

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Morgan Walter ASHWORTH, Kalannie WA 6468**

In the afternoon of 28 September 2014 Mr Morgan Ashworth assisted in the rescue of three men after their boat capsized at Horrocks Beach, Western Australia.

Morgan, who was 15 at the time, his father, and a 14 year old friend were on their runabout boat at Horrocks Beach when they noticed another runabout engulfed by a large wave. Three men were thrown into the water and managed to cling onto the overturned vessel as large waves crashed over them.

Morgan's father immediately directed their small boat towards the overturned vessel and Morgan pulled one of the men aboard. They quickly made their way to another man who was tiring and, after a struggle and an encounter with a large wave, and with the assistance of his friend, they managed to get the man aboard.

The third man didn't want to leave his upturned vessel, so Morgan's father steered their boat to a position where they could see the stranded man and kept sight of him until a cray fish boat arrived and took the man aboard and towed the stricken vessel to shore.

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

### **Mr Walter Forrest ASHWORTH, Kalannie WA 6468**

In the afternoon of 28 September 2014 Mr Walter Ashworth went to the rescue of three men after their boat capsized at Horrocks Beach, Western Australia.

Mr Ashworth, his 15 year old son and a 14 year old friend were on their runabout boat at Horrocks Beach when they noticed another runabout engulfed by a large wave. Three men were thrown into the water and managed to cling onto the overturned vessel as large waves crashed over them.

Mr Ashworth immediately realised the danger of the situation and directed his small boat into the unpredictable waves. When close to the overturned vessel, his son pulled one of the men aboard. They quickly made their way to another man who was tiring and, after a struggle and an encounter with a large wave, and with the assistance of the two boys on the boat, he too was pulled aboard.

The third man didn't want to leave his upturned vessel, so Mr Ashworth steered his boat to a position where he could see the stranded man and kept sight of him until a cray fish boat arrived and took the man aboard and towed the stricken vessel to shore.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

**Mrs Fiona Margaret BENNION**, Cannonvale Qld 4802

In the early hours of 13 September 2015, Mrs Fiona Bennion was involved in the rescue of several people during a fire in a backpacker's hostel at Airlie Beach in Queensland.

Two police officers were on patrol when they observed smoke coming from the hostel at Airlie Beach. They quickly went to the area and found smoke and flames coming from the kitchen.

Mrs Bennion, manager of the hostel, informed the officers that people were inside the building and that there were gas cylinders and gas lines nearby. The police officers entered the smoke-filled building and located three disorientated adults and led them outside. Mrs Bennion then informed them there was an elderly couple unaccounted for.

She accompanied the officers into the smoke-filled building to search for the elderly couple. Whilst the officers continued to look for the elderly couple, Mrs Bennion decided to navigate her way to an underground carpark where she was able to turn off the gas lines and reduce the threat of an explosion.

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

**Miss Tayah Erin BONGIORNO**, Box Hill Vic 3128

On the morning of 8 April 2016, Miss Tayah Bongiorno assisted a school friend who was being attacked at Blackburn, Victoria.

Tayah and her friend left their fourth grade class to walk to another section of their Primary School. As the girls rounded the end of a classroom, they came upon an unknown man who was an intruder on the school grounds. The man forcefully grabbed the arm of Tayah's friend.

Tayah began screaming for help as she took hold of her friend's free arm. After a short period of time she took a firmer hold of her friend with both hands and wrenched the girl out of the offender's grip.

Once free, the girls ran to the front office and alerted staff to the attack. The school Principal immediately ran to the scene and called Emergency Services. At this time, the intruder had fled the scene.

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

## **COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT**

### **Senior Constable Benjamin James BURNELL, Queensland Police**

In the evening of 5 January 2015, Senior Constable (then Constable) Benjamin Burnell assisted people trapped after an accident involving an LPG tanker at Ellis Beach, Queensland.

Constable Burnell and his colleague attended a traffic accident north of Ellis Beach. As first on the scene the officers saw an LPG tanker had run off the highway and landed nose first in a waterway culvert. The tanker had landed upside down and was resting precariously on two rocks and water was entering the crushed cabin.

Constable Burnell and his colleague climbed down the bank to the tanker. They saw two adults trapped within the cabin. The female passenger was unreachable, however they were able to assist the male driver in keeping his head above the rising water.

Constable Burnell and his colleague attempted to release the trapped victims but were unsuccessful. They continued to provide reassurance until Emergency Services arrived. Sadly the female passenger did not survive the incident.

