

STAR OF COURAGE

Ms Lorraine Mary CASEY, Victoria

On 7 February 2009, Ms Casey rescued her friend and colleague during the 'Black Saturday' bushfires at Kinglake, Victoria.

In the midst of the Black Saturday bushfires, Ms Casey, a member of the Country Fire Authority (CFA), assisted her friend to defend her house in Bald Spur Road, Kinglake from the firestorm. With safety considerations paramount, her friend asked Ms Casey to leave as the fire front approached. Ms Casey managed to return to the Kinglake CFA shed and remained until the fire front had past. As darkness approached, Ms Casey became aware that her friend's situation had become dire, so decided to drive back to assist. She drove through the fire-stricken forest until she was unable to travel further due to the fallen and burning trees which had blocked Bald Spur Road. Using a torch, Ms Casey left the safety of her vehicle and walked about 600 metres along the road until she found her friend, badly injured and almost unconscious. In very difficult conditions, Ms Casey assisted her friend back to the vehicle and again negotiated fallen trees to return to the main road and back to the CFA shed. With no ambulances available, local police officers were able to transport the woman to Whittlesea to receive urgently needed medical attention.

By her actions, Ms Casey displayed conspicuous courage.

Mr Charles ZERAFI, Roger River Tas 7330

On the morning of 9 May 2006, Mr Zerafa assisted a wounded police officer and confronted an armed offender at Mangalore, Tasmania.

Mr Zerafa was travelling along the Midland Highway at Mangalore, Tasmania, with a friend when he came upon a police vehicle and another vehicle stopped by the side of the road. Two other drivers had stopped by the vehicle and were attempting to assist a police officer, who had been shot and was lying on the ground. One of the men notified police on the police radio of the situation, and informed Mr Zerafa and his friend that a man was armed with a gun. As the two men moved away, Mr Zerafa approached the wounded officer and checked for a response. Despite the considerable risk to his own safety, he then yelled to the armed offender and tried to negotiate with him, but the man responded by pointing a gun directly at him. Mr Zerafa moved away as the offender knelt down beside the wounded police officer. The offender then went to back to his vehicle and appeared to be reloading his weapon, which allowed Mr Zerafa the opportunity to return to the police officer. While continually trying to negotiate with the gunman Mr Zerafa inched closer to him, however the offender responded by pointing the gun at him again. Mr Zerafa continued negotiating until the police arrived and arrested the man.

By his actions, Mr Zerafa displayed conspicuous courage.