



Hon Michael Gallacher MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Police and Emergency Services
Minister for the Hunter

MEDIA RELEASE

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MINISTER ANNOUNCES RECIPIENT OF THE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN FIRE SERVICE AWARD

Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Michael Gallacher, has announced volunteer firefighter Kendall Thompson as this year's recipient of the Benjamin Franklin Fire Service Award for Valour.

Mr Thompson, Captain of Moombi Rural Fire Brigade in Tamworth District was nominated for the award in recognition of the role he undertook as part of NSW Rural Fire Service assistance during the South East Queensland floods.

Captain Thompson, who is a qualified Remote Area Firefighter and Helicopter Winchman, responded to the devastating flash flooding that impacted upon Brisbane and surrounding areas in January this year.

Minister Gallacher said Captain Thompson was the designated "down-the-wire" crewman during the two day deployment and made extraordinary efforts to save lives.

"More than 45 people were rescued by Captain Thompson and his crew which is an extraordinary effort," Minister Gallacher said.

"On many occasions their efforts prevented almost certain tragedy in what were no doubt extremely difficult conditions.

"The actions of Captain Thompson went above and beyond and had it not been for his willingness to place his own safety at risk, a number of people would have certainly perished.

This award, the International Association's most prestigious, recognises the spirit of service, courage and heroism demonstrated by members of the world's fire and emergency services.

The program is named for Benjamin Franklin, one of the first fire chiefs in the United States.

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