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CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

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The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following names, for publication in *The London Gazette*, of those shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for Bravery!

QUEENS' COMMENDATION FOR BRAVERY

Kevin Charles BALCOMBE, Constable, West Mercia Constabulary.

For services in arresting a gunman.

Constable Balcombe was on patrol when he was informed by radio of the theft of two weapons from a gun shop. Shortly afterwards, he saw a man carrying a bin bag who was acting suspiciously. He approached the man and as he asked to look in the bag he caught sight of a gun barrel. The suspect pulled out a single barrelled shot gun and pointed it at the Constable's abdomen saying "Get away from me, it's loaded". Constable Balcombe stood his ground and, as the suspect backed away into the doorway of a restaurant, the Constable radioed to alert colleagues.

In order to safeguard the public, Constable Balcombe then managed to gain access to the restaurant for himself and the gunman. Once inside, he ordered the staff to move to the kitchen for safety. He then engaged the gunman in conversation to calm him and protect the staff in the kitchen, during which time a second weapon from the bin bag was handed by the gunman to Constable Balcombe. He placed it on the floor in order not to alarm the gunman.

The gunman, who had already attempted to kill himself in a previous incident, continued to behave irrationally. After about six hours sitting with the gunman in the restaurant—during which time Constable Balcombe declined the assistance of colleagues as he believed it would have encouraged the gunman to use his weapon against himself or those trapped in the kitchen,—the Constable saw the opportunity to grab the shot gun. He did this and then arrested the gunman.

Peter Lewis BENTALL, Constable, North Yorkshire Police

For services in arresting two shoplifters.

While off duty Constable Bentall noticed a male and female shoplifting in a supermarket. He informed store security and they followed the two suspects to their van. Constable Bentall

approached the van, and as he showed his warrant card the driver (female) drove forward and then stopped. The male shoplifter then got into the driver's seat and drove the van straight at Constable Bentall who was thrown onto the bonnet: he managed to grab hold of the wiper blade and roof rack stopping himself from falling off as the van continued to move forward. Constable Bentall shouted continuously at the driver to stop. The driver of the van then tried to force Constable Bentall off the bonnet by continually braking hard then accelerating and swerving from side to side. The van left the supermarket car park with Constable Bentall still holding on and sped off down the road reaching speeds of up to 40 mph. After 3 to 4 miles the driver stopped the van and Constable Bentall managed to reach through the driver's open window and grab the ignition keys. There followed a struggle as Constable Bentall tried to arrest the driver. A passer-by assisted until other police officers arrived.

Peter Ronald HIAM, Constable, Wiltshire Constabulary

For services in arresting a man armed with a shotgun who was firing indiscriminately.

In the late evening, on becoming aware that a gunman was firing a shotgun indiscriminately in the street, PC Hiam left his Police Station and followed the gunman on foot, staying within 20-25 paces, close enough to warn members of the public of the danger. After a while, during which time he fired six or so more indiscriminate shots, the gunman became aware of PC Hiam's presence when the officer stepped into the road to call out a warning to a member of the public. The gunman turned and faced PC Hiam. There followed a short exchange of words ending with the gunman threatening to "Blow the PC away" and at the same time, he levelled the shotgun to the right of the officer. The gunman then turned and walked away, with PC Hiam continuing to follow at a distance. After discharging the shotgun again the gunman stopped, seemingly to reload. Seeing this PC Hiam rushed the gunman and, managed to grab the barrel and pull the gun from his grasp. The gunman was then overpowered and arrested.

Philip John OWEN, Constable, Ministry of Defence Police

For services in arresting a man armed with a crossbow.

Constable Owen and a colleague were called to a disturbance where a man had been threatening residents with a crossbow and had already assaulted several people.

On arrival the police officers saw a man, who had sustained head injuries, lying on the ground. After requesting an ambulance they returned to their police van to move further down the street to the

place where the suspect was throwing large stones at a van. The suspect caught sight of the police van and started to move towards it; with a large stone in one hand and a loaded crossbow in the other. As he approached the police van he stopped and threw the large stone at the windscreen, which shattered. Constable Owen and his colleague jumped from the van and Constable Owen took temporary cover behind the vehicle's open door. The suspect then moved towards the door until he was able to aim the crossbow directly at Constable Owen. Constable Owen, who had remained alert to the need to disarm the disturbed man, rushed and rugby tackled the suspect. There then followed a violent struggle, until with the help of other officers the suspect was arrested.

