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NAVY DEPARTMENT

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1
29th November 1994

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

Queen's Gallantry Medal

Leading Radio Operator Nigel Mills GRIFFITHS D196144T

At 0845 on 15th July 1993, the Hong Kong Clearance Diving Unit were tasked by HMS TAMAR, Operations Room to attend an overturned fishing junk in Victoria Harbour. It was reported that a fifteen year old boy was trapped in the hull and was possibly still alive.

On that morning LRO GRIFFITHS had reported to the Diving Store to undertake continuation training as a Ship's Diver. Together with other members of the Clearance Diving Unit, he was readily available and in position to respond to the call and was on scene ready to dive 14 minutes after receiving the initial call. Despite the situation and lack of formal training in this task, LRO GRIFFITHS never hesitated when asked to volunteer for this potentially dangerous mission.

Once on scene and in the ensuing confusion, disregarding the extremely dangerous conditions he faced, LRO GRIFFITHS made dives inside the hull of the vessel in an attempt to locate and rescue the missing boy. He made 2 dives each approximately 30 minutes and entered the upturned vessel no less than 6 times to search various compartments and the wheelhouse. Each entry was more dangerous than the previous one as the condition of the vessel was deteriorating. During this time a response to tapping on the hull was heard. LRO GRIFFITHS showed a great deal of professional ability and selfless regard in this most hazardous and potentially life threatening task, conducted underneath the vessel in imminent danger of sinking, in unfamiliar unstable, cramped flotsam filled compartments and in the very murky waters of Hong Kong harbour. The swimming conditions were assessed as rough, the waters were oily and polluted and the visibility was less than one foot. Had the vessel sunk with LRO GRIFFITHS still inside he would probably have died. He departed only when ordered to do so immediately prior to the vessel sinking. It is with regret that LRO GRIFFITHS' efforts were to no avail. A body was eventually recovered from the wreck when it was subsequently raised to the surface.

LRO GRIFFITHS conducted himself throughout this dangerous and demanding operation calmly and with confidence. He displayed the utmost courage, selflessness, dedication and bravery and never faltered in his attempt to secure the release of the boy. His action were all the more impressive as he had no formal training in this type of diving task.

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