

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Mrs Connie Teresa BORG, Burnside Vic 3023

On the morning of 17 November 2011, Mrs Connie Borg attempted to rescue a baby during a dog attack at Burnside, Victoria.

Mrs Borg was pushing her one year old grandson in a pram when she saw a dog running towards them. She immediately placed herself in front of the pram to protect her grandson. During a prolonged attack the dog clawed and bit her as she screamed for help. As she fought with the dog she tried to stop it from biting her grandson. Two men who were driving by noticed the attack and immediately came to her aid. As one of the men struck the dog several times, the other man was able to assist Mrs Borg and her grandson into the cabin of a ute. Mrs Borg then drove to a nearby medical centre.

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

Senior Sergeant David George BRAY, Tasmania Police

During the early evening in late February 1989, Senior Sergeant (then First Class Constable) David Bray rescued a man who was attempting to jump from the Tasman Bridge, Hobart, Tasmania.

First Class Constable Bray was alerted by a member of the public that a man was about to jump off the Tasman Bridge. On arrival, he saw the man sitting on the railing at the crest of the bridge about sixty metres above the Derwent River. First Class Constable Bray attempted to reassure the distraught man and despite a fear of heights, he put his hands through the railing and handcuffed the man onto it. With the assistance of another officer, he then straddled the railing and pulled the man, who struggled against him, back onto the bridge.

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

Mr Stephen Francis CORCORAN, 27 Arkana Drive, Noosa Heads Qld 4567

Around midday on 14 September 2012, Mr Stephen Corcoran assisted in the rescue of several people following a multiple vehicle accident at Chatsworth, Queensland.

Mr Corcoran was driving a courtesy bus along the Bruce Highway when he saw an out of control vehicle heading towards them. He immediately applied his brakes before the oncoming vehicle drove off the road after narrowly avoided hitting the bus. Mr Corcoran pulled over and immediately went to the aid of the occupants in the overturned vehicle, noticing as he did that further along the road two other vehicles had also collided. Mr Corcoran assisted the front passengers out and then went to the aid of the female passenger in the rear seat who appeared to have sustained a head injury. He climbed through the driver's side window and assisted the woman out of the car. He then moved to the other vehicles one of which was on fire with the driver trapped inside. Mr Corcoran obtained a fire extinguisher from a truck driver and was able to extinguish the flames that were near the driver's head. With the assistance of others, he was able to wrench the driver's door open, grab hold of the injured woman and pull her outside.

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

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Mr James Michael DINGLE, Queensland

On the afternoon of 30 July 2008, Mr James Dingle rescued a man following a gas explosion on the property "Wagganba" via Surat, Queensland.

Mr Dingle was the drilling engineer at a remote gas and oil exploration drilling site when an explosion occurred. A high pressure nitrogen hose had blown off a well head and severed the drilling supervisor's left arm. The man was knocked face first into a two metre well where he also suffered a broken leg, ribs and other injuries. Concerned for his colleagues, Mr Dingle immediately entered the accident site and managed to turn off the valve that supplied high pressure nitrogen. When he realised a man was missing he returned to the well and looked into it and saw some bubbles and a shirt. Mr Dingle reached into the water, pulled the man out and moved him to safety. After calling 000, Mr Dingle and other colleagues provided first aid until ambulance personnel arrived.

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

Sergeant John Paul GOMES, New South Wales Police

On the morning of 25 April 2009, Sergeant (then Senior Constable) John Gomes assisted in the rescue of a man from rough seas near North Bondi, New South Wales.

When the New South Wales Police Patrol Helicopter Polair 1 was tasked to search the ocean off North Bondi for a man who went missing in the ocean the previous day, a radio report was received about a second man who was also in the water. The sea was choppy with a four – five metre swell and waves were breaking onto the rock shelf. The crew located the man and deployed a floatation marker for him to hold onto. While they waited for the Water Police to arrive, the man let go of the marker and was seen floating face down in the water. Senior Constable Gomes quickly removed his appointments, inflated his safety vest and jumped into the rough seas near the rock shelf. When he reached the man, Senior Constable Gomes held the unconscious man's head above the water and swam him away from the rocks to the water police boat which had arrived. When both men were aboard the vessel, Senior Constable Gomes assisted by others, attempted to resuscitate the man. Sadly, the man was unable to be revived.

