



DEFENCE MEDIA RELEASE

CPA – NSW 091/06

Friday, 2 June 2006

DEFENCE HONOURS NSW AMBULANCE SERVICE

The Ambulance Service of NSW Northern Division has been recognised as NSW Employer of the Year for its support of the Australian Defence Force Reserves.

Senator Sandy Macdonald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence, attended the ceremony held at Parliament House, Sydney, in late May.

The NSW Ambulance Services Northern Division located in Hamilton was nominated by Captain Andrew Kfoury from the 8th Brigade's 2nd/17th Battalion of the Royal New South Wales Regiment at Erina.

The Service was nominated for having provided Capt Kfoury with the necessary leave to serve with Rifle Company Butterworth in Malaysia for three months and to participate in Operation Acolyte in support of the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne.

“The NSW Committee of the Defence Reserves Support Council, through the Employer Support Awards, acknowledges employers who have adopted a supportive and positive role for their Reserve employees through leave arrangements and other special considerations to enable them to fulfill their Defence obligations,” Senator Macdonald said.

To be eligible for Employer Support Awards, companies need to have a supportive leave policy and must have released their employees for an extended period of Reserve service. Awards are presented in the categories of Government and Large Business, Private Enterprise - Medium Business and Private Enterprise - Small Business.

"It is important to recognise the support that employers give to our Reservists, who in turn play an important role in assisting the Australian Defence Force in all roles, but particularly in peace-keeping and humanitarian aid operations," Senator Macdonald said.

“By providing their staff with Defence service leave, Reservists have been able to complete their training, attend courses to enhance their abilities and participate in Defence exercises. They have also had the opportunity to deploy to countries such as Malaysia, Pakistan and the Solomon Islands, assisting in peacekeeping missions and natural disaster relief.”

"The Australian Government appreciates employers' efforts and one of the ways we thank them is through the Employer Support Payment Scheme, which sees eligible employers receive \$991.20 per week in order for them to employ a temporary replacement while their employee is performing Defence duties," Senator Macdonald said.

The Employer Support Payment will increase to \$1035.90 on 1 July.

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PHOTO CAPTION (DSC_9386)

Senator The Hon Sandy Macdonald - Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Defence presents Superintendent Allan Loudfoot - Northern Divisional Manager of the Ambulance Service of NSW a DRSC Employer of the Year Award in the Government category for 2006, accompanied by their employee Captain Andrew Kfoury - Bravo Company 2IC 2/17 Royal NSW Regiment.