

**NSW Rural Fire Service**  
**The Award of the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM)**  
**Honours and Awards Australia Day 2010**

**NOMINATION STATEMENTS**

**Ian Alexander Smith**

Group Captain Smith joined the Yerrinbool Brigade in 1965 and held the position of Senior Deputy Captain. In 1992 he was appointed a Group Captain, a position he is still active in today.

During his time with the Yerrinbool Brigade, he also held the position of President for 10 years and Vice President for five years. He is a life member of the Brigade and is a trainer for the Wingecarribee District. For many years he was an active leader in the development of training within the District and he was also an inaugural member of the Wingecarribee Remote Area Fire Fighting Team.

He has attended several out of area incidents including the Baulkham Hills Section 44 bush fire in 2002 and the Canberra bush fires in 2003. He has been a Divisional Commander during several major incidents in the Wingecarribee District, including the South Beloon, Burke River, Joadja, Nattai Complex and Willow Vale bush fires.

He is a member of the Senior Management Team and in his capacity as a Group Captain he continuously supports the other volunteer members within the District by providing daily assistance in dealing with brigade inquiries and the resolution of contentious issues at the brigade and group levels. He provides a vast fire fighting knowledge and experience to the Deputy Group Captains he has mentored over the past years, including regular visits to brigade training nights. He has also been part of the After Hours Duty Roster for the District for the past eight years.

Group Captain Smith has been tireless in his dedication to the Rural Fire Service for over 44 years and he continues to give an outstanding commitment to the Service, the other volunteers and to the community. His many years of distinguished service make him a most worthy candidate for the award of the Australian Fire Service Medal.

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## **Colin Edward Dowling**

Deputy Captain Colin Dowling officially joined the Bunglegumbie Brigade in 1963 and was elected Captain in the same year. His leadership and the esteem with which he is held by his peers are demonstrated by his service record having held office in one or more of the following positions: Captain, Senior Deputy Captain, Deputy Captain, Secretary, President and Vice President every year since. At present he is the Vice President, Deputy Captain and Training Officer of the Burrabadine Rural Fire brigade, which was amalgamated with the Bunglegumbie Rural Fire Brigade in 1985.

In promoting the Rural Fire Service, he has organised and conducted Open Days at Burrabadine Station long before it became common practice in the Rural Fire Service and he has always been involved in organising and conducting social and training events at the Station to foster community involvement in the Brigade. He was President during the planning and fund raising years prior to the opening of the Burrabadine Fire Station and was a major contributor. In 1992, the son of one of the more active members of the Brigade was diagnosed with leukaemia and Deputy Captain Dowling came to the fore to organise and assist with many fund raising activities used to assist that family. It was his suggestion that the Brigade form a Junior Committee to involve younger people in Brigade activities, which led to the formation of a Junior Brigade at Burrabadine, the first in the Dubbo area.

Following a tragic bush fire on Christmas Day in 1984, training courses for fire fighters were introduced in the Dubbo District. Even with some 20 years of experience, He attended these courses with an open mind, and like so many others, he was surprised at how much he could still learn. He became involved as a trainer at the Dubbo Fire Control Centre, a role he approached with enthusiasm. He used his creativity in his training; continually developing better ways of demonstrating the topics he was introducing and donating time and materials to the research into causes of fires to help develop better ways of preventing and extinguishing fires. When local Championships were held in Dubbo, he always assisted in organising and conducting these days, again donating both time and equipment to these events. He was also involved in the construction of the Wongarbon training Centre, again donating time and materials to this project.

He also organises the Brigade to many fund raising events assisting many community organisations and he also organises rosters for Burrabadine for the Driver Reviver Project.

Deputy Captain Dowling continues to be an active member of the Rural Fire Service and his selfless devotion to duty, quiet contribution and dedicated commitments shown to the Service over the past 45 years all contribute to making him a worthy recipient of the Australian Fire Service Medal.

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**Neville David Roberts**

Group Captain Roberts has been a member of the Euromedah Rural Fire Brigade for approximately fourty years and he served as Captain of this brigade for seven year during this time. He was appointed Group Captain in 1995 and has been a very active member in this role. During his time with the Rural Fire Service he has been involved in all types of incidents from bush and grass fires, Section 44 bush fires to horrific motor vehicle accidents and also structure fires involving deaths. He has also been involved in the loading of aircraft for flood relief tasks.

He was elected as a volunteer representative on the Narromine Liaison Committee with Narromine Council from the inception of the local Service Level Agreement and he also represents the volunteers on the Orana Bush Fire Management Committee and previously on the Narromine Bush Fire Management Committee.