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

Corporal Kim Elizabeth GRAY, Queensland

On 28 January 2013, Corporal Kim Gray was involved in the rescue of several people trapped in floodwaters at Bundaberg, Queensland.

Corporal Gray acted as the 'down the wire' crewman on the Army Black Hawk helicopter, Warhorse 104, from 5 Aviation Regiment which was tasked to provide emergency flood rescue assistance to the community of Bundaberg. On arrival the crew saw that the entire northern region was inundated with water which was continuing to rise. With emergency coordination still being established the aircrew noticed two police officers waving for attention near the crippled Quay Street Bridge. Despite intermittent showers and gusting winds, and to establish rescue priorities, Corporal Gray was lowered to the officers approximately sixty metres below. Corporal Gray was winched back up to the helicopter where she briefed the crew. As this was a residential area they needed to be aware of tall light poles, power lines, antennas and a colony of fruit bats that were disturbed and became projectiles. Over a two hour period, Corporal Gray conducted seven hazardous hoists from high levels and rescued six people in the north Bundaberg area.

For her actions, Corporal Gray is commended for brave conduct.

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Mr Graham Duncan HARTWIG, Eidsvold Qld 4627

In the early hours of 27 January 2013, Mr Graham Hartwig assisted in the rescue of a woman trapped in floodwater at Ceratodus near Eidsvold, Queensland.

Following a record breaking deluge of rain, the Burnett River rose to unprecedented levels. After his father had made two unsuccessful attempts by vehicle to reach a woman who was trapped by floodwater at a nearby property, Mr Graham Hartwig assisted him to ready a small tinnie. At first light Graham and his father launched the tinnie and travelled several kilometres in the debris laden torrent to reach the property. When they arrived at the house they saw that it was submerged. They spotted a flashing light and drove a further 800 metres, avoiding power lines, until they located a beacon which had been washed downstream. Not long after, they heard the woman scream. They manoeuvred the tinnie another sixty metres around the tops of submerged trees and found the woman clinging onto a tree. While his father steadied the tinnie Graham leaned over, grabbed hold of her and pulled her into the boat before they safely exited the flood zone.

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

Mr Rodney Duncan HARTWIG, 8 Screening Plant Road, Eidsvold Qld 4627

In the early hours of 27 January 2013, Mr Rodney Hartwig assisted in the rescue of a woman trapped in floodwater at Ceratodus near Eidsvold, Queensland.

Following a record breaking deluge of rain, the Burnett River rose to unprecedented levels. Just after midnight, Mr Rodney Hartwig received a call where he was advised that a neighbour was trapped at her property. Mr Hartwig immediately drove his high clearance ute towards the property, however his progress was stopped by floodwater when he was about two kilometres away. Unknown to Mr Hartwig, a wall of water had swept the woman away into a nearby tree farm where she managed to grab onto an upper branch and hold on for the next five hours. Mr Hartwig returned home and drove a tractor towards the flooded property but was again forced to return when the water level reached the tractor doors and he was unable to see the road or guide posts. Mr Hartwig again returned home and enlisted the help of his son. At first light Rodney and his son launched the tinnie and travelled several kilometres in the debris laden torrent to reach the property. When they arrived at the house they saw that it was submerged. They then spotted a flashing light and drove a further 800 metres, avoiding power lines, until they located a beacon which had been washed downstream. Not long after they heard the woman scream. They manoeuvred the tinnie another sixty metres around the tops of submerged trees and found the woman clinging onto a tree. While Rodney steadied the tinnie his son leaned over, grabbed hold of her and pulled her into the boat before they safely exited the flood zone.

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

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Mr Dean Edward HUDSON, Kotara NSW 2289

On the afternoon of 20 August 2010, Mr Dean Hudson apprehended an armed offender who was attempting a car jacking in Cardiff, New South Wales.

