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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

## HONOURS AND AWARDS

### AIR FORCE DEPARTMENT

Whitehall,  
London SW1A 2HB.  
8th April, 1975.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards:

#### *Air Force Cross*

Flight Lieutenant David Roderick COSBY (4231245), Royal Air Force.

On 21st December 1974, Flight Lieutenant Cosby was Duty Captain at D Flight, 202 Squadron, Royal Air Force, Lossiemouth, when he was notified that a Belgian trawler with a 9 man crew had run aground on rocks on the island of Hoy, Orkney. He took off in a Whirlwind in the early morning and at first light reached the trawler, which was lying on its side, parallel to and approximately 25 yards from the base of a 600 foot vertical cliff. The vessel was being pounded by heavy seas which were constantly breaking over her and at times almost engulfing her. The Longhope Lifeboat had arrived, but was prevented by the heavy seas and submerged rocks from getting nearer than 200 yards. The weather was clear, but the south-west wind was 20 to 25 knots, gusting to 40 knots, and helped by the rising tide was gradually pushing the trawler closer to the cliff. Flight Lieutenant Cosby knew at once the risks involved in hovering only 25 yards from the cliff in such turbulent conditions, but he also recognised the immediate and increasing danger to the ship's crew and therefore decided to transfer them to the nearby lifeboat. The winchman was lowered but the height of the trawler's superstructure and radio aerial prevented the aircraft hovering lower than 50 feet above the deck, which was angled at 45 degrees, and the considerable pendulum effect caused by the length of the cable, aggravated by the severe air turbulence, made it extremely difficult for the winchman to reach the vessel safely. The task was further complicated by having to face into the wind, thereby putting the tail rotor dangerously close to the cliff face. Throughout the

operation, which was carried out 9 times, the winchman was in constant danger of being battered against either the trawler or the rocks and only the superb flying skill displayed by Flight Lieutenant Cosby and the excellent co-ordination between him and the winch operator enabled the whole operation to be completed safely in 45 minutes. Flight Lieutenant Cosby's courage, determination and coolness in the face of great danger to himself and his crew undoubtedly saved the trawlermen from a perilous situation, and his exceptional display of flying under extremely difficult conditions was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Royal Air Force.

Master Air Loadmaster Peter David BARWELL (F0682699), Royal Air Force.

On 21st December 1974, Master Air Loadmaster Barwell was the winchman on board a Whirlwind of D Flight, 202 Squadron, Royal Air Force Lossiemouth, which was called to assist a Belgian trawler in distress. The trawler, which had a 9 man crew on board, had run aground on rocks on the island of Hoy, Orkney. The aircraft arrived on the scene at first light and found the trawler lying on its side, parallel to and approximately 25 yards from the base of a 600 foot vertical cliff. The vessel was being pounded by heavy seas which were constantly breaking over her and at times almost engulfing her. The Longhope Lifeboat had arrived but was prevented by the heavy seas and submerged rocks from getting nearer than 200 yards. The weather was clear, but the south-west wind was 20 to 25 knots, gusting to 40 knots, and helped by the rising tide was gradually pushing the trawler closer to the cliff. Master Air Loadmaster Barwell fully appreciated the problems which the pilot would have in maintaining the aircraft in the hover only 25 yards from the cliff in such turbulent conditions, but he immediately volunteered to be winched onto the deck of the trawler which was angled at 45 degrees, in order to uplift the crew to the nearby lifeboat. Unfortunately the height of the trawler's superstructure and radio aerial prevented the aircraft from hovering lower than 50 feet above the deck and the considerable pendulum effect caused by the length of cable, aggravated by the severe air turbulence, made it extremely difficult for Master Air Loadmaster Barwell to reach the vessel safely. Throughout the