Robert James CRAMMOND, Civilian
Stephen HUGHES, Civilian
Neil RACE, Civilian

For rescuing four children and one adult from a house fire.

In the early hours of the morning Mr. Race, Mr. Crammond and Mr. Hughes were woken by a neighbour screaming for help, saying that her house was on fire and her husband and four children were inside. The three men went to the rear of the house where Mr. Race attempted to enter through a partially open upstairs window, and Mr. Hughes managed to force open the back door. All three men entered the house and went upstairs, Mr. Crammond having put a damp cloth over his mouth. Mr. Race was first up and found the body of an adult on the landing which he managed to drag to the top of the stairs where Mr. Hughes took over and carried the adult downstairs, placing him in one of the downstairs rooms.

Mr. Race then crawled on hands and knees, trying to stay under the dense smoke, and found a child on the landing. He passed the child to Mr. Hughes, who had returned. Again Mr. Hughes carried the child downstairs to safety while Mr. Race followed downstairs to get his breath before returning to the bedroom area. Meanwhile Mr. Crammond had crawled on hands and knees, staying under the dense smoke, into a bedroom where he found two children on the bed. He took one child and passed it to Mr. Race on the landing, who in turn passed the child to Mr. Hughes at the top of the stairs. Mr. Hughes took the child downstairs, but on returning upstairs was overcome by smoke and had to leave the house through the back door. On regaining his breath he tried to gain access through an upstairs window, but this was too hot to touch.

Mr. Crammond had, in the meantime, re-entered the bedroom to get the second child who had become trapped between the bed and the wall, but was overcome by smoke before he reached it and was forced to retreat downstairs to regain his breath. He returned to the bedroom after a few minutes and managed to free the child whom he

carried downstairs and out of the house. At the same time Mr. Race had entered another bedroom and found the last child, whom he took and carried downstairs and out of the house.

Thomas MILLAR, formerly Reserve Constable, Royal Ulster Constabulary

For bravery in Northern Ireland.

QUEEN'S COMMENDATION FOR BRAVERY IN THE AIR

CHANG Yao-teng (Raymond), Aircrewman, Hong Kong Government Flying Service

For saving life at sea in hazardous conditions.

On 25th December 1995 a helicopter of the Government Flying Service was scrambled for an urgent medical evacuation of a crewmember of a Chinese fishing boat 125 miles off Hong Kong. At the time the weather was atrocious, with a 6 metre swell and wind speeds of 30-35 knots. As the helicopter approached, the rough seas and lack of clear deck space on the boat precluded an attempt to winch a trained ambulancewoman to the boat.

Mr. Chang, the helicopter winchman, elected to make a descent. After the fishing boat had positioned itself in the most stable position possible, the helicopter approached from astern, on a course parallel to the boat. This resulted in Mr. Chang being plunged into the cold and rough sea, and the attempt was abandoned.

The marginal flying conditions worried the pilots, but in the face of urgent pleas from the fishing boat (the injured crewman's foot was almost severed) Mr. Chang insisted on making a second attempt to reach the fishing boat. On this second occasion Mr. Chang landed heavily on the pitching and rolling deck. He then went to the boat's engine room where, in difficult and unstable conditions, he gave first aid and strapped the casualty to a stretcher, working against the clock due to the deteriorating condition of the casualty and of the weather as well as the helicopter's limited endurance. The casualty was then transferred to the deck for the lift to the helicopter.

To accomplish this, Mr. Chang placed the stretcher in front of him, and steadied himself against the boat's cabin. As the lift from the deck began, the fishing boat pitched violently, causing Mr. Chang to collide heavily with the roof of the cabin and the stretcher to strike him across the chest. The impact was cushioned by his protective helmet and life jacket, although he received facial injuries and badly bruised ribs. Despite these injuries Mr. Chang continued with the lift, and gave encouragement to the casualty until the fisherman could be taken to hospital where his injuries were successfully treated.

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