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

**For contact information on the above recipient please contact the relevant state police jurisdiction's media section.**

### **Mr Brian Keith CALWAY, Townsville Qld 4810**

On the morning of 24 August 2015, Mr Brian Calway was involved in the rescue of a disabled man from a burning house at Castle Hill, Queensland.

Mr Calway and others became aware of smoke billowing from a residence at Castle Hill, Townsville and they immediately ran towards the multi-storey property.

As he was assessing the situation, the home's owner arrived and informed them that her physically disabled son was inside the house and wouldn't be able to get out.

Mr Calway quickly entered the property and, as he moved through the house, he noticed that the mother had also entered and placed the young man's disability chair in a lift. With the smoke becoming thicker and breathing more difficult he urged the home owner to leave the building with him.

Meanwhile another man who had entered the house had managed to locate the young man, grab him and carry him outside to safety.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Sandy Robert COOKE, Koorda WA 6475**

In the afternoon of 28 September 2014, Mr Sandy Cooke assisted in the rescue of three men after their boat capsized at Horrocks Beach, Western Australia.

Sandy, his 15 year old friend and his friend's father were on a runabout boat at Horrocks Beach when they noticed another runabout engulfed by a large wave. Three men were thrown into the water and managed to cling onto the overturned vessel as large waves crashed over them.

His friend's father immediately directed their small boat towards the overturned vessel, and his friend pulled one of the men aboard. They quickly made their way to another man who was tiring and, after a struggle and an encounter with a large wave, Sandy with the assistance of his friend managed to get the man aboard.

The third man didn't want to leave his upturned vessel, so his friend's father steered their boat to a position where they could see the stranded man and kept sight of him until a cray fish boat arrived and took the man aboard and towed the stricken vessel to shore.

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

### **Miss Stacey Lee DENMAN, Labrador Qld 4215**

In the early hours of 27 September 2013, Miss Stacey Denman was involved in an aggravated robbery incident at Arundel, Queensland.

Two armed offenders, in possession of a shot gun and a machete, entered a tavern in Arundel with the intention of robbing it. They detained 15 staff members, including Miss Denman, as well as some tavern patrons.

The offenders removed all mobile phones; except for one that Miss Denman had the presence of mind to hide in her apron pocket. She was able to discreetly make a call to police and kept the line open, until it was safe to speak with the operator, and provide details of the robbery that was taking place.

After forcing the safe open and removing cash, the offenders decamped on foot into nearby bushland. Police officers later successfully apprehended the two armed offenders after they had seriously wounded one of the officers.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Christopher Joseph DENNIS, Queensland**

On the afternoon of 10 October 2015, Mr Christopher Dennis was involved in the rescue of a boy who was swept into the sea at Fingal Head, New South Wales.

A woman and three young children were playing in an area known as Echidna Rock at Fingal Headland. The children were two metres from the water line when a large wave crashed onto the headland and caused one of the children, a nine year old boy, to lose his footing, fall onto the rocks and into the water. The remaining two children also lost their balance, but did not enter the water.

The woman immediately jumped into the water and swam to the boy and, on reaching him, held his head above the water. Mr Dennis observed the woman's attempts to rescue the child. They appeared to be struggling as he quickly entered the surf and swam towards them. Upon reaching the distressed swimmers he took hold of the child and began to swim away from dangerous rocks.

Mr Dennis, who still had hold of the boy, raised the alarm with nearby fishermen. He continued to manoeuvre through the strong currents and was eventually able to touch a sandbank where a police officer had swum out to assist. The police officer towed the boy through the surf until he could stand and walk.

Mr Dennis then made his way back to shore. Sadly the woman did not survive the incident.

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

### **The late Mr Stephen Charles DICK, Late of Garden Suburb NSW 2289**

On the afternoon of 12 April 2016, Mr Stephen Dick went to the rescue of a boy who became caught in a rip at Boomerang Beach, New South Wales.

Mr Dick was visiting Boomerang Beach with his wife and children. As he was swimming with his 13 year old son, the boy became caught in a strong rip.

He immediately swam over to his son and pushed him towards the shore. The boy managed to find his footing as Mr Dick directed him to swim. The boy followed the directions and, upon reaching the beach, turned back to see his father floating face down about 50 metres from the shore.

A man who had witnessed the incident managed to obtain a surfboard and swam out to Mr Dick. He then put his arms around Mr Dick's neck and swam back to the shore where CPR was commenced. Unfortunately Mr Dick was unable to be revived.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Jye FISHER, Pacific Palms NSW 2428**

On the afternoon of 12 April 2016, Mr Jye Fisher went to the rescue of a man who became caught in a rip at Boomerang Beach, New South Wales.