When appointed Group Captain he saw the need for the brigades of the Narromine Rural Fire District to change and modernise their equipment, training, firefighting, communications, hazard reduction and volunteer input. He alone drove all parties to modernise the aged and majority “petrol” fleet to become an all “diesel” fleet that now has an average age of ten years. In addition, he has been a very strong advocate for the training of the brigades in the rural and remote areas of Narromine and with strong leadership he was instrumental in getting reluctant volunteers to attend training and then progress through the training system.

He has been a pillar of support for the Fire Control Officers and staff of the Orana Team, often manning the Fire Control Centre during incidents, taking and receiving “000” calls and providing wise counsel to management on volunteer issues. In addition, he has been a strong voice for the volunteers with Council when allocations were being deliberated by Councillors and has generally been totally dedicated to representing the volunteers of the Service within Narromine Shire.

He is also a leader within the Narromine community and has taken on roles that he is passionate about and in all of these he gives his all. He seeks no personal credit or accolades and merely seeks what is best for the community. The Rural Fire Service owes much to Group Captain Roberts for his passionate, dedicated service and for his strong and fair leadership. He is a most worthy candidate for the award of the Australian Fire Service Medal.

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## **Lance Edward Howley**

Group Captain Lance Howley joined the Weimby Rural Fire Brigade, situated in the Balranald Shire in February 1974. In 1975 he was elected to the position of Deputy Captain, a position he held for fourteen years. During those fourteen years, he was involved in attending many incidents and provided strong leadership to his fellow brigade members as well as to other brigade members in the Balranald Shire.

Such were his leadership qualities that in 1989 he was elected to the position of Group Captain for the Group of Balranald Brigades, a position he still actively holds today. During his twenty years of being the Group Captain, he has continued to provide excellent leadership to the Balranald Brigades. Prior to the Balranald Shire becoming part of the Lower Western Zone in 1999, Group Captain Howley continually strived to ensure better conditions and equipment for his brigades such that they were able to carry out the tasks that they had called upon to do and to this end, his brigades were ultimately more suitably equipped. He is an experienced pilot and has even utilised his own plane to over fly bush fires so that his members were given the latest accurate information while fighting these fires.

He has also been a very strong advocate for the introduction of the PMR system into the Shire. When the Balranald Shire combined with the Wentworth Shire in 1999 to form the Lower western Zone, he was at the forefront of discussions to ensure that his members were not disadvantaged in any way by the Zoning agreement.

He has also been actively involved as an invaluable member of the Lower Western Zone Senior Management Team, the Service Level Agreement Committee and the Bush Fire Management Committee since their inception as a Zone. In addition, he consults widely with his brigade members and holds their safety and welfare as being paramount at all times. He regularly attends brigade meetings, Group Captains' Conferences and he ensures that training is provided to the Balranald Group and he ensures that he also keeps up to date with his own Group Captain training requirements.

Group Captain Howley was awarded the National Medal in 2005 for long and distinguished service to the NSW Rural Fire Service and to the Community. He has continually served the Balranald Brigade Group Members and the community of Balranald now for 35 years and he has been instrumental in the formation of the Balranald Headquarters Brigade and for the construction of a modern three bay Fire Station in a concerted effort to further the protection of the community. His 35 years of distinguished service to the NSW Rural Fire Service and to the communities in Western New South Wales made him an inspiration to all who meet him and he is held in very high regard and is most respected by staff members and by the community. He is a most deserving candidate for the award of the Australian Fire Service Medal.

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## **Angelo Baldo**

Superintendent Baldo joined the Glenorie Rural Fire Brigade as a volunteer in September 1978. He soon held the position of Deputy Captain and was recognised as someone heavily involved with the brigade, its training, operations and many out-of-area commitments. He was elected Captain of the Glenorie Brigade in 1993.

His career as a salaried staff member commenced when he was appointed as the Deputy Fire Control Officer at Campbelltown. He was later appointed as the Fire Control Officer. One of his outstanding career achievements was his work in 1996 when he led in the successful development of the Mutual Aid Agreement in the Campbelltown area between the NSW Rural Fire Service and the NSW Fire Brigades. In so doing, he turned around a strained inter-service relationship in that area.

In 2000, Superintendent Baldo was appointed as the 2000 Olympics Operations Commander for the Service during which time he was responsible for leading a team of individuals including volunteers and salaried staff from across the State, in the provision of fire protection to spectators and participants at Olympic venues and surrounding areas. He was awarded the Commissioner's Commendation for Service in 2001.

He went on to take up the position of Chief Superintendent Operational Communications at the Headquarters in November 2001. In October 2002 he was appointed as the Fire Control Officer at Hornsby where his concern for the welfare of staff and volunteers remained a focus of his leadership and commitment to the Service. On numerous occasions since, his leadership qualities have been recognised by his appointments as Section 44 Incident Controller.

