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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

HONOURS AND AWARDS

NAVY DEPARTMENT

Whitehall, London SW1A 3HB

28th September 1993

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

Air Force Cross

Lieutenant Michael Ian Phillips LANGLEY, Royal Navy.

On 25th October 1992 Lieutenant LANGLEY was the Captain of the duty Search and Rescue helicopter callign Rescue 172 which was tasked to assist the merchant vessel *Igloo Lion*, 5 nms north west of Guernsey.

Helpless, in violently gusting storm force winds, the vessel was foundering in darkness, stopped in the water, beam onto mountainous breaking seas and in imminent danger of running aground. The ship's crew were terrified and totally exhausted and the Master requested that they be airlifted immediately to safety. The ship was rolling and lurching extremely violently, the decks were only very dimly illuminated by emergency lighting and there was no obvious area suitable for a helicopter transfer. Ship to aircraft communication was virtually impossible. Lieutenant LANGLEY assessed that the only possible evacuation point was the top of some wooden pallets, stowed on the starboard quarter, adjacent to the ship's superstructure and masts. Thus the aircraft had to be stationed facing across the deck, which is a hazardous position even in calm weather.

During the long and arduous winching, for a period of some 40 minutes, Lieutenant LANGLEY manoeuvred the aircraft with immense skill, precision and fortitude to overcome the sudden and unpredictable motion of the ship in the most tumultuous conditions. His visual references were poor. The aircraft was in constant danger of being struck by the wildly swinging masts and rigging. A contact between the main rotor blades and a thin radio aerial did occur but, fortunately, without significant detriment to the aircraft. Despite this, Lieutenant LANGLEY elected to continue with the life-saving

rescue. Eventually all ten crew members were safely onboard and transferred to Guernsey for medical attention.

Throughout this heroic mission, Lieutenant LANGLEY displayed an outstanding degree of captaincy, professionalism and sound judgement under particularly severe pressure. With barely adequate visual references, he flew to and tested the extreme limits of his ability, made timely and accurate decisions and displayed a selfless courage in keeping with the very highest traditions of the Service.

Air Force Medal

Petty Officer Aircrewman Adrian ROGERS, D129498Q.

On 25th October 1992 Petty Officer ROGERS was the aircrewman of the duty Search and Rescue helicopter callign Rescue 172 which was tasked to assist the merchant vessel *Igloo Lion*, 5 nms north west of Guernsey.

Helpless in storm force winds, the vessel was foundering in darkness, stopped in the water, beam onto mountainous breaking seas and in imminent danger of running aground. The ship's crew were frightened and totally exhausted and the Master requested that they be airlifted to safety. The ship was rolling violently, the decks were only very dimly illuminated by emergency lighting and there was no obvious area suitable for a helicopter transfer. The aircrew assessed that the only possible evacuation point was the top of some wooden pallets, stowed on the starboard quarter adjacent to the ship's superstructure and masts with the aircraft facing across the deck.

Petty Officer ROGERS was lowered onto the vessel in order to supervise the evacuation of the crew by 'Hi-line' transfer. Space was severely restricted, the ship's motion unpredictable and time was of the essence. The transfer area was littered with debris; on one occasion he was actually pinned to the ship's guardrail by a wooden crate. In poor light conditions the aircraft was constantly in danger from the wildly swinging masts and rigging of the ship. Communication was difficult due to aircraft noise and the crew spoke little or no English; they looked solely to Petty Officer ROGERS for guidance and direction. During the long difficult airlift, a period