A young boy became caught in a rip at the beach and his father swam over to him and managed to push him towards the shore, the man then got into difficulty.

Mr Fisher was working on a construction site across the road from the beach when he became aware that the man was in trouble. He quickly ran to the beach, got hold of a surfboard and entered the water.

He made his way to the man but was unable to get him onto the surfboard so he put his arms around the unresponsive man's neck and battled his way back to shore through the strong surf. CPR was then commenced on the man but unfortunately he was unable to be revived.

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

### **Mr Aaron HILLIER, Queensland**

On the afternoon of 10 October 2015, Mr Aaron Hillier was involved in the rescue of people who were swept into the sea at Fingal Head, New South Wales.

A woman and three young children were playing in an area known as Echidna Rock at Fingal Headland. The children were two metres from the water line when a large wave crashed onto the headland and caused one of the children, a nine year old boy, to lose his footing, fall onto the rocks and into the water. The remaining two children also lost their balance, but did not enter the water.

The woman immediately jumped into the water and swam to the boy and held his head above the water. A man quickly entered the surf and made his way towards the woman who was struggling in the difficult conditions. He got hold of the boy and swam him back to shore. Another man had also entered the water and was assisting the now unresponsive woman.

Mr Hillier quickly became aware of the situation and entered the water with his surfboard to render assistance. Despite the strong current, Mr Hillier and the other man, after several attempts, managed to get the unconscious woman onto the surfboard and commenced CPR.

Mr Hillier and the man were making their way back to shore with the woman when a rescue boat arrived and took them back to shore. Sadly she did not survive the incident.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Detective Constable Lachlan Charles KNOWLES**, Queensland Police

In the early hours of the morning of 27 September 2013, Detective Constable Lachlan Knowles assisted at an aggravated robbery incident in Arundel, Queensland.

Queensland Police were alerted to an incident at a tavern where two armed offenders, in possession of a shot gun and a machete, were conducting a robbery. Fifteen tavern patrons and employees were being detained in the tavern by the two offenders. After forcing the safe open and removing cash, the offenders decamped on foot into nearby bushland.

Two police officers arrived on the scene and quickly began to conduct a search in the surrounding area. After a period of time, and with the assistance of a police dog, the offenders were located hiding behind a tree. The offenders then opened fire seriously wounding one of the officers.

One of the offenders was then detained while the second offender fled on foot. Detective Constable Knowles and another officer arrived at the scene and quickly pursued the second offender. With weapons drawn they caught up with the man who was then handcuffed.

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

### **Corporal Mark Adam LAMB**, Northern Territory

On the afternoon of 8 March 2015, Corporal Mark Lamb assisted in restraining an armed offender during an assault at Belmont, New South Wales.

Corporal Lamb and two others heard a female screaming in a neighbouring property and they immediately scaled a fence and entered the yard to assist. When the male offender saw Corporal Lamb and the others arrive, he threw a chair towards them before grabbing hold of a loaded spear fishing gun.

The offender ran down some stairs and moved behind a glass sliding door, cocking and aiming the spear gun towards the men as they rushed to the door. The offender then discharged the gun causing the spear to skim past one of the men.

Corporal Lamb and the others wrestled the offender to the ground. During the struggle, one of the men sustained an injury. Corporal Lamb and the others disarmed and then detained the offender until Emergency Services arrived.

For his actions, Corporal Lamb is commended for brave conduct.

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Stephen Thomas LAMB**, Belmont NSW 2280

On the afternoon of 8 March 2015, Mr Stephen Lamb assisted in restraining an armed offender during an assault at Belmont, New South Wales.

Mr Lamb and two others heard a female screaming in a neighbouring property at Nerang Close. They immediately scaled a fence and entered the yard to assist the female. When the male offender saw Mr Lamb and the others arrive, he threw a chair towards the men before grabbing hold of a loaded spear fishing gun.

The offender ran down some stairs and moved behind a glass sliding door, cocking the spear gun and pointing it towards the men as they rushed to the door.

The offender discharged the gun causing the spear to skim past Mr Lamb. He and the others wrestled the offender to the ground. During the struggle, Mr Lamb sustained an injury however the men were able to disarm and detain the offender until Emergency Services arrived.

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

### **Mr Graeme Gary LAWRENCE**, Bald Hills Qld 4036

Late in the evening of 19 November 1977, Mr Graeme Lawrence, (then Constable with Queensland Police), attended a residence in Brighton, Queensland, where gun shots were being fired.

