

2008 Emergency Services Medals and Ministerial Commendations Recipient List

Presented 24 November 2008

EMERGENCY SERVICES MEDALS

Wayne Maxwell Atkins (Athelstone)

Commander – Country Fire Service

Wayne is a commander for the CFS Brukunga unit and the holder of an AFSM and national medal.

On the 13 March 2008, a bushfire in the area of Taylors Road, Willunga ignited and subsequently burnt 150 hectares and destroyed one house. During the height of the fire, Wayne was the first arrival Air Attack Supervisor who was responsible for the safe medivac of a number of firefighters injured in a burnover event on the Range-Hope Forest fire appliance. Wayne and the pilot from Heliair landed the helicopter in hostile conditions to medivac these personnel to the Willunga Oval.

Dean Clarke (Lockleys)

Patients Services Manager – SA Ambulance Service

Dean, who has been employed with SA Ambulance since 1979, has been nominated for his significant efforts with the enhancement of non-emergency patient transport services at SA Ambulance which has increased patient and staff safety across all emergency services.

Dean was instrumental in driving the development of the Bariatric Unit (a Stretcher and Lifter for heavy patients); in the development of the Mental Health Unit memorandum of understanding with SA Health, Royal Flying Doctor Service and SAPOL; and has also played a significant role in establishing a specialised group of patient transport service ambulance officers who are skilled in the safe and dignified transport of patients with a mental illness.

Dean has also spent many years in the development of SAAS vehicles playing a major role in enhancing the current fleet.

Dean Annandale James (Torrensville)

Communication Officer – SA Metropolitan Fire Service

Dean has served with the MFS since July 1978 and has organised the firefighters' annual retirement dinner for approximately 600 retirees and staff for 12 years. Dean is also involved with organising the firefighters' Christmas party and plays the part of Father Christmas for the firefighters' children and sponsored children attending. Outside of the MFS, Dean is also involved with junior football, lawn bowls and has performed in theatres in the Barossa Valley to raise money for cancer victims.

Simon James (West Lakes Shore)

Grange Surf Life Saving Club

On the evening of 23 February 2007, Simon was standing on the Grange balcony with a mate when a member of the public raised the alarm of a person in difficulty a couple hundred metres off shore. In rough water, and in the dark, Simon came across the patient, motionless and face down. He flipped him over noting that he was blue and started to tow him to shore. By the time he got to shore, all his remaining strength was used to drag him up to the beach. CPR was commenced and Simon set up the oxy-viva for oxygen therapy until the paramedics arrived.

Without a doubt, if it was not for Simon's quick actions and strong swimming ability, the gentleman would have been a statistic and not a survivor. Simon's actions were exemplary, and his confidence and ability were without question, but extraordinarily Simon was only 16 at the time of the rescue.

Ramon Philip Kruger (Pt Augusta)
Senior Firefighter, MFS, Pt Augusta

Michael Colin Scott (Pt Augusta)
Firefighter, MFS, Pt Augusta

On 26 June 2005, the Port Augusta station responded to a reported explosion and fire at the ETSA Utilities sub-station. A male person located within the sub station had been electrocuted and was reportedly on fire. Senior Firefighter Ramon Kruger and Firefighter Michael Scott were part of crew 5-1-9 from Port Augusta who arrived at the scene for a snatch rescue. Along with other emergency services personnel, Ramon and Michael assisted the rescue of the casualty in a stressful and dangerous situation.

Peter Marshman (South Brighton)
Aerial Services Officer – Surf Life Saving SA

Peter joined Surf Life Saving in 1962 and has served at the State level for more than 34 years. In particular he has been involved in aerial services since 1974 in many significant roles. Peter has gone above and beyond the call of duty in ensuring Surf Life Saving South Australia is presented at the highest level in Aerial Services ensuring that SLSSA has enjoyed a lengthy period of helicopter operations for surf patrolling. He has dedicated many years to this role and has in the past 4 years again taken on a key position for the organisation to ensure SLSSA is well positioned. Peter has provided extraordinary leadership and service to the Glenelg SLSC over many years both when in an official role and as a general member.

Don McCulloch (Hawthordene)
Volunteer Marine Rescue

Don joined the SA Sea Rescue Squadron at West Beach in March 1977 and has dedicated many thousands of voluntary hours attending to emergencies at sea, performing proactive patrols and conducting radio base duties. For many years Don offered his private vessel as a squadron auxiliary craft and performed many searches at sea as a skipper, often in hazardous conditions and at personal risk.

