

Commissioner's Awards

Recognising and celebrating achievements

Swimming through crocodile infested waters to lead people to safety, holding back rioting crowds, identifying tsunami victims, thwarting clandestine drug syndicates and unwavering commitment to duty would seem to be all in a year's work for the AFP members recognised at the 15 February presentation of Commissioner's Awards held at Parliament House in Canberra.

Since the inaugural presentation of Commissioner's Awards in 2004, a large number of AFP members throughout Australia and overseas have been recognised for their service and endeavours.

The AFP internal awards recognise: excellence, innovation, conspicuous conduct, bravery and overseas service including operating in hazardous circumstances.

Each year, the Recognition and Ceremonial Team plan and coordinate ceremonial events including the Commissioner's Awards Investiture.

"We have a dedicated team coordinating all AFP ceremonial events as well as managing formal recognition processes for the AFP. This includes facilitating the Commissioner's Awards framework, Australian Awards System and other





Natalie Chapman receiving her Police Overseas Medal.



NSW Police Senior Sergeant Dave McCann congratulated by fellow officers after receiving the AFP Commissioner's Commendation for Bravery for his actions during the Honiara riots.



Federal Agent Dennis Sweeney received five awards for his outstanding conduct and commitment.

external recognition providers," Investiture coordinator, Janine Ferry said.

"The Commissioner's Awards ceremonies are held in each state at least once a year with ceremonies in Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney up to two times a year," she said.

February's ceremony in Canberra was held in the Great Hall of Parliament House and 68 AFP members attended the Commissioner's Awards Investiture to receive awards.

The ceremony's official party was led by Commissioner Keelty and comprised Senator Chris Ellison, Deputy Commissioner John Lawler, Chief Operating Officer Trevor Van Dam and ACT Chief Police Officer Audrey Fagan.

Guests attending the event included Victor Samuel Ngele the High Commissioner for the Solomon Islands, Hernani Coelho da Silva the Ambassador for Timor-Leste, local members for the ACT, key AFP and Government Department personnel, and family and friends of the awardees.

In recognising the contributions made by individuals to the AFP, Commissioner Keelty said: "Today we acknowledge and celebrate the extraordinary efforts of individuals and teams who have continued to adapt to a rapidly changing environment.

"The demands placed on sworn and non-sworn members are often very high. However, it is this commitment and

dedication that makes the organisation better able to respond rapidly to changing situations locally, nationally and globally.

"From preventing illicit drugs reaching Australian streets to restoring stability in Honiara, AFP members continue to work in challenging circumstances, inspire their colleagues and go beyond the call of duty."

Commissioner Keelty also highlighted the essential role families and friends play in supporting the members as they go about their daily work.

The awards included Police Overseas Service Medals, National Medals, Humanitarian Overseas Service Medals, Commissioner's Commendations, Commissioner's Group Citations,



Operations and Emergency Medals, Community Policing Medals and Australia Day Medallions.

Federal Agent Dennis Sweeney received five awards for his outstanding conduct and commitment to the organisation through varied roles in community policing, overseas operations, and ACT emergencies.

NSW Police Officer Dave McCann was recognised for his bravery while serving with UN Mission in Support of East Timor (UNMISSET) in 2003, where he assisted in rescuing over 100 local villagers from fierce, crocodile-inhabited floodwaters.

The ceremony also included a presentation of volunteer Dick Cox's posthumous Australia Day Achievement Medallion to his wife, Anne and son Iain. Mr Cox was one of the original members to join the Volunteers in Policing Program when it began in September 2002. He undertook more than 1000 hours of voluntary work for the AFP with his last volunteer activity being as a wreath orderly for the Dedication of the National Police Memorial in September last year.

This year's Investiture Ceremony was also the first to include presentations of Australia Day Achievement Medallions. The recipients of these awards were first announced on 25 January 2007, and include members from sworn and non-sworn ranks who have excelled in their respective roles.

Sue Lalor, the personal assistant to both the ACT Policing's Deputy Chief Police Officers, received the medallion for exemplary services to the AFP. She said

she was pleased to be acknowledged after 19 years working in Executive for ACT Policing and shared the special occasion with her husband and mother.

Guests attending the presentation were also fortunate to see the ceremonial parade skills of the Assistant Ceremonial Officers participating in the Flag Party.

"AFP ceremonies, whether they are medal investitures, dedications or funerals, require planning, precision and respect. The Assistant Ceremonial Officers are men and women from the AFP and Protective Services who volunteer their time to be a part of an important service," Janine Ferry said.



Below: February's Award Ceremony included a presentation of Dick Cox's posthumous Australia Day Achievement Medallion to his wife Anne and son Iain, by Commissioner Keelty and ACT Policing's Chief Police Officer Audrey Fagan.