Constable Lawrence was informed of the situation and then moved to a property next door. As he was approximately 30 metres from the offender, he yelled at him in an attempt to encourage conversation.

Constable Lawrence then observed a colleague kneeling on a footpath across the road. As he approached his colleague, he was shot in the leg. He fell to the ground and self-administered first aid before sliding himself along the footpath as a car stopped on the opposite side of the street.

Constable Lawrence warned the driver of the gun fire; however the driver exited the vehicle and was also shot. The driver managed to get back in the car as Constable Lawrence made his way towards him. During this time Constable Lawrence was again wounded and he took cover.

Sometime later two police officers came to his assistance. Unfortunately the driver of the car did not survive the incident.

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

## **COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT**

### **Mr Gregory Thomas LEWIS, Belmont NSW 2280**

On the afternoon of 8 March 2015, Mr Gregory Lewis assisted in restraining an armed offender during an assault at Belmont, New South Wales.

Mr Lewis and two others heard a female screaming in a neighbouring property and they immediately scaled a fence and entered the yard to assist the female. When the male offender saw Mr Lewis and the others arrive, he threw a chair towards the men before grabbing hold of a loaded spear fishing gun.

The offender ran down some stairs and moved behind a glass sliding door, cocking and aiming the spear gun towards the men as they rushed the door. The offender discharged the gun causing the spear to skim past one of the men.

Mr Lewis and the others then immediately wrestled the offender to the ground. During the struggle one of the men sustained an injury. Mr Lewis and the others disarmed and detained the offender until Emergency Services arrived.

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

### **Detective Senior Constable Danijel LUKIC, Queensland Police**

In the early hours of the morning of 27 September 2013, Detective Senior Constable (then Senior Constable) Danijel Lukic assisted at an aggravated robbery incident in Arundel, Queensland.

Queensland Police were alerted to an incident at a tavern where two armed offenders, in possession of a shot gun and a machete, were conducting a robbery. Fifteen tavern patrons and employees were being detained in the tavern by the two offenders. After forcing the safe open and removing cash, the offenders decamped on foot into nearby bushland.

Two police officers arrived on the scene and quickly began to conduct a search in the surrounding area. After a period of time, and with the assistance of a police dog, the offenders were located hiding behind a tree. The offenders then opened fire seriously wounding one of the officers.

One of the offenders was then detained while the second offender fled on foot. Senior Constable Lukic and another officer arrived at the scene and quickly pursued the second offender. With weapons drawn they caught up with the man who was then handcuffed.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Ms Cristiana Margaret MORF**, Castle Hill Qld 4810

On the morning of 24 August 2015, Ms Christiana Morf was involved in the rescue of a disabled man from a burning house at Castle Hill, Queensland.

Several members of the public became aware of smoke billowing from a residence at Castle Hill, Townsville and immediately ran towards the multi-storey property.

As they were assessing the situation, the home's owner arrived and informed them that her physically disabled son was inside the house and wouldn't be able to get out. Two men then quickly entered the property along with the home owner and the young man was located and carried outside to safety.

Ms Morf also entered the home, located the seat of the fire and closed doors to inhibit the spread of the smoke and flames. She then isolated the electricity to the home and waited to guide the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services team directly to the fire.

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

### **Mr Robert Ross PARKIN**, New South Wales

In the early hours of 1 September 2009, Mr Robert Parkin (then Senior Constable with New South Wales Police) attended an armed robbery incident at a hotel in Canley Heights, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Parkin and his colleague were alerted to a robbery taking place and immediately made their way to the scene. At the front of the hotel they observed the offenders moving around inside.

The Officers drew their weapons as the offenders, who were both armed with guns, approached the front doors of the hotel holding a hostage. Senior Constable Parkin shouted for the men to put down their weapons.

At this point the second offender aimed his rifle directly at Senior Constable Parkin who then discharged a single shot in the man's direction. The offender wasn't wounded but fell against a wall and dropped his weapon.

The other officer was then able to discharge a shot at the other offender, hitting him and allowing the hostage to break free. The Officers then secured the offenders until police backup arrived.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Robert Charles PEARSON, Yellow Rock NSW 2777**

On the afternoon of 17 October 2013, Mr Robert Pearson provided shelter and protection to residents from a bush fire at Yellow Rock, New South Wales.

As a bushfire raged in bushland around Yellow Rock more than 50 residents sought refuge at a local lookout. They had been unable to evacuate as the road to the highway had been blocked by fallen debris and thick smoke.