Mr Hudson was inside a barber shop with his children at Cardiff when he heard shouts that a robbery had occurred at a nearby grocery store. He immediately left his children in the care of the barber and exited the store. Mr Hudson chased the offender down the footpath for several hundred metres and then onto the street where he saw the man open the door of a stationary motor vehicle which was waiting at an intersection, and get inside. The offender sat down and demanded the driver drive away. When he observed the passenger door was slightly ajar, Mr Hudson pulled it open, grabbed hold of the offender and attempted to drag him outside. The offender then threatened to stab Mr Hudson. An off-duty police officer arrived at the scene and arrested the offender.

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

Mr Robert Stanley KEARNEY, Adelaide SA 5000

On the afternoon of 6 May 1996, Mr Robert Kearney took actions during a riot at Yatala Labour Prison, South Australia.

Mr Kearney was working as a Divisional Manager in E-Division of the Yatala Labour Prison when he became aware that a serious incident was occurring at B-Division. Mr Kearney immediately organised for the prisoners in E-Division to be secured in their cells before he released staff to respond to the emergency at B-Division. When he arrived at B-Division, Mr Kearney saw that a riot was occurring and the prisoners had taken four prison officers hostage on the top floor and, over the next eleven hours caused them serious injuries. The prisoners were smashing windows and furniture, throwing items out of the windows and setting fires. During the extremely tense situation, Mr Kearney personally negotiated with the armed prisoners during which he was able to gain useful information and later relayed this to the police and designated negotiators on their arrival. Early on, Mr Kearney was instrumental in organising the release of the first hostage who had been badly injured. Later, as negotiations continued, Mr Kearney went unarmed and alone, and met the prisoners. He unlocked the fire escape back door which allowed a seriously injured colleague to be released. The hostage takers, concerned the door was unlocked, threatened the lives of the remaining hostages unless Mr Kearney returned to secure the door. In the interest of the hostages he did so. He continued to play an active role in communicating with the prisoners until the siege ended when the prisoners gave themselves up and the remaining hostages were freed.

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

Miss Elise Nicole LAVERS, Normanville SA 5204

On the afternoon of 11 April 2012, Miss Elise Lavers went to the assistance of a man during a shark attack at Dolphin Bay, Yorke Peninsula, South Australia.

Miss Lavers was kayaking with her friend in the ocean around the cliffs off Dolphin Bay when she heard a splash and assumed her friend had accidentally capsized. She turned to find her friend's kayak lying on its side and a great white shark thrashing about in the water. In a split second decision, she stroked her kayak towards her friend so he was able to launch onto the back of it and then began to paddle towards a rock shelf where they were able to land.

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

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Senior Constable Drew Alexander LEWIS, Queensland Police

On the morning of 12 June 2012, Senior Constable (then Constable) Drew Lewis assisted in the apprehension of an armed offender in Upper Mount Gravatt, Queensland.

The offender, who was armed with a sawn off rifle, broke into a residence and took four people hostage after earlier absconding from police. Accompanied by other colleagues, Constable Lewis used a door ram to force open the front door and moved inside and found the offender holding the four people captive. To ensure the safety of the hostages, Constable Lewis and his colleagues withdrew from the house and waited for further reinforcements to arrive. A short time later the offender exited the house with the hostages and menacingly pointed his weapon at them. Two of the hostages broke free and managed to run back into the house. The offender then unsuccessfully tried to break into parked vehicles and escape. Concerned for public safety, Constable Lewis broke cover several times to turn people away from the scene and lock a running vehicle while the offender yelled and pointed his weapon at him. The offender was eventually overpowered by his hostages and arrested by the police.

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

Mr Thomas Peter McPEAKE, Goolwa Beach SA 5214

In the early evening of 27 July 2012, Mr Thomas McPeake assisted in the rescue of a woman who was trapped in floodwaters at Finniss, South Australia.

As night approached, Mr McPeake responded with colleagues from the Goolwa Country Fire Service to the Finniss River following a report that a woman had attempted to drive across a flooded ford and was trapped. After checking several crossings in the area, Mr McPeake and his colleagues heard a woman's screams. Using torchlight the group made their way through uneven terrain and chest deep water to reach higher ground. From there they spotted the woman desperately clinging onto a tree branch in the main river channel. Mr McPeake volunteered to enter the torrent and, once a rope had been tied around him, he entered the water upstream and used the current to reach her. Mr McPeake reassured the woman and when a second rope was thrown to him, he tied it around her. They were then pulled back to safety by his colleagues.

