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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

HONOURS AND AWARDS

AIR FORCE DEPARTMENT

Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB.

19th April 1983.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards:

Bar to Air Force Cross

Master Air Loadmaster Robert Brian DANES, A.F.C. (X0593459), Royal Air Force.

Master Air Loadmaster Danes was the winchman of a Search and Rescue Wessex helicopter scrambled from Royal Air Force Coltishall on the evening of 19th November 1982 to assist in transferring 3 seriously injured seamen aboard the Chinese People's Republic vessel Kungming, to hospital. The weather conditions were poor with mean winds of 60 knots, sea state 9 and severe turbulence and dense spray at low level. On arrival it was apparent that the conditions would be hazardous for the winchman; waves of between 30 and 50 feet in height were rolling along the length of the 14,000 ton ship, breaking over the bows and sweeping the deck to the stern, the only place from which to carry out the winching operation, although it was rising and falling through 50 feet and was alternately clear of the water, and then awash. Despite this and many hazardous projections and wires near the winching area, Master Air Loadmaster Danes volunteered to be winched down to the pitching deck. After releasing himself from the winch cable he was waist deep in flowing seawater

and but for safety lines positioned by the ship's crew would have been swept overboard. On regaining a foothold he was led along the continually awash deck to the main superstructure of the ship where the three injured seamen were located. Working alone and unable to communicate with the Chinese crew except by sign language, he applied first aid to the casualties and then prepared the most seriously injured seaman for recovery to the helicopter. With great risk to his own life and little assistance he manoeuvred the stretcher back along the deck to the winching area where both he and the casualty were recovered to the aircraft. Undaunted, he then repeated the operation and successfully recovered a second casualty to the aircraft. By this time the aircraft was short of fuel and the rescue had to be abandoned. Under the guidance of a doctor who was on board the aircraft Master Air Loadmaster Danes continued to apply medical aid to the casualties until they were transferred to an ambulance in Holland. Throughout this extremely hazardous and difficult rescue, Master Air Loadmaster Danes displayed exceptional courage and devotion to duty saving those in need. In the face of grave personal danger his actions were in the highest tradition of the Service.

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air

Flight Lieutenant Alan Coy (5201528), Royal Air Force.

For his skill, courage and determination when on the evening of 19th November 1982 as pilot of a Search and Rescue Wessex helicopter from R.A.F. Coltishall he successfully transferred two seriously injured seamen from a Chinese merchant vessel, to hospital in Holland in the most adverse weather conditions.

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