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Honours and Awards

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross to the under-mentioned:

ARMY

Victoria Cross

25048092 Corporal Bryan James BUDD,
The Parachute Regiment (killed in action)

During July and August 2006 A Company, 3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment were deployed to occupy once again the District Centre at Sangin. The company's location was constantly under sustained attack from a combination of Taliban small arms, rocket-propelled grenades, mortar and rocket fire. In order to reduce this threat platoons were regularly tasked to conduct security patrols into the urban and rural areas in the vicinity of the District Centre. Given the prevailing enemy activity in the area it was assessed that patrols had a 75 per cent chance of coming into contact with the Taliban—a statistic that was not lost on the men of A Company.

These patrols regularly came under attack and on 27th July Corporal Budd's section identified and engaged two enemy gunmen on the roof of a building in the centre of Sangin. This provoked a fierce fire-fight in which two of Corporal Budd's section were hit. One was seriously injured and collapsed in the open ground, where he remained exposed to enemy fire, with rounds striking the ground around him. Realising that he needed to regain the initiative and understanding that the enemy needed to be driven back so that the casualty could be evacuated,

Corporal Budd led his section forward and assaulted the building where the enemy fire was heaviest. He led this attack under fire and personally killed two of the enemy inside the building with grenade and rifle fire, forcing the remaining fighters to flee across an open field where they were successfully engaged by the rest of his section. This courageous and prompt action proved decisive in breaking the enemy and was undertaken at great personal risk. In inflicting significant losses amongst the enemy and forcing their withdrawal, Corporal Budd's deliberate action and conspicuous gallantry also allowed the wounded soldier to be evacuated to safety where he subsequently received life-saving treatment.

On 20th August Corporal Budd was leading his section on the right forward flank of a platoon clearance patrol near Sangin District Centre. Another section was advancing with a Land Rover fitted with a .50 calibre heavy machine gun on the patrol's left flank. Pushing through thick vegetation, Corporal Budd identified a number of enemy fighters 30 metres away to his front. As he had not been seen by these Taliban, Corporal Budd indicated their presence to the rest of his section and used hand signals to prepare his men to launch a hasty attack. He then led his section on a flanking manoeuvre but the enemy engaged the Land Rover on the left flank and the element of surprise Corporal Budd had hoped to achieve was lost as his own section was also spotted.

Recognising the immediate requirement to regain the initiative, Corporal Budd made a conscious decision to assault the enemy and ordered his men to follow him. As they moved forward the section came under a withering fire that quickly wounded two men and incapacitated a further soldier when a bullet struck his body armour. The effectiveness of the enemy's fire and these losses forced the unwounded members of the section to take cover. However, Corporal Budd continued to assault forward on his own, knowing full well the likely consequences of doing so without the close support of his remaining men.