



COPY



PRIME MINISTER
CANBERRA

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13 SEP 2012

Her Excellency Quentin Bryce AC CVO
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
Government House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Your Excellency

I write to recommend that you consider endorsing the Chief of Army's decision to award an Army Battle Honour to the Special Air Service Regiment and the 2nd Commando Regiment for the Battle of *Eastern Shah Wali Kot* in Afghanistan 2010.

The Chief of Army, following the Army Battle Honours Committee's extensive analysis of the facts, has recommended that the Battle Honour *Eastern Shah Wali Kot* be awarded to the combat elements of Special Operations Task Group XII (comprising elements of the Special Air Service Regiment and the 2nd Commando Regiment). The honour will recognise the extraordinary heroism and exemplary combat performance against a numerically superior Taliban force in the *Eastern Shah Wali Kot* region of Afghanistan in May and June 2010.

The Chief of Army indicates that this is a significant occasion for the Australian Army, as it is a public acknowledgement of outstanding performance by soldiers, many of whom remain serving today. I understand that this would be the first Army Battle Honour awarded since the Vietnam War.

I also understand that the Minister for Defence and Chief of the Defence Force support the Battle Honour decision and I have copied this letter to the Minister for Defence. The Chief of Army's supporting letter is enclosed for your reference.

Yours sincerely

s22

Julia Gillard

s22

s22

From: Lieutenant General D.L. Morrison, AO
Chief of Army



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OCA/OUT/2012/R11929110

31 July 2012

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO
Governor-General of Australia
Government House
YARRALUMLA ACT 2600

Your Excellency,

As you will be aware, the Australian Army has a system of theatre and battle honours in place to recognise exemplary service by arms corps units in combat and combat-related roles. The Army Battle Honours Committee, recognising that Army now fights in ways different from the past, is continuing its review of all Army operations since the end of the Vietnam War. As part of this review, a recent analysis was conducted of the Eastern Shah Wali Kot Offensive. This was an operation conducted in May and June 2010 as part of the War in Afghanistan

After careful consideration, I have approved a recommendation for the award of the first Battle Honours since the Vietnam War to the Special Air Service Regiment and the 2nd Commando Regiment for their outstanding performance during this battle. The Citation for the award reads:

CITATION – SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK GROUP – ROTATION XII

The Australian Special Operations Task Group Rotation XII, which included combat elements from 2nd Special Air Service Squadron, the Special Air Service Regiment; Alpha Company Commando Group, the 2nd Commando Regiment; and supported by the Incident Response Regiment and the United States 101st Airborne Division, Task Force No Mercy; is awarded the Battle Honour **Eastern Shah Wali Kot** in due recognition of extraordinary heroism, exemplary combat performance and the relentless destruction of a highly trained and fanatical Taliban enemy of numerical superiority within the extremely inhospitable region of Eastern Shah Wali Kot, Afghanistan, during the period May to June 2010.

Tasked with a mission of vital operational importance within Regional Command – South and of strategic significance for the International Security Assistance Force, from May 2010 the Task Group conducted a series of daring daylight heliborne raids, deep into enemy territory, to destabilise local insurgent networks and to identify key Taliban leaders. Often resulting in fierce engagements with the enemy, these deadly shaping raids created fractures throughout the command and control architecture of the Taliban.

Immediately realising a tactical opportunity, Alpha Company Commando Group audaciously established an attack by fire position inside the insurgents' strong hold of Chenartu during the early hours of 10 June 2010. Shortly after first light, the enemy surrounded the commandos and employed sophisticated tactics in an attempt to overrun the commando positions throughout the day. Holding their exposed positions doggedly under heavy and sustained attack, the commandos determined to regain the initiative, launching several aggressive counter attacks against the assaulting enemy. Surprised by the ferocity of the commando response, combined with having lost significant numbers of fighters, the enemy withdrew to the village of Tizak to conduct deliberate planning for the destruction of the isolated commando company.

Receiving intelligence that a high level Taliban commander had now been drawn to the village of Tizak, E Troop, 2nd Special Air Service Squadron deployed by helicopter to conduct a kill or capture mission on the morning of 11 June 2010. Upon landing in Tizak, the Troop was immediately engaged by a maelstrom of small arms fire and a stream of rocket propelled grenades from insurgents in the village and the surrounding high ground, resulting in friendly wounded in action and four helicopters sustaining battle damage. Despite being outnumbered four to one and suppressed under a hail of machine gun fire, E Troop inched forward until they were again checked and fixed by the interlocking fire of three machine guns. Drawing on the deepest reserves of collective courage, combined with notable acts of individual valour and gallantry, the initiative was regained allowing a subsequent break-in of the enemy's defensive position. Exploiting a tenuous tactical foothold, E Troop unflinchingly cleared the remaining depth positions in close quarter combat throughout the remainder of the day while being relentlessly supported by Apache helicopters from Task Force No Mercy. At the conclusion of the battle late on the evening of 14 June 2010, ten high level Taliban commanders and a significant and disproportionate number of enemy fighters were killed and the remaining enemy were routed and fled from the region.

The extraordinary heroism and exemplary combat performance displayed during the Eastern Shah Wali Kot Offensive resulted in a major enemy supply line from Pakistan into Kandahar being destroyed and the Taliban in Eastern Shah Wali Kot being rendered ineffective. The battlefield orchestration, courage, gallantry and determination displayed by the combat elements of the Special Operations Task Group, Rotation XII, under extremely adverse and hazardous conditions has set them apart, and by their achievements they have brought distinguished credit on themselves, and the Australian Defence Force.