Mr Pearson and a firefighter drove to the lookout. They gathered the trapped residents and their pets and had them follow Mr Pearson in convoy back to the safety of his house.

The residents were rushed into the home as Mr Pearson and firefighters began to extinguish spot fires on the roof and the surrounding garden area. Mr Pearson and the firefighters continued to battle the fire from mid-afternoon until about 9pm at which time the fire front passed.

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

### **Senior Constable Adam Issac PETERSEN, Queensland Police**

In the evening of 5 January 2015, Senior Constable (then Constable) Adam Petersen assisted people trapped after an accident involving an LPG tanker at Ellis Beach, Queensland.

Constable Petersen and a colleague attended a traffic accident north of Ellis Beach. As first on the scene the officers saw an LPG tanker had run off the highway and landed nose first in a waterway culvert. The tanker had landed upside down and was resting precariously on two rocks and water was entering the crushed cabin.

He and his colleague climbed down the bank to the tanker. They saw two adults trapped within the cabin. The female passenger was unreachable, however they were able to assist the male driver in keeping his head above the rising water.

Constable Petersen and his colleague attempted to release the trapped victims but were unsuccessful. They continued to provide reassurance until emergency services arrived. Sadly the female passenger did not survive the incident.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

**Mr Scott Alan PITT**, New South Wales

Details not released at the request of Mr Pitt

**Miss Kaitlin Lily RELF**, Munruben Qld 4125

In the evening of 1 May 2015, Miss Kaitlin Relf rescued her young sister from a submerged vehicle at Munruben, Queensland.

Heavy rain had been falling in the area for over a week causing flash flooding. Kaitlin, then eight years old, was in a car with her mother, grandmother and three year old sister travelling on Greenhill Road in Munruben. As the car was travelling downhill it was hit by a wave of water, swept sideways, and began floating in 8-10 metre deep water.

Kaitlin's mother and grandmother were able to exit the car, but were quickly carried away from the vehicle by the force of the water and managed to grab hold of a tree. Kaitlin immediately undid her own seatbelt and moved to where her sister was secured in a baby seat. With the car sinking into the water she managed to pull her sister from the seat straps.

She then swam underwater and exited the car, pulling her sister out behind her. Becoming fatigued, she pushed her sister to the surface where the child was grabbed by her mother, who then also managed to get hold of Kaitlin.

Emergency services arrived at the scene and all four were rescued.

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

**Mr Darren Rogers**, New South Wales

Details not released at the request of Mr Rogers

## **COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT**

### **Mr Simon Robert ROSS, Port Macquarie NSW 2444**

In the early hours of 1 September 2009, Mr Simon Ross (then Detective Senior Constable with New South Wales Police) attended an armed robbery incident at a hotel in Canley Heights, New South Wales.

Detective Senior Constable Ross and his colleague were alerted to a robbery taking place and immediately made their way to the scene. At the front of the hotel they observed the offenders moving around inside.

The Officers drew their weapons as the offenders, who were both armed with guns, approached the front doors of the hotel holding a hostage. Detective Senior Constable Ross' colleague shouted for the men to put down their weapons.

At this point the second offender aimed his rifle directly at his colleague who then discharged a single shot in the man's direction. The offender wasn't wounded but fell against a wall and dropped his weapon.

Detective Senior Constable Ross was then able to discharge a shot at the other offender, hitting him and allowing the hostage to break free. The Officers then secured the offenders until police backup arrived.

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

### **Sergeant Gregory Burgess ST CLAIR, Queensland Police**

In the early hours of the morning of 27 September 2013, Sergeant Gregory St Clair assisted at an aggravated robbery incident in Arundel, Queensland.

Queensland Police were alerted to an incident at a tavern where two armed offenders, in possession of a shot gun and a machete, were conducting a robbery. Fifteen tavern patrons and employees were being detained in the tavern by the two offenders. After forcing the safe open and removing cash, the offenders decamped on foot into nearby bushland.

Two police officers arrived on the scene and quickly began to conduct a search in the surrounding area. After a period of time, and with the assistance of a police dog, the offenders were located hiding behind a tree. The offenders then opened fire seriously wounding one of the officers.

Sergeant St Clair arrived on the scene and, despite not knowing the location of the offenders, he quickly approached and administered first aid to his seriously wounded colleague.

With the assistance of other police officers, both offenders were successfully detained.

For his actions, Sergeant St Clair is commended for brave conduct.