He was one of the key members of the Executive of the Rural Fire Employee's Association which was established during the District staff employment project in 2000. As such, he represented the industrial interests of District staff during negotiations with the Service focusing on working conditions and entitlements. In doing so he was able to contribute to a smooth transition from Local to State Government employment for District staff while maintaining an equitable result for all members. This work was undertaken in an environment of great complexity, with sometimes competing interests and with tight deadlines. Since that time he has been an active member of the Executive of the Rural Fire Service Association, the body representing the interests of volunteers and staff of the Service. He has served a number of terms as the Association's Treasurer. He has also been instrumental in the review of the Association's Constitution which will assist in the establishment of improved structures, processes and governance of the Association. His many roles and commitment to the volunteers of the District involve significant travel and out-of-hours work that has been in addition to his role as the Superintendent District Manager.

Superintendent Baldo's dedication, passion and leadership across the Service over many years as both a volunteer and staff member makes him a most worthy candidate for the award of the Australian Fire Service Medal.

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## **Gregory Green**

Captain Greg Green joined the NSW Rural Fire Service in 1977. He has served in a majority of positions within the Bargo Rural Fire Brigade and he is currently the Brigade Captain, a position he has held since 1992. He has also qualified as a Group Leader and was a Deputy group Officer for three years in the late 1990's.

Captain Green has attended numerous major incidents within the Wollondilly District and also twenty four out-of-area bush fire emergencies. For three of these deployments he was the Group Leader.

He was a founding member of the Wollondilly Remote Area Fire Team whose goal setting abilities included a 12 kilometre fire trail made by fourty members in one day during a fire. He was also a member of the Wollondilly Team during State Field Days winning on two occasions at the Southern Highlands Regional Competition.

He is committed to furthering the knowledge of community members concerning fire safety having recently attended the local nursing home to advise residents on this issue. He is also dedicated to mentoring younger members and supporting their development through his involvement in District training.

Captain Green is a strong enforcer of fire ground safety and is well regarded amongst his peers and subordinates. There have been a few occasions when he has attended an incident and has either taken control or been given control due to his knowledge of bush fire behaviour and his ability to remain calm during crisis situations. He was part of a crew awarded the Commissioner's Unit Citation for Bravery during a vehicle accident on the Hume Highway.

He has given outstanding service and leadership to the Wollondilly District and to the Rural Fire Service and is a worthy candidate for the award of the Australian Fire Service Medal.

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**Richard (Rick) Parish**

Captain Parish joined the Bringelly Rural Fire Brigade in 1981. Completing basic training in 1981 and on gaining his heavy vehicle licence he was soon able to drive the brigade tanker. He quickly became actively involved in all aspects of the brigade, responding to incidents on a regular basis including, house fires with fatalities and some horrific motor vehicle and aircraft accidents. He completed his Crew Leader training in 1991 and then took on the role of Deputy Captain and Training Officer of the Bringelly Brigade.

On gaining his Rural Fire Instructor Qualifications in 1992 he spent a considerable period of time coordinating and/or instructing on zone training courses up to an including crew leader. He gained his Assessor Qualifications in 2006.

In 1993 at the request of the Captain Luddenham Rural Fire Brigade he transferred to the Luddenham Brigade as Training Officer and he trained that brigade to be one of the first “village” brigades in the outer metropolitan area. He moved back to the Bringelly Brigade in 1997 on the retirement of the then Brigade Captain and he was appointed as Brigade Captain, a position he has held ever since.

He was the Incident Controller at the 2001 bush fires in the Luddenham area and he coordinated the operations of six brigades, including some from "out of area". His other commitments were to “out of area” bush fires at Pittwater, Blue Mountains and Victoria. He also spent time at Gosford/Wyong during recent floods and in the eastern Suburbs and Blacktown after hail storms.

In 2004 the Bringelly Brigade obtained a toy wooden fire truck and Captain Parish suggested the building of a “Firewise” trailer and with his continued support and assistance a trailer and other equipment were either manufactured or purchased. This included a smoke house (for “get down and go” education and training and a hoses and ladders game. He and his dedicated support crew now travel all over the zone to School Fetes and other community events, educating the public on fire awareness. He has also taken the trailer to other zones in the State.

In 2007 he qualified as a Community Safety Assistant. Using his skills as a qualified Instructor he combined both sets of skills to coordinate the first community based ten week duration Rural Fire Brigade Cadet Course conducted in the zone. He then coordinated a school based program which was so successful that it is scheduled to be again conducted this year. As Captain of the Brigade he also provided assistance in the conduct of the inaugural National Cadet Championships held in Penrith in 2007.

His services to the Rural Fire Service have been significant and he is a worthy candidate for the award of the Australian Fire Service Medal.

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