

GROUP BRAVERY CITATION (GBC)

The following recipient is added to the Group Bravery Citation gazetted on 16 March 2022.

Mr Zhenbo FANG, Perth WA 6000

The recipients are recognised with the award of the Group Bravery Citation for their actions during the rescue of people from burning vehicles in Breton Bay, Western Australia on 27 August 2019.

At about 6.30pm, two cars collided on Indian Ocean Drive, trapping both drivers. A fire started in one of the damaged vehicles.

Four passing motorists stopped to render assistance and were later joined by two police officers. An attempt was made to smash the driver's window of the car on fire. A fire extinguisher was sourced and used on the flames with little effect. One motorist broke a rear window and discovered the interior was filled with pieces of wood. Together with a second motorist they began to remove the wood but were forced back due to the flames and heat. A police officer emptied a second fire extinguisher on the flames, which continued to intensify.

A second attempt smashed the driver's window and an unconscious driver was located. A police officer emptied a second fire extinguisher, but the increasing intensity of the flames and heat forced everyone back.

By this time the second vehicle was on fire. One motorist spoke to the driver who indicated that he was trapped. Working together the motorists and police officers prised open the driver's door, cut the man from his seatbelt, and dragged him out of the wreckage to a safe distance.

A short time later a small explosion occurred and the second vehicle was fully engulfed in flames. Sadly, the driver of the first car perished at the scene.

GROUP BRAVERY CITATION (GBC)

Detective Leading Senior Constable Joey Anton KURTSCHENKO, Victoria Police

Detective Senior Constable Jarred Lindsay SMITH, Victoria Police

Sergeant Mark James SMITH, Victoria Police

The recipients are recognised with the award of the Group Bravery Citation for their actions during the rescue of two people from a burning car in Morwell, Victoria on 29 April 2019.

At approximately 2:50pm, three police officers were on duty when they found a car which had collided with a tree on a residential street. The front of the vehicle was on fire and thick smoke was filling the cabin. The vehicle involved in the collision was the same vehicle that the officers had recently pursued following an armed robbery.

The three officers approached the vehicle and one of them attempted to smash the rear passenger side window with his baton.

They observed a man inside and one of the officers used his baton to break the window. Another officer pulled the man from the vehicle with the assistance of the two others. One of the officers took him to the median strip away from the vehicle.

The two officers that remained observed another man in the rear of the vehicle. They used their batons to smash the driver's side and passenger's side rear windows and ordered the male, who was belligerent and not cooperating, to get out of the vehicle.

With the help of two onlookers, the two officers removed the man from the vehicle as it became fully engulfed in flames.

Both males were airlifted to hospital.

GROUP BRAVERY CITATION (GBC)

Senior Constable Domenico BARILLARO, New South Wales Police

Senior Constable Keith Howard FURNER, New South Wales Police

Mr Rabii HADDAD, NSW

Senior Constable Chantelle HANNAH, New South Wales Police

Detective Sergeant Sean Martin HEAGNEY, New South Wales Police

Senior Constable Joshua JONES, New South Wales Police

Senior Constable Todd KIRK, New South Wales Police

Senior Constable Ergun KOKSAL, New South Wales Police

Senior Constable Kelly SCHOLES, New South Wales Police

Mr Gilbert Alex VARLET, NSW

The recipients are recognised with the award of the Group Bravery Citation for their actions after a building exploded and caught fire in Wentworthville, New South Wales on 8 October 2013.

At 4:15am, two New South Wales Police Force officers were on duty when they heard an explosion and saw a partially collapsed building engulfed in fire.

The two officers saw an injured man on the footpath crawling away from the building, so they approached him and removed him from the immediate area. They saw another man trapped by fallen brickwork close to the fire, and then heard several further explosions and saw arcing power lines. The two officers approached the trapped man but were forced back when a nearby wall collapsed.

Two more police officers arrived and ran over to the trapped man. They attempted to lift him out of the rubble but were forced back by the intense heat. One of the officers moved a police vehicle closer to the fire to shield the officers and the man from the heat.

