

EREBUS SPECIAL SERVICE MEDAL TO BE AWARDED

28 November 2006

Prime Minister Helen Clark today announced that the New Zealand Special Service Medal (Erebus) will be awarded to those who were involved in the recovery, investigation, and identification operation following the Erebus air disaster.

Today, 28 November, is the 27th anniversary of the disaster.

Helen Clark said that the medal will be awarded to an initial group of 133 police and other personnel who took part in the response to the tragedy of the crash of Air New Zealand flight TE 901 on Mt Erebus, Ross Island, Antarctica, on 28 November 1979, with the loss of all 257 on board.

"The crash of flight TE 901 was without question the bleakest moment in the history of New Zealand's fifty year presence in Antarctica. The work of those involved in what was called Operation Overdue was critical in supporting the victims' families and helping our nation come to terms with the tragic deaths of so many people.

"The recovery team at the crash site consisted of experienced Search and Rescue personnel, including police and Federated Mountain Club members, together with support personnel. Victims recovered from the crash site were flown to Auckland for identification by teams of pathologists, dentists, and police.

Helen Clark said that until the Government had instituted the NZSSM in 2002 there was not a suitable way of recognizing the extraordinary service of those involved in Operation Overdue.

This new medal recognises service or work for New Zealand in very difficult, adverse, extreme, or hazardous circumstances which falls outside the boundaries of what individuals could normally expect as part of their routine duties or work. A Special Service Medal was last awarded in 2005 to recognise New Zealanders who were involved in rescue, relief, and rehabilitation efforts in areas devastated by the [Boxing Day 2004 earthquake and tsunami](#).

"The work of personnel involved at Mt Erebus far exceeded the boundaries of what could be expected in the course of normal police, search and rescue, or air accident investigation duties. The circumstances were extreme: a hazardous physical location, extreme climatic conditions, dangers presented by the wreckage, the psychological strain of recovering the victims, and highly demanding physical work," Helen Clark said.

"This medal also recognises the unique psychological risks faced by those who worked to identify successfully 214 of the 257 victims. The identification team's complex work was exhaustive and painstaking. It was undertaken in harrowing circumstances well outside the boundaries of what would normally be expected in the course of routine duties.

Police Minister Annette King said a small number of medal recipients are still serving with the NZ Police.

"They include Sergeant David Templeton who worked with the disaster victim identification teams in Auckland, and who was recently awarded the New Zealand Bravery Decoration. Southern District Commander Superintendent George Fraser also worked in the Auckland Mortuary.

"Additional former police personnel and civilians will also be eligible for the medal. Available records have not enabled us to identify everyone involved with Operation Overdue. The Government would like other eligible people, or the families of any eligible Operation Overdue personnel who have since died, to make an application for the medal," Annette King said.

Defence Minister Phil Goff said the NZSSM (Erebus) will be administered by the New Zealand Defence Force, on behalf of the NZ Police.

Ceremonies to award the New Zealand Special Service Medal (Erebus) will be held in the coming months.

The initial list of 133 eligible New Zealand Police personnel who will receive the NZSSM (Erebus) can be viewed below.

Further information on the Erebus disaster can be found on the following pages of the NZ History.net website:

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/culture/respondingtotragedy-erebus>

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/gallery/797>

INITIAL LIST OF 133 NEW ZEALAND POLICE ELIGIBLE FOR THE AWARD OF THE NEW ZEALAND SPECIAL SERVICE MEDAL (EREBUS) - 28 NOVEMBER 2006

The following 133 New Zealand Police personnel served either at the Erebus crash site or the Mortuary, Auckland University School of Medicine, Auckland, and are eligible for the award of the New Zealand Special Service Medal, (NZSSM), (Erebus).

Note: New Zealand Police personnel, whose names do not appear on the initial list of recipients, should note that their eligibility for the NZSSM (Erebus) is currently being assessed by the New Zealand Police. Other New Zealanders who meet the eligibility criteria will be awarded the NZSSM (Erebus) during 2007, once applications from organisations and individuals are received and approved by the New Zealand Defence Force, who will administer the medal.

New Zealand Police - Location of service: Crash Site, Mount Erebus

Constable Russell Alan BLACKLER;
Sergeant Gregory James GILPIN;
Sergeant Trevor John HORNE;
Constable Brett Ardron JONES;
Constable Stuart Barlass LEIGHTON;
Inspector Robert Stronach MITCHELL;
Sergeant Mark Anthony PENN;
Sergeant Peter John RODGER;
Constable Bruce THOMPSON;
Constable Alistair Lance WINDLEBURN;
Constable Peter YOUNGER

New Zealand Police - Location of service: the Mortuary, Auckland University School of Medicine, Auckland

Senior Sergeant Nicholas Philip ANDERSON;
Sergeant Steven William ARMITAGE

Constable Dennis Arthur BIRCH;
Constable Joanne BIRDLING;
Constable Pauline Lucy BLAKELOCK;
Constable Bruce Edward BLAYNEY;
Constable Anthony Pieter BOOTSMA;
Senior Sergeant Bryant Bernard BOWERMAN;
Sergeant Kevin Thomas BOYLE;
Constable Rodger Henry BRICKLAND;