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

Miss Terry McPHERSON, Forrest Beach Qld 4850

On the afternoon of 15 September 2012, Miss Terry McPherson assisted in the rescue of a girl who was being attacked by a dog at Forrest Beach, Queensland.

Miss McPherson and a friend heard children screaming for help from a neighbouring property. They immediately jumped the fence and made their way through a vacant block to reach the next property. When they reached the back porch they saw a dog biting a girl's throat and had inflicted multiple puncture wounds to her neck area. While her friend struck the dog with a lump of wood to force it to release its grip on the girl, Miss McPherson pulled the victim away and assisted her to safety. She then helped apply pressure to the girl's wounds as they waited for ambulance personnel to arrive.

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

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Mr Mandeep NAGRA, 8 Carroll Street, Nambour Qld 4560

On the morning of 12 June 2012, Mr Mandeep Nagra assisted in the apprehension of an armed offender in Upper Mount Gravatt, Queensland.

The offender, who was armed with a sawn off rifle, broke into a residence and took Mr Nagra and three other people hostage after earlier absconding from police. A short time later, the offender exited the residence with the four hostages, menacingly pointing his weapon at them. Two of the hostages broke free, however Mr Nagra and the other hostage were used as human shields as the ordeal continued. The offender then tried to break into parked vehicles and escape. Unsuccessful, the offender approached another house where he smashed a window in order to gain entry. During this attempted entry the magazine of the gun ejected. Realising the weapon was no longer loaded, Mr Nagra tackled the offender and, assisted by the other hostage held him on the ground until the police apprehended him.

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

Detective Leading Senior Constable Marc Anthony NEWTON, Victoria Police

On the afternoon of 11 October 2002, Detective Leading Senior Constable (then Senior Constable) Marc Newton took actions to apprehend an armed offender following a robbery in Brisbane, Queensland.

Senior Constable Newton was performing plain clothes patrol duties at Queen Street when he identified a man he believed matched the description of an offender who had previously committed several armed robberies. He allowed the man to walk past him and when he turned around he saw the man remove a wig. Believing the man may have just committed another robbery and was armed, Senior Constable Newton identified himself and told the offender he was under arrest and drew his firearm. The offender immediately faced Senior Constable Newton and, as he backed away, attempted to grab hold of a shortened rifle from a bag that he was carrying. When the offender accidentally dropped the bag, he ran off into an arcade and Senior Constable Newton chased and confronted him. Senior Constable Newton saw the offender remove a pistol from his waist area and aim the gun at him. When the man ignored Senior Constable Newton's orders to stop, he took action to protect himself and those around him.

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

Mr Zachary John O'LEARY-BARLOW, Bedford WA 6052

On the night of 26 March 2011, Mr Zachary O'Leary-Barlow assisted in the rescue of two people from a burning house at Dianella, Western Australia.

Mr O'Leary-Barlow was at home when he heard glass breaking and then a woman screaming. He went outside and saw flames and thick smoke coming from a nearby house. He began to run towards the house and noticed the front room appeared to be the room on fire. As he went to the side gate he met up with a neighbour who had arrived to assist. The two men went to the rear of the house where Mr O'Leary-Barlow grabbed a chair and smashed a window. He yelled into the room as he climbed onto the window sill but was forced back by the heat and smoke. When a boy appeared near the window he grabbed hold of his arm and, assisted by the neighbour, lifted him outside. He then gave the boy to his partner to look after. Mr O'Leary-Barlow then returned back to the window and tried to assist in getting the mother out. The fire brigade then arrived and lifted the woman through the window to safety.

For his actions, Mr O'Leary-Barlow is commended for brave conduct.

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Mr Glen OLERENSHAW, 9/102 Murray Road, Corrimal NSW 2518

At midday on 29 June 1986, Mr Glen Olerenshaw attempted to save a man who was swept off rocks into the sea at Currarong, New South Wales.

