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TUESDAY, 23RD DECEMBER 1975

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

## HONOURS AND AWARDS

### NAVY DEPARTMENT

#### CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace,  
London S.W.1.

23rd December 1975.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the Queen's Gallantry Medal to the under-mentioned:

207376 Marine John CRAWFORD, Royal Marines Reserve.

1. During a Territorial Army Volunteer Reserve Basic Parachute Course training exercise on 18th June 1975 at R.A.F. Weston-on-the-Green, Oxfordshire, Marine John Crawford, R.M.R., was one of nine pupils descending from a Hercules aircraft with approximately 60 lbs. of equipment strapped to his body.

2. Marine Crawford exited from the aircraft and his parachute inflated normally at approximately 600 feet.

Another pupil, Private G. A. Mahon, T.A.V.R., exited from the other side of the aircraft fractionally later: his parachute inflated but his rigging twisted preventing him from controlling the drift of his parachute. A dangerous situation then developed when Mahon's parachute drifted over Crawford's, resulting in the former's canopy losing its air. It collapsed and Mahon slipped down inside Crawford's parachute. As Mahon fell, his canopy encased Crawford. Mahon was hanging by the full length of his parachute and rigging lines which became entangled with Crawford's. Mahon's canopy then started slipping, whereupon Crawford grabbed it and held on to prevent Mahon from streaming the remaining 200-300 feet to the ground. With his hands full, Crawford was unable to jettison his equipment or operate his reserve parachute. The two men landed heavily, Mahon sustaining only minor cuts and bruising, but Crawford suffered a leg fracture in three places and spinal injury.

3. Marine Crawford, without thought to his personal safety, showed a remarkably quick appreciation of the danger of the situation and his gallant and courageous act undoubtedly saved Private Mahon from serious if not fatal injury.

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