This is a significant occasion for the Australian Army. It is a very public acknowledgement of outstanding performance by soldiers, many of whom are still involved in operations in Afghanistan. For this reason, and because this type of award is so important to the morale and esprit-de-corps of our people, the Australian Army humbly requests that you endorse this decision.

Yours Sincerely

AUSTRALIAN ARMY


TO BE AWARDED A BAR TO THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

AUSTRALIA DAY 2012

s22 **LIEUTENANT COLONEL P** **s22** **DSC**

For distinguished command and leadership in action **s47E(d)**
s47E(d), on Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan **s47E(d)**

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F



TO BE AWARDED A BAR TO THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

LIEUTENANT COLONEL P^{s22} [REDACTED] DSC
WA

For distinguished command and leadership in action ^{s47E(d)}
^{s47E(d)} **on Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan** ^{s47E(d)}
^{s47E(d)} **[REDACTED]**

^{s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F} **[REDACTED]**

AUSTRALIAN ARMY


TO BE AWARDED THE COMMENDATION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 2011

s22 SERGEANT G s22 DSM

For distinguished performance of duty in warlike operations and in action while s47E(d)
s47E(d)
on Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan.

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F



TO BE AWARDED THE COMMENDATION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

SERGEANT G^{s22} [REDACTED] DSM
NSW

For distinguished performance of duty in warlike operations and in action while **S**
s47E(d) [REDACTED] 4
s47E(d) [REDACTED] on Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan.

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F
[REDACTED]

AUSTRALIAN ARMY

TO BE AWARDED THE COMMENDATION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 2011


s22 CAPTAIN C s22

For distinguished performance of duty in warlike operations and in action s47E(d)
s47E(d)

Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan s47E(d)

on

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F



TO BE AWARDED THE COMMENDATION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

CAPTAIN C^{s22}

NSW

For distinguished performance of duty in warlike operations and in action ^{s47E(d)}
^{s47E(d)}

on

Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan ^{s47E(d)}

^{s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F}

AUSTRALIAN ARMY

TO BE AWARDED THE COMMENDATION FOR GALLANTRY

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 2011

s22 **PRIVATE M** s22

For acts of gallantry in action s47E(d) while s47E(d)
s47E(d) on Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan.

s47F

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F

TO BE AWARDED THE COMMENDATION FOR GALLANTRY

PRIVATE M s22
NSW

For acts of gallantry in action s47E(d) **while in** s47E(d)
s47E(d) **on Operation SLIPPER in**
Afghanistan.

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F



AUSTRALIAN ARMY

TO BE AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 2011

s22 MAJOR J s22

For distinguished command and leadership in action s47E(d)
s47E(d) on Operation
SLIPPER in Afghanistan s47E(d)

s47F

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F

TO BE AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

MAJOR J s22

WA

For distinguished command and leadership in action s47E(d)

s47E(d)

on Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan s47E(d)

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F

AUSTRALIAN ARMY

TO BE AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 2011

s22 CAPTAIN C s22

For distinguished leadership in action while s47E(d) a
s47E(d) on Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan s47E
s47E(d) (d)

s47F

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F

TO BE AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

CAPTAIN C s22
WA

For distinguished leadership in action while s47E(d)
s47E(d) **on Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan**
s47E(d)

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F

AUSTRALIAN ARMY
TO BE AWARDED THE MEDAL FOR GALLANTRY
AUSTRALIA DAY 2013

s22 [REDACTED] **CORPORAL J** s22 [REDACTED]

For acts of gallantry in action in hazardous circumstances s47E(d) [REDACTED]
s47E(d) [REDACTED] on Operation SLIPPER in
Afghanistan.

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F [REDACTED]

TO BE AWARDED THE MEDAL FOR GALLANTRY

CORPORAL J^{s22}
WA

For acts of gallantry in action in hazardous circumstances ^{s47E(d)}
^{s47E(d)} **on Operation SLIPPER in**
Afghanistan.

^{s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F}

AUSTRALIAN ARMY
TO BE AWARDED THE STAR OF GALLANTRY
QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 2011

s22 SERGEANT P s22

For acts of conspicuous gallantry in action in circumstances of great peril s47E(d) while
s47E(d) on
Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan.

s47F

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F

TO BE AWARDED THE STAR OF GALLANTRY

SERGEANT P^{s22}
WA

For acts of conspicuous gallantry in action in circumstances of great peril ^{s47E(d)} while
^{s47E(d)} on
Operation SLIPPER in Afghanistan.

^{s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F}

AUSTRALIAN ARMY

TO BE AWARDED THE VICTORIA CROSS

s22 [REDACTED] CORPORAL BENJAMIN ROBERTS-SMITH MG

For the most conspicuous gallantry in action in circumstances of extreme peril as a Patrol Second-in-Command, s47E(d) [REDACTED] Special Operations Task Group on Operation SLIPPER.

s47F [REDACTED]

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F [REDACTED]

TO BE AWARDED THE VICTORIA CROSS

s22 Corporal Benjamin Roberts-Smith MG
Campbell Barracks, SWANBOURNE, WA, 6010

For the most conspicuous gallantry in action in circumstances of extreme peril as a Patrol Second-in-Command, s47E(d) Special Operations Task Group on Operation SLIPPER.

s47E(d), s33(a)(ii), s47F