Don has also undertaken a term as the Commodore and volunteered his time on various internal executive committees. In 1978 Don wrote a marine radio course and became the inaugural Radio Training Officer. Over the next 30 years, Don not only delivered the course to members of the Sea Rescue Squadron but also to members of the public and various yachting and sporting clubs, and he has been personally responsible for having trained thousands of people.

Don's exceptional contribution towards marine safety in South Australia not only reflects greatly upon himself, but on the SA Sea Rescue Squadron and Volunteer Marine Rescue in general.

Alexandra (Alex) Prodanovski (Daw Park)
Executive Assistant to the Chief Officer, MFS

Alex commenced her career with the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service on 22 October 1973. During her 35 years as an Executive Assistant to the Chief Officer, Alex has worked with seven Chief Officers and three acting Chief Officers. Her breadth of experience has encompassed virtually all areas of managing the Office of the Chief Officer and Alex has performed her work with a high degree of professionalism, commitment and effectiveness. She is highly valued by the Chief Officer and is held in high esteem by members of the Executive Team. Her contribution has significantly supported the effectiveness of the Fire Service over an extensive period of time.

Albert James Puxley (Victor Harbor) – Posthumous Award Kevin Puxley (son) to accept award
Volunteer Marine Resource

Albert James Puxley passed away in October 2008 and has been awarded the Emergency Services Medal posthumously.

Albert was a founding member of the Victor Harbor Sailing Club Sea Rescue in the 1960's, now the Victor Harbor – Goolwa Sea Rescue Squadron. Albert was an active member and performed many operations at sea, as well as many committee roles including longstanding Treasurer.

For some 40 years, Albert operated the only Limited Coastal Listening Station on the south coast from his house on the hill of Encounter Bay, high above the surrounding waters, and spent thousands of voluntary hours monitoring marine radio distress frequencies.

While having received a number of accolades from the Squadron including life membership, Albert never sought recognition for his outstanding service to the south coast community and significant contribution to marine safety over such a long period.

Ian Robert Taverner (Hackham)

Deputy Group Officer – Mawson Group, Country Fire Service

Ian has previously received a National Medal in 1985, National Medal First Clasp in August 2008, and along with other volunteers, has been a recipient of the Volunteers Medal issued by the State Government in 2001. Ian has been a dedicated member at the CFS since 1969. He is held in high esteem by his peers for not only his dedication to the job, but more importantly his operational and fire ground skills. He has exhibited exemplary operational capabilities, including during the Mount Bold and Willunga fires where he was Divisional Commander.

Ian has been in the position of Deputy Group Officer for the Mawson CFS for over 10 years. He has been on numerous management and operational committees representing Brigades/Group/Region and even the CFS organisation.

Jennifer Maree Vincent (O'Halloran Hill)

State Training Officer & Volunteer Team Leader – Noarlunga SES

Jennifer has previously received a National Emergency Services Medal two years ago for her dedication to the State Vertical Rescue program in providing high level training to SASES volunteers and other agencies in Vertical Rescue.

Jennifer is commended for the rescue of a family of 3 from the cliffs at Hallett Cove in September 2007. Only 3 hours from returning from an interstate deployment, Jennifer's volunteer unit was called to rescue 2 children and an adult caught out by rising tides 70 metres down a cliff. Jennifer was lowered down the cliff 3 times to complete the rescue and bring the victims to safety. The weather conditions were very bad with strong winds and rain making the rescue very difficult and physically draining. Whilst the rescue was a team effort with other members providing haul crew and communications support, Jennifer's professionalism and courage ensured the victims were supported and encouraged throughout their ordeal.

Christopher Alagich (formerly of Morphettville, now living in Queensland)

Patrol Member – Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club

Christopher, together with Alex Carr, assisted in a rescue at Goolwa on 6 January 2007. In less than ideal conditions where the surf was approximately 4-6 feet high and there was a strong wind, Chris set off with Alex Carr on their skis to rescue a person in trouble.

Christopher paddled his ski to the beach which was some 600 metres back to shore and with no-one else around he needed to swim back again, another 600 metres in lumpy surf through multiple breaks. While Chris was swimming out and back in again with the body board, Alex was left with the patient, who was in a bad way. Eventually when Christopher was able to negotiate the surf and secure the body board with the patient and with Alex assisting, struggled back to shore in very trying and dangerous conditions.