Three more officers arrived on scene and they all attempted to move the man from the rubble. Two of the officers grabbed the man by the arm but were forced back by the heat and part of the building collapsing.

One of the officers grabbed a jacket from a passer-by, placed it over his head and ran towards the man to try and free him from the rubble but was again forced back by the heat. Two more officers arrived on scene, and they again attempted to remove the man from the rubble, but were forced back by the heat and gas explosions.

A fire appliance arrived and two of the officers used a fire hose to spray the area around the man while firefighters, assisted by one of the officers, cleared the rubble. Four of the officers then assisted firefighters to remove the man. A section of the roof collapsed, missing one of the officers by a few metres. Another officer arrived on scene and helped drag the man away from the fire.

One of the officers drove a police vehicle to the rear of the building to see if anyone was trapped. She broke down a wooden gate and found the rear door of the building open.

Another officer learned that other people could still be trapped in the building and ran down an alleyway at the side of the building over rubble and through fire to reach the rear.

The two officers entered the building. One of them went upstairs and called out for any persons trapped, however both officers withdrew due to thick black smoke.

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The two officers were joined at the rear of the building by two firefighters. One of the officers led them inside to the staircase and helped feed a hose into the building while the firefighters searched inside. The two officers returned to the front of the building when the two firefighters determined the conditions inside were not survivable.

The officers were treated for various injuries including extensive burns and smoke inhalation.

Mr Dean Andrew BIRD, Andergrove QLD 4740

Mr Glen Kenneth DUSSELL, QLD

The late Mr Matthew James STOCKMAN, formerly of QLD

The recipients are recognised with the award of the Group Bravery Citation for their actions rescuing people from burning vehicles following a collision on the Bruce Highway near Gindoran, Queensland on 5 August 2020.

Shortly after 11:00pm, a man came across a traffic crash involving three semi-trailers and a car towing a caravan which had collided in thick fog and caught fire.

The man walked through the fog towards the glow caused by the fire and called out to see if anyone required assistance. He found a driver trapped in the cabin of a burning truck. Three others arrived to assist, so he walked on to search for anyone else needing assistance.

The three people that arrived used a metal bar to pry open the cabin. One of them climbed onto the engine block of the truck and removed the driver from the cabin with the assistance of the other two people. They carried the driver up a steep embankment to safety. One of them stayed with the driver and rendered first aid.

The first man found another injured person lying on the roadway in close proximity to the burning trucks. With the assistance of another person he removed the man away from the fire and into a nearby paddock. He then used his own vehicle to aid police to recover the injured man, and transported him to an awaiting ambulance.

He and two others remained to render first aid to the injured.

Emergency services arrived shortly afterwards and took control of the scene.

GROUP BRAVERY CITATION (GBC)

Senior Constable David BOJCZENKO, Victoria Police

Senior Constable Priyanka DUNLOP, Victoria Police

Senior Constable Rebecca NOVIELLO, Victoria Police

Senior Constable Thomas William SHAKESPEARE, Victoria Police

The recipients are recognised with the award of the Group Bravery Citation for their actions during the attempted rescue of a man from a dog attack in Mill Park, Victoria on 10 July 2019.

At approximately 6:30pm, four police officers were called to reports of a dog attack at a residential property.

The officers looked over a fence into the backyard and saw a man lying motionless on the ground being attacked by the dog, and an injured woman in a chair.

Two of the officers jumped the fence and were confronted by the dog. One of the officers sprayed the dog with oleoresin capsicum (OC) foam, causing the dog to run away briefly, before coming back at him. This occurred on three successive occasions.

The officer kicked the dog, and struck it with the baton. The dog briefly ran away, providing the opportunity for the two officers to draw their pistols. One officer fired a shot at the dog and missed. The sound scared the dog and it ran around the side of the house.

The two other police officers jumped the fence into the backyard. The dog ran towards one of these officers, who sprayed the dog with OC foam, drew his pistol and fired twice at the dog.

The dog ran back toward one of the other officers, who again fired at the dog.

