

GROUP BRAVERY CITATION

Awardees comprise the crew of the Tugboat Watagan who, on 8 June 2007, went to the assistance of the Sea Confidence during the Hunter/Central Coast Storm Emergency.

**Mr Stephen Robert BAKER
Captain Jack DE GILIO
Mr Paul Stephen DEVEREUX
Mr Leslie Harold HANDICOTT
Mr Robert William HARRIS
Mr Steven William PARKER
Mr Jon Gregory PARTRIDGE
Mr George William SEWELL
Mr Stephen Ernest TAYLOR**

On the afternoon of 8 June 2007, the crew of the Newcastle Harbour Tugboat *Watagan* assisted the *Sea Confidence* which was in distress at sea during the Hunter/Central Coast Storm Emergency.

The crew of the tug *Watagan* headed out to sea to assist the bulk carrier *Sea Confidence* which was in serious difficulty and in danger of being blown ashore. In swells of up to 20 metres the tug crew were buffeted by 50 knot winds and driving rain. Several attempts were made to position the tug under the bow of the carrier but the enormous sea surges made the manoeuvre far too dangerous. The crew worked on deck in treacherous conditions, attaching a line between the tug and the stricken ship. However the line broke and a second attempt also failed. As the tug continued to be pounded, two of its crew were injured – one was concussed and another had his right thumb crushed. Given the perilous conditions, the master decided to return to harbour to have his injured crew treated. Having endured more than two hours of pounding seas, driving rain and poor visibility during the rescue operation, the tug was able to make its way back to the safety of harbour through the skill and teamwork of the master and his crew. The stricken bulk carrier's situation improved and its master confirmed that his vessel was in a position to make its own way seaward out of danger.

For their actions, the crew of the *Watagan* is recognised by the award of the Group Bravery Citation.

Mr Stephen Robert BAKER
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25 Paterson Close, Whitebridge NSW 2290

GROUP BRAVERY CITATION

Awardees comprise the crew of the Tugboat Wickham who, on 8 June 2007, went to the assistance of the Betis during the Hunter/Central Coast Storm Emergency.

Mr Murray Francis GREEN
Mr Ashley Ian HARDY
Captain Aaron Jeremiah HENSHAW
Mr Gerard Christopher INKSTON
Mr Michael Arthur MINERS
Captain Ian Robert TURTON
Mr Peter James WEARY
Mr Thomas Pearson WILEY

On the afternoon of 8 June 2007, the crew of the Newcastle Harbour Tugboat *Wickham* assisted the *Betis* which was in distress at sea during the Hunter/Central Coast Storm Emergency.

During the height of gale force winds and torrential rain along the Newcastle Coast, the cargo vessel, the *Betis* was 8 nautical miles off Swansea in considerable difficulty in large seas and had called for assistance. Despite the treacherous conditions, the crew of the Newcastle Harbour Tugboat "Wickham" agreed to head out to assist. For 45 minutes the crew endured swells of up to 20 metres and were buffeted by winds of up to 50 knots in driving rain before arriving at the cargo vessel. The intention was to attach a tow line and pull the *Betis* away to prevent it from running aground. As the tug approached the ship, the master was advised by the *Betis* that it was now capable of making headway under its own steam and no longer required assistance. While the *Wickham* attempted to navigate its return to harbour, the tug faced dangerous seas. The skill and determination of the master and crew saw the tug survive huge swells at a very slow speed as enormous waves broke over the stern pushing down on a vessel not designed to endure such treacherous conditions. The *Wickham* was able to re-enter the safety of the harbour more than two hours after it was first despatched.

For their actions, the crew of the *Wickham* is recognised by the award of the Group Bravery Citation.

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