The difference with this rescue from any other they are trained for, was that Christopher was suffering from a heavy cold, had a hard session that morning as part of his SASI kayak commitments, and was rostered at Glenelg from 3pm that afternoon.

If it wasn't for the efforts of Christopher, with his quick decision making and ability to negotiate the surf four times, a life may have been lost that day.

Richard Giles Mould Jnr (Coondambo Station, Port Augusta)

Captain – Glendambo, Country Fire Service

Richard was nominated for his actions in relation to an incident that occurred at Glendambo on 6 December 2007. The incident involved a Roadhouse employee barricading himself in a hut at the rear of the facility and setting fire to the contents of the room. While the person was removed from the burning building, the temperature was nearing 40c with an estimated 70-80 kph north wind blowing.

The Glendambo CFS was contacted and 1 crew member arrived – that being Richard Mould, Captain - who fought the fire solely with the exception of a passing traveller who assisted in fighting the fire. Undoubtedly Richards's bravery, decisive action and ability to combat the fire on his own for the majority of the time prevented the fire from spreading to the roadhouse complex and averted a potential BLEVE (boiling liquid expanding vapour explosion).

MINISTERIAL COMMENDATIONS

Dean Andrew (Pt Lincoln)

Volunteer Marine Rescue

A member of the SES since August 1986, Dean is currently a member of the West Region Headquarters. In addition to performing active duties within that unit during major incidents on the west coast, for many years Dean has operated a Volunteer Marine Rescue Limited Coastal Listening Station from his Port Lincoln home, where he issues routine weather and safety broadcasts, receives vessel movement reports and monitors marine emergency frequencies.

Dean goes far beyond what is normally expected of a volunteer, and adds a personal touch by often greeting visiting mariners and assisting them with advice on marine services in Port Lincoln. Dean has previously received a National Service Medal and Dean's contribution towards marine safety in the Port Lincoln area over a long period has not only reflected greatly on him personally, but also on the SES.

Christopher Cotton (c/- Woodside)

Intensive Care Paramedic – SA Ambulance Service/ CFS

Chris has been an intensive care paramedic for 19 years and was a volunteer ambulance officer for two years before that. He is also a volunteer firefighter with the CFS.

Chris has held positions within the Australian College of Ambulance Professionals (ACAP), and through this association and his general passion for developing people, he spends significant time supporting the profession and the personal development of ambulance personnel. Chris was a key player in the planning and coordination of the Emergency SA 2007 and 2008 conferences and the Australian College of Ambulance Professionals 2006 National Conference. As a member of the ACAP SA Journal Club, he has developed and implemented the ACAP pre-hospital scholarship.

His extreme dedication and commitment to both the professions of SAAS and the CFS has been recognised in receiving a commendation today.

John Edge (Normanville)

Training Officer/ Business Manager, SES

John is currently the Business Manager and Training Officer for the SES and Lieutenant 3, Equipment Coordinator and committee member for the CFS. John's commendation is based on his service with the NSW Forestry Commission (10 years as a radio technician), SES and CFS.

John has been an extremely active member of the CFS/SES since joining. He has attended over 90% of callouts and training sessions, as well as volunteering for most strike teams, including the NSW floods. He has been active in volunteering his services for many community events and now conducts training with the Yankalilla area school.

John has previously received medals for his navy service in Malaya and Vietnam and his past and ongoing commitment to his work in the emergency services in both the operational and training roles, along with his dedication to community based activities, deserves the recognition of this award.

Elaine Farmer (Ethelton)

General Manager, Surf Life Saving SA

Elaine has been a long term part of SLSA for over 40 years, helping lead and steer the organisation over many years to ensure it remains a vibrant and responsive emergency services based agency.

Elaine has been heavily involved in the Nipper Safe program working with different departments to introduce education and awareness programs. She has also been at the forefront of developments with government agencies in improving Surf Life Saving Club facilities and the organisation being a recognized Emergency Service body. Elaine's list of achievements is exhaustive and includes being awarded an International Lifesaving Commendation this year.

Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club

Shane Daw, Ben Clement & Gareth Morgan to accept on behalf of the Club

The members of the Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club have been involved in numerous rescues and resuscitations and their efforts and determination are always of the highest order.

On 17 November 2007, members of the Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club responded to the search for a missing teenager who was last seen in a rip current and struggling. While the members were not alerted until 20 minutes after the boy went missing, all members, some as young as 14, swung into action with inflatable rescue boats, foot patrols, swimmers in the water, and both the lifesaver jet rescue boat and Westpac lifesaver rescue helicopter were called in to assist.