One of the officers used a metal chair to fend off the dog and push it through an open door into the house. The officer slammed the door shut, securing the dog inside the house.

Two of the officers searched the side of the house to ensure there was not a side door the dog could escape through.

The officers rendered first aid to the woman. Sadly, the man did not survive.

GROUP BRAVERY CITATION (GBC)

Mrs Ann Margaret GILLIES, Birtinya QLD 4575

Mr Gary Gordon GILLIES ASM, Baringa QLD 4551

Mr Jack McINNES, QLD

Mr Stephen Kenneth RAINBOW, Takura QLD 4655

The recipients are recognised with the award of the Group Bravery Citation for their actions rescuing people from a burning vehicle on the Bruce Highway near Tiaro, Queensland on 17 April 2017.

At approximately 2:00pm, a multi-vehicle collision occurred on the Bruce Highway. Four individuals in three separate cars stopped to provide assistance.

They got out of their cars, went over to a vehicle that was on fire, and saw one man fall out of the rear of the burning vehicle. Two of them moved this man away from the area. One of the others then picked up the man and moved him further away from the vehicle.

They heard another passenger screaming for help. One of them climbed into the rear of the burning vehicle and, with two of the others, removed the second passenger from the rear seat of the vehicle and away from the immediate area.

One of them returned to the vehicle and tried to get the front passenger out. He abandoned this attempt after observing that the person was suffering injuries incompatible with life and that the intensity of the fire was growing.

Two of them rendered first aid to the injured. One of them wrapped the patient and themselves in a towel to protect from the radiant heat of the burning vehicle.

Emergency services arrived a short time later and took control of the scene. Unfortunately, two people perished inside the burning vehicle.

GROUP BRAVERY CITATION (GBC)

Leading Senior Constable Grant Andrew HEALEY, Victoria Police

Mr Jonathan KEITH, Glenlogie VIC 3469

Mrs Sarah Nanette KEITH, Glenlogie VIC 3469

Mr Justin McKENZIE, Elmhurst VIC 3469

Mr Geoffrey Douglas PENNA OAM, Elmhurst VIC 3469

Mr Geoffrey ROGERS, Elmhurst VIC 3469

Mr Mark STEPHENS, SA

Mr Steven Craig WHITING, VIC

Mr Peter WILSON, SA

The recipients are recognised with the award of the Group Bravery Citation for their actions during the attempted rescue of a man from a house fire in Elmhurst, Victoria on 28 December 2019.

At approximately 10:00pm, two men saw smoke coming from the backyard of a nearby property. They went to investigate and found a house on fire.

One of them banged on the walls and shouted to raise the attention of anyone inside, while the other phoned triple-0. They both tried to force the front door open but were forced back by fire burning through the gable above the door.

At the same time, seven others, including firefighters and an off-duty police officer, were at a barbecue when one of them received a phone call alerting them to the fire. Four of them went straight to the property while the other three went to the Elmhurst fire station to retrieve a fire appliance.

Upon arrival, one of them recognised the property and realised that it was the home of a man with mobility issues. He joined the two men who were already at the property and tried to kick the front door in.

Two of them ran to the rear of the property, opened the back door and took two steps inside before being forced back by thick smoke and intense heat.

Another man took a hose from the fire appliance and fought the fire from the outside with the assistance of two others.

Some of them crawled along the hallway through thick smoke and intense heat towards the bedroom. One of them made it part way down the hallway before retreating to retrieve a torch. Another turned off from the hallway to check a bathroom and a spare bedroom before retreating outside and going to the front of the property to join those on the hose.

One of them opened the door of the main bedroom after the occupant's walking frame had been observed. A flashover occurred, leading to a rapid rise in temperature and increased spread of fire. The man's body was on the bed, so the person removed him out of the bedroom and down the hallway towards the rear door.

They were joined by another who had re-entered the house and they moved the man down the hallway. They were then met by three others at the rear door who assisted to pull the man away from the house. Once outside, three of them rendered first aid to the man.

Unfortunately, the occupant of the residence did not survive.