deeper section of the floodway. The car filled with water and quickly sank. Mrs Hallett ran to the scene to see that an elderly man had escaped from the submerged vehicle in the middle of the stream. Mrs Hallett jumped into the creek, swam across a partially submerged barbed wire fence and grabbed the victim who was crying out for help. She was able to pull the man towards a clump of trees as he floated past and hooked him to a branch. The man was concerned his elderly wife was still trapped in the submerged car; however Mrs Hallett was unable to attempt to rescue the woman because of the perilous conditions. Ensuring that the man was safely lodged in the stand of trees, Mrs Hallett made her way out of the floodway to locate a tyre and a rope. With the help of her husband, the victim was hooked to the tyre and pulled to safety from the creek. Sadly, the victim's wife was unable to be rescued and was discovered deceased after the floodwaters had receded.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Shane Douglas HALLETT, Qld**

On the morning of 20 November 2008, Mr Hallett rescued an elderly man from a submerged vehicle trapped in floodwater at Forest Hill, Queensland.

Mr Hallett had seen a vehicle being swept by floodwaters from a small bridge and plunge into a deep floodway. The car quickly filled with water and sank. Mr Hallett called for police as his wife ran to the scene where she was able to grab the elderly driver as he floated past and hook him to the branch of a tree. Mr Hallett ran to join his wife, and with the use of a tyre and a rope, he was able to swim out to the victim, negotiating his way across a partially submerged barbed wire fence and other debris in the floodway. The water flow was particularly strong as Mr Hallett swam the man to the safety of the bank. Sadly, the victim's wife was unable to be rescued and was discovered deceased after the floodwaters had receded.

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

### **Mr Ralph HAMILTON-PRESGRAVE, 13 McFarlane Street, Maldon Vic 3463**

Details not released at the request of Mr Hamilton-Presgrave.

### **Sergeant David JAENSCH, Victoria Police**

On 6 January 2009, Sergeant Jaensch helped rescue a woman trapped under a capsized catamaran on Port Phillip Bay, Victoria.

Water Police received a report of an upturned catamaran in Port Phillip Bay. Sergeant Jaensch and a colleague headed out in a police vessel through rough conditions, sighting the catamaran which had been swamped by freak waves. Several women were clinging to a float still attached to the catamaran by rope. The skipper and a fourth passenger were underneath the catamaran in a trapped air pocket. Without any protective clothing or breathing apparatus, Sergeant Jaensch dived into the water and swam underneath the catamaran, making contact with the skipper. The woman had agreed with the skipper to make a couple of attempts to swim down and away from the vessel but had become anxious and was reluctant to leave the confines of an air pocket. Sergeant Jaensch swam back to the surface, and communicating with the skipper through the upturned hull, devised an escape plan. He dived down again into unstable conditions underneath the stricken vessel, just as the skipper pushed the victim downwards. Sergeant Jaensch grabbed the exhausted woman, pulled her down from underneath the vessel and swam her clear to the safety of the police launch.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr William George JOHNSON**, Mornington Vic 3931

On the morning of 8 November 2005, Mr Johnson attempted the rescue of a victim from a burning house at Cranbourne, Victoria.

Mr Johnson was woken early by a knock on the door of his home from a stranger warning that an adjacent house was on fire. While his stepdaughter called the fire brigade, Mr Johnson grabbed a towel and ran next door where he could see smoke rising from the roof at the rear of the house. He tried to open the main door but it was securely locked. Running back to his property, Mr Johnson grabbed a garden hose and threw in into the neighbour's yard. The house was now billowing with thick smoke and it was impossible to see through into the building. While attempting to force open a security door, Mr Johnson detected an intense orange glow through the smoke. Unable to break in, Mr Johnson grabbed a rake and smashed a bedroom window to check for his elderly neighbour although he thought she may already have left earlier. He clambered into the room but was quickly forced out, choking on the toxic smoke. Using a singlet over his face for protection, Mr Johnson made another attempt but was unable to breathe and reluctantly was forced to retreat. He remained at the scene assisting another rescuer until fire fighters arrived.

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

### **Sergeant Samantha Helen KNIGHT**, Victoria Police

On the afternoon of 19 January 2002, Sergeant Knight (then Senior Constable) intercepted an armed offender during a siege at Glen Waverley, Victoria.