After a short search the teenager was found floating on the bottom of the ocean and was promptly brought back to shore where lifesavers worked hard to resuscitate him. Together with a team of paramedics the lifesavers continued resuscitation before he was transported to hospital. Despite the desperate tireless efforts of all those involved, the teenager was pronounced deceased.

While it was a tragic outcome, the fact that the lifesaving members never gave up and did everything possible was commendable.

Mark Steven Hewitson (Ceduna)

Group Officer, CFS

Mark is a Group Officer for the CFS Western Eyre region. Mark is always putting forward new ways of improving how the unit carries out its business and getting support from the community. He is now heavily involved with the merging of the Streaky Bay group and the Western Eyre region. Mark also plays an important part of the Region 6 Volunteer Management Committee amongst others.

Mark always puts in 110% for the Service and is always positive and supportive with his group. He has an excellent working relationship with all emergency services officers and the community in Ceduna. Mark has previously received a National Medal and First Clasp.

Anthony Johnstone (Whyalla Norrie)

Squadron Leader, Volunteer Marine Rescue

Anthony was a member of the Whyalla Sea Rescue for five years, committing many hours of volunteer time crewing rescue craft and participating in a vast number of search and rescue missions when in 1998 he took over the role of Squadron Leader.

In May 2000, Anthony was responsible for initiating a response to the Whyalla Airlines incident and coordinated the volunteer and private craft search until search and rescue authorities could assume command.

Anthony has been responsible for creating and maintaining a close liaison with Whyalla Police and other emergency services, to ensure effective and efficient response to marine emergencies. In 2001, he became a member of the State Marine Rescue Committee and is well respected within VMR and the Whyalla community for his dedication and contribution to marine safety over many years and has previously received a Whyalla Community Service Award.

Andrew Lawson (Littlehampton)
Deputy Chief Officer, CFS

Andrew has previously received an Australian Fire Service Medal, National Medal & First Clasp, and CFS Life Membership.

Andrew has been awarded this Ministerial Commendation for his work in developing the new CFS Bushfire Information and Warning System. Following the 2005 Wangary fire, the former 'phased warning system' of CFS was identified as no longer meeting the needs of CFS and the community. During 2005 and 2006 Andrew acted on the recommendation from CFS Project Phoenix to develop a new CFS Bushfire Information and Warning System. The new system was implemented in 2005 for the 2006 bushfire season.

Andrew took carriage of this important project at a time of high activity for the CFS. He developed the bulk of the content of the system and personally led the process of consultation and approval at all levels within CFS and the State Emergency Management Council.

Shane Leedham (Salisbury Downs)
Deputy Unit Manager, SES

Shane has previously received Service Medals for 15 and 25 years of Service with the CFS and SES. Shane was a big influence in getting Salisbury, Elizabeth and Gawler councils to support a SES unit in the Northern Districts. Following 11 years as Deputy Rescue Officer for Enfield SES, he is now the Deputy Unit Manager and also a qualified training officer and goes to many country areas to help train other volunteers.

Shane never asks his crew to do anything he wouldn't do himself and the safety and welfare of his crew always comes first. Shane is very knowledgeable in all aspects of the SES because of many years of experience which helps him tackle some of the more difficult jobs that most units may not be able to do. Shane goes beyond the call of duty to help his crew.

Lynette Jean Little (Salisbury Downs)
Rescue Officer, SES

Lynette has previously received a National Medal for 15 years service having been with the SES for 17 years. For 3 years she was a communications officer with the Northern Districts SES and also conducted communication training. Starting at the Enfield SES 14 years ago as rescue crew she has worked her way through to Rescue Officer. She has been training officers for the last 12 years both in metro and regional areas.

Lynette is extremely dedicated to SES and her crew and she always goes that extra mile to give her crew the training and support she feels they may need.

Janice McEvoy (Warooka)
Volunteer Team Leader – SA Ambulance Service

Janice has previously received medals for International Year of the Volunteer, Australia Day and in 1984 Yorke Peninsula's Citizen of the Year Award.

She is currently the Volunteer Team Leader for Warooka Ambulance Service and performs a minimum of 10x12 hour shifts per week (120 hrs!) and sometimes a lot more. Janice is an outstanding volunteer across more than one emergency service and many other volunteer organisations.

John McNaughton (Renmark)
Station Officer – MFS, Renmark

John is a retained firefighter (acting as Station Officer for the Renmark MFS) and is also employed full-time as a cellar hand at Berri and as a training officer at different regional wineries under their OHS requirements.