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Rodney John SMITH, Botanic Ridge Vic 3977**

On the morning of 24 September 2007, Mr Rodney Smith rescued an unconscious man at Boomerang Beach, New South Wales.

Mr Smith, his 15 year old son and a friend entered the surf at Boomerang Beach, near Forster, to go boogie boarding. After a short time in the water, Mr Smith noticed that his friend was floating upside down.

Mr Smith and his son immediately made their way to their friend and attempted to keep him afloat. They then found themselves caught in a rip and being dragged further out to sea. Onlookers realised the situation and called for help.

Large waves continued to knock the man off his boogie board forcing Mr Smith to duck dive under the water in order to pick him up and rest his head on the board. His son assisted in keeping the man's head above water while Mr Smith continued to undertake EAR procedures.

Soon after, other bystanders entered the water and rendered assistance to the man and brought them to shore. Emergency services arrived and were able to revive him.

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

### **Mr Rory Samuel SMITH, Botanic Ridge Vic 3977**

On the morning of 24 September 2007, Mr Rory Smith rescued an unconscious man at Boomerang Beach, New South Wales.

Rory, his father and his father's friend entered the surf at Boomerang Beach, near Forster, to go boogie boarding. After a short time in the water, his father noticed that his friend was floating upside down.

Rory and his father immediately made their way to their friend and attempted to keep him afloat. They then found themselves caught in a rip and being dragged further out to sea. Onlookers realised the situation and called for help.

Large waves continued to knock the man off his boogie board forcing Rory's father to duck dive under the water in order to pick him up and rest his head on the board. Rory assisted in keeping the man's head above water while his father continued to undertake EAR procedures.

Soon after, other bystanders entered the water and rendered assistance to the man and brought them to shore. Emergency services arrived and were able to revive him.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

### **Mr Frans Fredrik VAN REES**, Castle Hill NSW 2154

On 3 August 1990, Mr Frans Van Rees was involved in the rescue of several people from rising flood waters at Eugowra, New South Wales.

Mr Van Rees was piloting a small helicopter with a television crew on board and was heading towards Dubbo to report on the floods which were occurring in western New South Wales. As he was nearing his destination Mr Van Rees heard another pilot's request for help over the radio.

He responded to the request, flying his helicopter to Eugowra where he observed several people who were trapped in major floods which had swamped the town. He immediately landed the helicopter in a safe zone and deployed two members of the news crew onto the ground. He then piloted the helicopter towards the stranded people.

With no rescue equipment available, Mr Van Rees concluded that the only way a rescue could be conducted was to hover close to the stranded people and have them physically lifted into the aircraft and fly them one by one to safety. With the helicopter's skids touching the water the assistant cameraman was able to lift and drag the trapped people into the aircraft and they were then flown to safe ground.

Mr Van Rees and the assistant cameraman then conducted several further rescues of people who were either on roof tops of buildings or trapped in the rising waters.

For his actions, Mr Van Rees is commended for brave conduct.

### **Ms Jojanne Gertrude (Anneke) WEEMAES**, United Kingdom

On the morning of 22 March 2016, Ms Anneke Weemaes went to the assistance of victims injured during terrorist bombings at Brussels Airport, at Zaventem in Belgium.

Ms Weemaes was close to where two terrorist nail bombs had been detonated inside the departure terminal at Brussels Airport. Immediately after the bombs were discharged, and despite the chaotic scene inside the terminal, she maintained her composure and quickly began to tend to some of the injured victims. She treated their wounds, maintained their morale, and made calls to reassure their loved ones.

Whilst tending to the injured, she came upon a severely injured police officer. Disregarding the threat of potential further explosions, she removed her jacket and placed it over the injured officer. Ms Weemaes remained with the injured man and provided him with support and reassurance whilst waiting for emergency services to arrive.

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

## COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

**Mr Wayne Gerrard WELLER**, Madora Bay WA 6210

In the afternoon of 6 October 2015, Mr Wayne Weller rescued a teenage boy who was caught in a rip at Port Bouvard, Western Australia.

Mr Weller was walking on Pyramid Beach when he noticed a lone swimmer, out past the wave zone, showing signs of distress. A teenager ran past alerting him that the swimmer was his brother and needed assistance.

Despite the rough seas, Mr Weller entered the water and made his way to the swimmer. Once out past the breaking waves he was able to grab the exhausted teenager and place in him a 'survivor paddling hold'.

He then swam with the teenager, letting the rip carry them out a distance before using the currents to drift back through the breakers and then to the safety of the beach.

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