

# Australia Day honours for Disaster Victim Identification Squad



Senior Sergeant Ken Rach and Sergeant Stephen Cook, Disaster Victim Identification Squad, Coronial Support Unit helped identify victims of the Bali bombings in October 2002.

Four Queensland police officers will receive the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for their actions following the Bali bombings in October 2002.

Superintendent Ross Dwyer, Senior Sergeant Ken Rach and Sergeants Stephen Cook and Scott McLaren are being honoured for the roles they performed in the joint investigation and victim identification process that followed the bombings.

The OAMs were announced on Australia Day and will be presented during an upcoming ceremony at Government House in Brisbane.

Senior Sergeant Rach from the Coronial Support Unit said he was very proud of the award.

"It was quite unexpected. I think the award is more recognition for the other members of the squad who worked in Bali and their families," he said.

"I just did what was expected of me as everyone else did.

"We were there to ensure the successful identification of all those who perished in the bombings so their loved ones could have some closure.

"The lack of plumbing and drainage, the hot humid conditions and the less than hygienic surrounds were not going to deter us from doing our jobs. There was also the threat of more terrorist activity," Senior Sergeant Rach said.

Senior Sergeant Rach was part of a Queensland Police Service (QPS) team that arrived in Bali two days after the bombing – undertake four tours of duty in four months.

He and Sergeant McLaren, Coronial Support Unit, have both recently worked in Phuket, Thailand, where their expertise was an important part of the victim identification process following the Asian tsunami disaster on Boxing Day.



Sergeant Cook (pictured here in the morgue in Bali) and his colleagues had to work in basic conditions compared to the forensic facilities available in Australia.

## AUSTRALIAN POLICE MEDALS

Australian Police Medals have also been announced for Assistant Commissioner Ian Stewart, Chief Superintendent Alan Davey, former Superintendent Michael Huddlestone, Detective Senior Sergeant Gregory Daniels and Senior Sergeant Michael Pearson.

Assistant Commissioner Stewart was acknowledged for his leadership and strategic planning skills and commitment to the ongoing education, training and development of police officers.

He was recently appointed as Assistant Commissioner, Ethical Standards Command.

Chief Superintendent Davey, the Operations Coordinator for the South Eastern Police Region, was recognised for his leadership and excellence in organisational improvement, change management and operational training.

Former Superintendent Huddlestone retired in April 2004 after 34 years with the QPS.

He was responsible for policing one of the most remote and diverse police districts in Queensland and was recently commended for his leadership by achieving a peaceful outcome during the occupation and protest at the Century Mine near Karumba.

As officer in charge of the Sunshine Coast District Juvenile Aid Bureau, Detective Senior Sergeant Daniels established a police and community network to provide an effective policing partnership in response to offences committed by juveniles.

Senior Sergeant Pearson has been recognised for his extensive commitment to improving social standards in the Logan community through such successful projects as Urban Renewal, Problem Oriented Policing Partnerships, Safe House for Substance Abuse and Police Beats.



Sergeant Scott McLaren, Sergeant Stephen Cook and Senior Sergeant Ken Rach take a minute during their busy schedule in Bali to relax.

# “Scariest day” ends with QPS Valour Awards

By Louise Allen, Media and Public Affairs Branch



Acknowledged for exceptional bravery by Assistant Commissioner Pat Doonan (second from left) and Commissioner Bob Atkinson (second from right) were (from left) Constable Mark Waitowitz, Senior Constable Bruce McKinnie and Senior Constable Andrew Bailey.

Photos by Sergeant Stuart Cross, Photographic Section.

For Senior Constables Andrew Bailey and Bruce McKinnie and Constable Mark Waitowitz, March 12, 2000 was the “scariest day of their lives”.

While on patrol in Gympie, the three officers intercepted a vehicle involved in a traffic offence.

The offender got out of the car, threatened the officers with a semi-automatic pistol and then pointed his weapon directly at Senior Constable McKinnie.

The officers' quick thinking enabled them to disarm the offender.

Late last year they were presented Valour Awards for displaying exceptional bravery and professionalism when apprehending the offender.

During the presentation, Commissioner Bob Atkinson said courage, valour and bravery represented the work that was undertaken daily across the State.

“It is the role of our police officers to provide for the safety and security of Queenslanders.

“By doing their job, police officers risk their lives every time they

start their shift,” Commissioner Atkinson said.

Senior Constable Bailey and Constable Waitowitz both agreed that it was the most frightening situation in which they had been involved.

“It could have happened to anyone though,” Constable Waitowitz, who had only been in the Service for 18 months at the time of the incident, said.

Eight Task Force Argos detectives were also awarded Commissioner's Certificates during the ceremony for displaying

professionalism, resourcefulness and dedication to duty.

In March 2003, Detective Acting Inspector Jon Rouse, Detective Sergeants Denzil Clark, Mark Hamilton, Peter Jory; Detective Senior Constables Rees Folpp, Kirsten Helton, Lea-Ann McNeil and Plain Clothes Senior Constable Darren Cowles were responsible for the arrest of an internationally wanted man in relation to serious sexual offences against children.

A Commissioner's Certificate of Appreciation was also presented to Senior Sergeant Craig Huxley in recognition of his service to the East Timorese community during his six-month deployment with the United Nations Police in 1999.

Caboolture resident Mr Richard Lohse was also honoured with a Commissioner's Certificate of Appreciation for his actions when rescuing a man from the Pumicestone Passage at Bribie Island on November 6, 2002.



Commissioner Bob Atkinson (fourth from right) presents Task Force Argos detectives with Commissioner's Certificates for their professionalism, resourcefulness and dedication to duty.