Mr Olerenshaw was rock fishing with two men at Currarong when a wave crashed onto the rock shelf and swept one of them into the ocean. Mr Olerenshaw immediately climbed the cliff and cut a fifty metre length of rope and threw it down to his companion. He then climbed back down the cliff and tied one end of the rope around his waist as his companion held onto the other end. Mr Olerenshaw dived into the water and swam out to the full length of the rope but was unable to reach the man as he had drifted further out to sea. Mr Olerenshaw was pulled back onto the rocks and unfortunately the man disappeared and was unable to be located.

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

Mr Duncan James ROGERS, Wonga Park Vic 3115

On the afternoon of 28 August 2009, Mr Duncan Rogers apprehended a woman who was assaulting an elderly man in Ashburton, Victoria.

Mr Rogers was driving when he saw an altercation between two people on the footpath. He slowed down and saw a woman punching an elderly man. He stopped his vehicle, turned around and went to where the altercation was taking place. When Mr Rogers approached he saw the man lying on the ground and the woman kicking him. He ran towards the pair and shouted at the woman to stop but she continued to attack the man. Mr Rogers grabbed hold of the woman's right arm and, as she attempted to punch him, he twisted her arm behind her back and restrained her as she struggled against him. While members of the public called the police and attended to the injured man, Mr Rogers detained the woman until the police arrived.

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

Corporal Scott Robert RUEHLAND, New South Wales

On 28 January 2013, Corporal Scott Ruehland was involved in the winch rescue of several people trapped in floodwaters at Bundaberg, Queensland.

Corporal Ruehland acted as the 'down the wire' crewman on the Army Black Hawk helicopter, Warhorse 214, from 5 Aviation Regiment which was tasked to provide emergency flood rescue assistance to the community of Bundaberg. On arrival, after conducting a sweep of the area, the crew saw four people stranded on a small balcony at a house which was surrounded by floodwater near the intersection of Perry and Kolan Streets. Despite intermittent rain and wind gusts which buffeted the helicopter, Corporal Ruehland was lowered about forty metres onto the balcony as they avoided power poles, overhanging wires and antennas. After he briefed the evacuees, Corporal Ruehland individually rescued them. Corporal Ruehland and the crew then conducted several hazardous hoists from high levels rescuing people in the north Bundaberg area.

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

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Mrs Sharon Maree VAUGHAN, Wolvi Qld 4570

On the afternoon of 16 November 2012, Mrs Sharon Vaughan rescued her father-in-law who was being attacked by a steer at Wolvi, Queensland.

Mrs Vaughan and her father-in-law were moving cattle through a gate between two paddocks when a steer struck the elderly man and flung him into the air. As the steer continued to attack the man, Mrs Vaughan hit and kicked it in an attempt to distract it. When this was unsuccessful, she drove a ute into the steer and used the bull bars to force it away. She then assisted the man into the vehicle and attempted to exit the paddock but saw that the gate was closed and blocked by the steer. Mrs Vaughan exited the vehicle and walked around the steer and opened the gate. When the steer remained in front of the opened gate Mrs Vaughan drove the vehicle into the steer and pushed it out of the way.

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

Mr Brett Leslie WILLIAMS, Yeppoon Qld 4703

On the morning of 25 January 2013, Mr Brett Williams rescued a boy who was trapped in floodwaters at Rockhampton, Queensland.

Over a period of twenty-four hours almost 400mm of rain fell on Rockhampton which caused creeks to turn into treacherous floodways. A teenager saw that the water had risen substantially in Frenchman's Creek and decided to go for a swim. Within minutes he was swept downstream, trapped up to his neck in fast running water before being able to grab onto a tree. Mr Williams and other Queensland Fire and Rescue Service colleagues responded to the situation by setting up a safety line. Mr Williams tied himself to the line and entered the water and made his way to the boy in the middle of the creek. He reassured the boy and, before placing a personal floatation device onto him, coaxed him to let go of the tree. They moved through the water to the western side of the creek until Mr Williams was able to grab a protruding object. This placed the boy within reach of support crews on shore who grabbed hold of him. Due to the cross flow of a large underwater storm-water drain, Mr Williams kept getting pulled under the surface. He was forced to release himself from the safety line and was washed under a bridge and downstream before he was thrown a rope by a colleague and pulled from the creek.

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