Employed by the MFS at Renmark, he carries a pager and responds to emergencies 24/7, during work time and after hours. The Renmark station has about 15-20 callouts per month of which John's attendance is 90%. John is also involved with the MFS training for regional recruits, and in 2008, the Renmark Station achieved second place in the Chief Officer's trophy mainly through John's dedication and training.

John has 18 years service with the MFS and has been a dedicated and enthusiastic employee. His continual commitment to the MFS and the community are an inspiration and example for all.

Peter John James Nygaard (Clarence Gardens)
OHS&W Officer, SA Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM)

Peter is employed by SAFECOM as an OHSW officer, embedded within the SES. Peter, who has previously been awarded a National Medal, wholeheartedly supports every aspect of the SES and its many and varied roles. He provides a very personal form of support to SES volunteers and staff in his role and continually strives to provide direct support to volunteers who have been injured or otherwise involved in accidents. He has worked tirelessly to develop and implement safe systems of work and to support SES units and the organisation in the development of a procedural doctrine to ensure a safe environment.

Peter's dedication extends far beyond working hours and he has diligently made himself available as a point of contact and reference for SES volunteers and staff alike. He demonstrates the true spirit of SAFECOM support to the Sector.

Quentin Russ (Tumby Bay)
Group Officer, CFS

Quentin for many years has been a major support for the Tumby Bay CFS in the position of Group Officer and Brigade Officer and in 2003 received an AFSM medal. Under his leadership, his Group excels at operations and administration.

Quentin stood up for the community after Wangary with unwavering courage against those who had passed judgement against the service and volunteers. Quentin is one of those volunteers who believes volunteering is the only way to be part of a community. He is involved in many other community groups in Tumby Bay.

Shaun Ruxton (Sheidow Park)
District Officer, MFS

As District Officer for the MFS, Shaun has maintained the Fire Investigation Section on behalf of the MFS for sustained periods as the only fire service investigator for the state. Shaun has guided the section through a period of major change and designed and implemented data systems, achieving significant improvements in the recording and distribution of information and intelligence.

Shaun is a dedicated fire investigator who has given of his personal time and sustained effort to ensure the MFS is well represented and the community well served in regard to fire cause investigation and the ensuing benefit of preventing loss of life and property.

Shaun has completed 25 years of service and has previously been awarded an Australian National Medal and Clasp.

Lee Watson (c/- Brukunga)
State Training Officer – CFS

In his capacity of State Training Officer at CFS, Brukunga, Lee has been instrumental in ensuring that the Training Department of the CFS has continually maintained its accreditation as a registered training organisation. As a result of the Memorandum of Understandings with Fire and Rescue Northern Territory and Bushfires NT, the training department of the CFS has a responsibility to ensure that its quality systems and processes across all aspects of training delivery and accreditation work effectively for both SA and NT organisations and Lee has worked tirelessly to maintain consistently high standards in this area.

Lee's dedication and achievements as a career officer within the SACFS have been acknowledged in receiving this commendation today.

Trevor Pearce (South Plympton)
Manager, Financial Services – SAFECOM

Trevor is a person of great integrity, values and commitment. While the sector has faced many changes and challenges, Trevor has maintained great focus and provided leadership to the financial services team. The successful consolidation of financial services and quality financial reporting and management has largely been due to Trevor's commitment to customer service.

In addition to his position in Financial Services, Trevor undertakes additional activities for the sector – namely the SAFECOM Office Liaison Officer ensuring that SAFECOM is constantly aware of CFS activity and ready to respond where necessary. He is also a member of the Executive of the SA Police and Emergency Services Games Committee and assists in the planning and conduct of events.

Trevor also organises a number of teams within the SAFECOM office to compete in the BRW Corporate Trial and Aquatic Corporate Cup.

On the basis of Trevor's commitment to the sector, the quality of service that he provides and his extensive voluntary involvement in additional activities that are morale building, he is most worthy of a Ministerial Commendation.

Alex Carr (formerly of Hallett Cove, now living in Norwood)
Patrol Member – Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club

Alex is a Patrol Member for the Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club and assisted Christopher Alagich in the rescue at Goolwa on 6 January 2007.

While Chris was swimming out and back in again with a body board, Alex was left to look after the patient, who was in a bad way. Alex then assisted Chris in securing the patient to the body board and returning to shore in dangerous conditions. If it wasn't for the efforts of both Alex and Chris, a life may have been lost that day.