Detective Sergeant Thomas Vincent BRIEN;
Constable Karen Lorraine BROOKS;
Constable Ernest Allan BROUGHTON;
Constable Kevin Stanley BROWN;
Constable Fiona BROWN;
Constable Norma Bertha BROWNE;
Sergeant Russell Michael BROWNE;
Constable Colin Edward BUCKLEY;
Constable Garth Asby Wills BURLEIGH;
Constable Paul Michael Callister BURNS;
Constable Peter Croft BURRIDGE;

Constable Alan Robert CAMPBELL;
Sergeant Derek Edward CANTELO;
Sergeant Allan Donald CANTLEY;
Constable Ian John CARR;
Constable Raymond Martin CARTER;
Detective Inspector Ronald Ian CHADWICK;
Detective Inspector Michael Gwyther CHARLES;
Constable William David CHARLTON;
Constable Pamela Janis CHIPMAN;
Constable Robyn Lenora CHRISTIAN;
Sergeant Trevor Andrew CHURCH;
Detective Edward William John CIURLIONIS;
Sergeant Richard Edwin CLARKSON;
Constable Wayne Ashley COCKBURN;
Constable Stuart Bruce CONN;
Constable John Sydney CONNORS;
Constable Donald Stephen CONWAY;
Constable Ronald Ernest James COOM;

Inspector Ross Philip DALLOW;
Detective John Lionel DEARING;
Sergeant Mervyn Harold DEDMAN;
Constable Arnold George DICKEY;
Constable Alastair Ross DICKIE;
Sergeant John Joseph DOOLEY;
Sergeant Roderick Philip DRUMMOND;

Sergeant Hugh Phippard EATON;
Constable Kilawa ELISAIA;

Detective Constable Timothy Cavanagh FINLAY;
Sergeant David Joseph FINNIE;
Constable George Patrick FRASER;
Constable Krystyna FRYCKOWSKA;

Constable Christopher Michael GALLAGHER;
Constable Andrew Roger GENTRY;
Sergeant Malcolm Ernest GEORGE;
Sergeant Desmond John GIBSON;

Constable Barry Thomas GILL;
Constable Graham Scott GLENNIE;
Constable Robert Christopher GORST;

Senior Sergeant Angela Mary HARWOOD;
Constable Anne-Marie HAWKE;
Constable Stuart Charles HOUCHEN;
Constable Robert Douglass HUGHES;
Sergeant Brian Frank Vivian HUNTER;

Constable Pauline Beatrice JOBLIN;
Constable Trefor JONES;

Constable Patrick Joseph KEIR;
Constable Dennis James KITNEY;
Constable John Francis KLINGENBERG;
Constable Robert KNOX;

Constable Derek Keith LAWFORD;
Constable Thomas William LEWIS;
Constable John Sidney LINSOTT;
Detective Sergeant David Claude LUCAS;
Sergeant Rex David LUCINSKY;

Detective Constable Warren Thomas MANSELL;
Constable Alexander Gregory McMANUS;
Sergeant Wayne Todd McNEIL;
Sergeant Peter Anthony MILDENHALL;
Superintendent Ian Lindsay MILLS;
Constable Kevin Ross MONTAGUE;
Chief Inspector James MORGAN;
Sergeant Ronald John MORRIS;
Senior Sergeant Keith James MORROW;

Constable Carl NICOLL;
Constable Peter David NISBET;
Detective Sergeant Alesana Marcellus NU'U;

Constable Richard Edward PAK;
Constable Wendy Anne PATON;
Sergeant Robert Henry PROUTING;

Constable Terrence Moss RICHARDSON;
Constable Margaret Evelyn ROBERSTON;
Constable Floyd Richmond Frederick ROSCOE;
Constable Murray Roy ROSENBROOK;
Constable James Turnbull RUSSELL;

Constable Harley Dene SAUNDERS;
Constable John Alexander SAUNDERS;
Sergeant James Warren SAWERS;

Constable Alan Frank SHEARER;
Constable John Keith SMITH;
Sergeant Roger Ernest STEVENS;
Constable Ross Forbes STEWART;
Constable Richard James STRACHAN;
Detective Constable John Leslie STRINGER;
Constable Allan David STUART;
Sergeant Ian Andrew SUTHERLAND;

Constable Phillip Richard TAYLOR;
Constable Stewart Tawaroa TE TANA;
Constable David TEMPLETON;
Constable David John TURNER;

Constable Neville William WATKINS;
Sergeant Graham Charles WEBBY;
Sergeant Ian WEDGWOOD;
Constable Trevor Lester WHITE;
Constable Eric Clinton WICK;
Constable Alastair Bruce WILLIAMS;
Constable Catherine Ann WILLIAMS;
Constable David Gertie WONGTUNG;
Detective Constable John William WORDSWORTH;
Constable Wayne James WRIGHT;
Sergeant Earl Harding WYATT;

Constable Christopher Ray Duncan YATES