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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

HONOURS AND AWARDS

ARMY DEPARTMENT

Ministry of Defence,
Whitehall, London S.W.1.
20th May 1980.

(To be dated 6th May 1980)

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the award of The Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct to:

23732027 Sergeant Ian ALLAN, Royal Military Police.

For his calm and courageous conduct after an explosion.

AIR FORCE DEPARTMENT

Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB
20th May 1980

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

Air Force Cross

Flight Lieutenant Robert Edwin NEVILLE (4232554),
Royal Air Force.

On the evening of 27th March 1980 Flight Lieutenant Neville was the duty captain on the Sea King Flight of No. 202 Squadron at Royal Air Force Boulmer. At 1800 hours a call was received from the Rescue Co-ordination Centre at Pitreavie Castle reporting that the accommodation platform "Alexander Kielland" had capsized in the Ekofisk oil field with over 200 people on board. Within eight minutes the standby aircraft was airborne and en route to the scene of the disaster, some 170 miles north-east of Boulmer. The weather deteriorated rapidly as the aircraft neared the search area, with low cloud, driving rain and winds gusting to over 55 knots. Flight Lieutenant Neville immediately set up a low level search pattern and, despite the very poor visibility, soon located a liferaft with 10 survivors on board. Initial attempts to

place the winchman onto the liferaft by means of the auxiliary hover trim were frustrated by the mountainous 30 feet waves. Flight Lieutenant Neville elected to maintain the hover himself under the direction of the winch operator and despite the appalling operating conditions all ten seamen were successfully recovered into the aircraft. After landing these survivors on an adjacent oil rig the captain went back to the search area and found a lifeboat by means of the locator beacon. The weather by now had deteriorated still further and it was necessary to carry out an automatic transition to the hover in order to make contact with the boat. The winchman was lowered and found 26 survivors but as none was injured, a surface vessel was homed in to the lifeboat and they were taken aboard. After nearly 6 hours operating in the area the helicopter was landed on a nearby oil rig and the crew was able to take a much deserved rest. The search was then resumed for a further period of three and a quarter hours. During the entire mission, in the most appalling conditions Flight Lieutenant Neville displayed the highest standards of flying skill and leadership of his crew. His actions throughout were in the highest traditions of the Royal Air Force.

Air Force Medal

Q1948964 Flight Sergeant Charles Michael YARWOOD,
Royal Air Force.

On the evening of 27th March 1980 Flight Sergeant Yarwood was the duty winchman of the stand-by Search and Rescue Sea King of No. 202 Squadron at Royal Air Force Boulmer. At 1800 hours the helicopter was tasked to investigate reports that the "Alexander Kielland", an accommodation platform in the Ekofisk oil field, had capsized in heavy weather. The platform, used as a floating hotel, was thought to have some 200 oil men on board and was situated 170 miles north-east of Boulmer. As the aircraft approached the area the weather deteriorated rapidly and by the time the search began the wind was gusting at more than 55 knots with heavy driving rain, low cloud and very poor visibility. A liferaft with 10 men on board was located but attempts to establish a hover with the auxiliary hover trim proved impossible due to the mountainous 30 feet high waves and the rapid