Senior Constable Knight and her patrol partner were dispatched, along with other officers, to attend a suburban address where a male was wielding two carving knives. He had stabbed his father and was threatening family members and neighbours. Senior Constable Knight stationed herself within the police cordon to keep the man at bay and to protect citizens. The offender was highly agitated and unpredictable as he lurched forward threatening to stab those around him. Senior Constable Knight was positioned close to the offender who continued to scream threats and abuse. A siege situation followed, the offender moving forward repeatedly at police, wielding his knives and threatening to kill anyone in his way. As events unfolded, the offender lunged towards an officer to stab him. Acting instinctively and despite the danger to her own life, Senior Constable Knight moved to protect her colleague. As she did so, shots were fired by police which fatally wounded the armed man. Maintaining her composure in the highly volatile situation, Senior Constable Knight then assisted an officer suffering shock from the shooting.

For her actions, Sergeant Knight is commended for brave conduct.

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

**Mr Craig James MIDDLETON**, 44 Wesley Street, Balcatta WA 6021

During the night of 13 October 2007, Mr Middleton helped rescue a friend from the sea at Avalon Bay, Falcon, Western Australia.

Mr Middleton and two friends, who were brothers, had launched a dinghy from a boat ramp in the afternoon and were fishing in the ocean off Avalon Bay. As winds began to rise and darkness closed in, the men decided to return to shore, however the craft was swamped by a large wave and capsized. The three men were thrown into the water as their dinghy began to sink. In the darkness, one of the brothers began to swim towards the shore to raise the alarm. Mr Middleton stayed with his other friend who had a history of breathing problems, reassuring and helping him as he struggled to stay afloat. As they moved through the rough waters, a woman who had earlier rescued the third member of the party swam out to assist. Mr Middleton linked arms with her around the victim to support him as his condition deteriorated. Together they were successful in seeing the man back to the safety of the beach to wait for medical assistance.

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

**Mr Christopher John OVEREND**, Bairnsdale Vic 3875

On the morning of 30 March 2009, Mr Overend rescued a driver from an overturned cattle truck and helped remove another victim from a second truck at Rosedale, Victoria.

Mr Overend was travelling behind a semi-trailer when another heavy vehicle, a cattle truck, failed to give way at an intersection. The semi-trailer hit the truck just behind the driver's cabin, the impact causing it to roll over. As a result of the collision, the trailer jack-knifed and burst into flames. Mr Overend pulled over and ran to the cattle truck. The driver was injured and disoriented, and had fallen down to the passenger side of the toppled truck. Mr Overend kicked in the truck's windscreen, pulled the driver free from the cabin and dragged him to a safe position away from the fire.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

**Mr David Lloyd PINCHIN**, 14 Hopbush Street, Palm Beach Qld 4221

On the morning of 16 June 2009, Mr Pinchin rescued a woman and three children from a burning house at Palm Beach, Queensland.

While walking his dog, Mr Pinchin noticed smoke escaping from the roof tiles of a single storey duplex. He tried to gain access to the building while yelling and knocking on the door to alert any occupants. Mr Pinchin managed to get the attention of a young boy inside who unlocked the front door for him. Entering the house he saw that the lounge room was well alight as smoke billowed through the building. Screaming out, Mr Pinchin continued to search the house, finding a closed bedroom door. Inside he found a woman and her two children still asleep, oblivious to the fire. Waking them quickly, Mr Pinchin guided the mother and her children out of the burning house to safety. He then returned inside and attempted to extinguish the flames with a bucket of water and a wet blanket, however the fire had taken hold and could not be contained until fire services arrived at the scene.

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

**Private Alex ROBBEN**,  
3 CSSB Field Supply Company, Lavarack Barracks, Townsville Qld 4813

During the evening of 29 January 2005, Private Robben assisted in the rescue of a woman and a man from a rip at Windang Beach, New South Wales.

Private Robben, his friend and another man were made aware that a woman had been swept out to sea in a rip. Responding to pleas for help, Private Robben and his companions raced into the water, swimming out to the victim through dangerous rolling swells and high waves. The young woman was motionless and face down in the water. One of Private Robben's friends was able to grab the woman and swim her back to shore, battling very difficult conditions at sea. As he did so, one of three rescuers himself had become caught in the swell and was carried out to sea well past the rescue site. Private Robben swam through the rip and located his companion, swimming him back to the safety of the beach. On his return, Private Robben assisted with first aid treatment for the woman, helping maintain her in the recovery position and reassuring her until she began to breathe unaided.

For his actions, Private Robben is commended for brave conduct.

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Patrick Craig ROBERTSON**, Broadbeach Qld 4218

On the afternoon of 16 September 2008, Mr Robertson assisted in protecting students and a teacher from youths armed with a knife at Marymount Catholic College, Burleigh Heads, Queensland.

Mr Robertson and a couple of workmates were at the college, laying a surface for the long jump track. Returning to the site after lunch, Mr Robertson saw five males, aged in their late teens, gathered on the school oval. One of the strangers had produced a knife, menacing a small group of students while a body of 200 or so students kept back at a small distance. Mr Robertson saw that a lone female teacher had arrived at the scene and had pulled a student out of the way of the knife-wielding offender. However, she was unprotected and the only person of authority facing off the armed man. Fearing for the safety of the teacher and students, Mr Robertson and one of his workmates armed themselves with a star picket and a shovel and made their way over to the group to help defuse the situation. Despite the considerable tension and the belligerent nature of the offenders, Mr Robertson and his workmate joined the teacher and stood their ground, instructing the youths to leave the college grounds. Reluctantly, the offenders retreated, and no one sustained serious injuries.

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

### **Mr Andrew SAMPSONIDIS**, Vic

In the early hours of 15 April 2007, Mr Sampsonidis rescued a man from a burning vehicle at Wantirna, Victoria.

Mr Sampsonidis was one of four people in a vehicle which was involved in a single vehicle accident. The car swerved and rolled, catching alight. The driver climbed free and left the scene while Mr Sampsonidis and another passenger tried to escape from the back seat. Dazed and confused, they crawled over to the driver's side window and got away from the vehicle. However the front seat passenger was trapped, pinned in the seat as his legs began to be burned by the under dashboard fire. Despite the shock of the accident and the danger of an explosion, Mr Sampsonidis returned to free his friend from the burning car. The windscreen had blown out in the collision, enabling him to pull the victim forward through the opening and carry him to safety. Within minutes of rescuing his companion, the vehicle exploded.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Senior Constable Christian James SAVAGE**, Victoria Police

During the early hours of 11 December 2008, Senior Constable Savage helped rescue two children held captive in a burning house at Dandenong, Victoria.

Senior Constable Savage and colleagues were tasked to investigate an alleged domestic violence issue, and to check the safety of two children inside the home. The children's father was uncooperative and refused to let the officers enter the building. Police detected the smell of fuel, and smoke had begun pouring from some of the eaves. Senior Constable Savage began smashing windows at the rear of the house to gain entry but the height of the windows made this impossible. He saw the man in a bedroom holding the children under his arms, and despite repeated pleas from the police, the offender refused to release them. One of the officers smashed a window and climbed into the burning house, followed by Senior Constable Savage. While his colleague wrestled with the offender, Senior Constable Savage grabbed the children and passed them safely through the window to officers outside. He then assisted his colleague subdue the offender, and together they forced the man through the window where he was secured. The children were physically unharmed, and soon after were reunited with their mother.

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

### **Mr Timothy James SHARROCK**, Nairne SA 5252

In the early hours of 27 November 2005, Mr Sharrock rescued a man from a burning vehicle at Lyndoch, South Australia.

Mr Sharrock was travelling along the Barossa Valley Way when he came upon a crashed vehicle on fire. The car had collided with a tree, and as a result the fuel tank had ruptured causing the rear of the vehicle to catch alight. The driver's door had sprung open and the car's engine continued to rev out of control while the wheels spun. While another passerby switched off the engine, Mr Sharrock rushed to the victim who was pushed forward in the front seat. Despite the danger to his own safety as the fire continued to spread through the car, Mr Sharrock remained inside the vehicle working to free the seriously injured driver. He managed to undo the victim's seatbelt and pull him away from the burning wreck to safety.

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

### **Mr Jason Scott SOROHAN**, Qld

Details not released at the request of Mr Sorohan.

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

**Mr Gregory John SPITERI**, 69 Liquidamber Drive, Narellan Vale NSW 2567

During the evening of 29 January 2005, Mr Spiteri swam into the ocean to assist a woman caught in a rip at Windang Beach, New South Wales.

A group of beachgoers raised the alarm with Mr Spiteri and others that one of their group had been swept out to sea in a rip. Mr Spiteri and two teenagers raced into the water, swimming out to the victim. The condition of the ocean was considered dangerous as the men faced high swells and crashing waves as well as a significant undercurrent. As Mr Spiteri swam to the rescue he soon became caught in the strong rip, beginning to drift away as he attempted to swim back to shore. One of the teenagers swam out to Mr Spiteri and was able to assist him to reach the sandbank and make it back to the beach. The female victim was brought back to shore and placed in the recovery position where she regained full consciousness and was able to leave the scene without medical assistance.

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

**Mr Robert William WARE**, PO Box 150, Kyogle NSW 2474

On the night of 17 December 2008, Mr Ware helped rescue a man from a burning vehicle at Kyogle, New South Wales.

Mr Ware was driving his wife and a friend towards Kyogle when a woman waved them down. A utility had run off the road, careered 20 metres down an embankment and crashed into a tree. The car's engine bay was already well alight and smoke was pouring from the vehicle. Mr Ware went to assist a woman who was trying to open the driver's side door to free the driver from the wreck. The victim was badly injured and unconscious, still strapped into his seat. Mr Ware pulled repeatedly on the door and was able to open it wide enough to enable the couple to pull the victim free from the burning wreck. Mr Ware remained with the victim until emergency and medical services arrived at the scene. Sadly, the driver was unable to recover from his serious head injuries and died the following day.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Sergeant Graham Neil WEST**, New South Wales Police

On the afternoon of 16 April 2007, Sergeant West (then Leading Senior Constable) rescued a woman attempting to drown herself at Wollongong Harbour, New South Wales.

Police were called to assist a woman with mental health issues who had made her way to Wollongong Harbour. As officers attempted to intervene, the woman jumped from the jetty into deep water and began swimming out towards the Heads. She was approached by various civilians and police in craft but rejected their help. Leading Senior Constable West had boarded a trawler and headed towards the woman. He jumped into the ocean and swam to the woman. She turned on Leading Senior Constable West, kicking him and causing him to submerge. He continued to negotiate with the victim for up to 20 minutes as the pair drifted out to sea. Again he was kicked and began to tire as he was pulled under the water. Concerned for her wellbeing, Leading Senior Constable West made a further attempt to subdue the woman and was able to secure her to a torpedo buoy. He pulled her onto a rescue board attached to a lifesaver's Jet Ski, however the woman renewed her attacks on him. Leading Senior Constable West persisted until the victim was overcome by exhaustion. She was able to be secured to the ski and safely brought back to land.

For his actions, Sergeant Constable West is commended for brave conduct.

### **Mr Kane Joseph WILLIAMS**, 16 Hunt Place, Berkeley NSW 2506

On the night of 19 September 2008, Mr Williams helped rescue a man from a burning vehicle at Unanderra, New South Wales.

A motor vehicle travelling at high speed along the Princes Highway clipped a power pole and spun out of control before coming to rest on top of a high pressure gas main. The vehicle's fuel tank was ruptured and caught alight, igniting the main which shot up flames engulfing the car. After calling '000', Mr Williams ran to the scene where a couple of people were attempting to break their way into the vehicle to rescue a trapped passenger. Mr Williams assisted the other rescuers, encouraging the victim to move to the driver's side window. As the man did so he was grabbed around the head and shoulders and partially pulled through the window of the burning cabin. At this point, Mr Williams took hold of the man around his legs and helped pull him free. As a result the victim was able to be dragged away from the burning wreck and carried to safety. Sadly, three other passengers in the car died at the scene.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Jason Robert WORLEY, Vic**

On the afternoon of 14 April 2009, Mr Worley rescued a female storekeeper who was being robbed by a man armed with a knife at Norlane, Victoria.

Mr Worley had noticed a suspicious looking man standing outside a milk bar and decided to walk across the roadway to investigate. As the man entered the shop, Mr Worley followed, to see the female shop owner behind the counter being threatened. The offender was leaning forward and pointing a knife at the woman's throat. Mr Worley yelled at the offender, ordering him to leave the store. Taken by surprise, the armed man turned to leave the store, attempting to intimidate him as he escaped on foot. Mr Worley followed in quick pursuit, yelling for someone to call the police. Keeping the offender in sight, and uncertain whether police had been called, Mr Worley used his mobile phone to raise the alarm while monitoring the attacker's movements. As a result of Mr Worley's vigilance, police were soon on the scene and able to arrest the man. Concerned for the victim, Mr Worley returned to the store to check of the owner's wellbeing.

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