

THE NEW ZEALAND BRAVERY MEDAL (N.Z.B.M.)

Keran Mana DURRANT

(Lately Able Hydrographic Systems Operator, Royal New Zealand Navy)

Date of action: 16 August 2004

Date of award: 14 October 2006

Citation

On the morning of 16 August 2004, Able Hydrographic Systems Operator (AHSO) Durrant and Able Chef Job were in a group of twenty-two members of the ship's company of HMNZS Endeavour undertaking a routine lifeboat drill in Sydney Harbour. As the lifeboat was about to be lowered into the water, it suddenly released from the lifeboat launch system and plunged 10 metres into the water. On the way it struck the ship's side, turned over and landed in the water upside down. During the course of this violent descent, AHSO Durrant suffered severe lacerations to his head and face. Able Chef Job suffered a significant impact to his chest, a laceration to his face and bruising to his left leg. Both were shaken from being tossed around in the falling craft as well as suffering from their injuries. In the face of considerable danger and confusion, however, both men coolly and deliberately remained in the upturned lifeboat, ensured that all the occupants had made their escape and no-one had been left behind. They then made their own escape by which time, the exit hatch of the lifeboat had become submerged, the glass window had broken, water was pouring into the boat and there was a danger of becoming trapped inside. Nevertheless, they remained calm throughout. Once clear of the boat, they made their way to safety. Afterwards, both men elected to re-enter the water to assist with the recovery of other members of the crew. By ensuring the safety of other crew members ahead of their own, AHSO Durrant and Able Chef Job displayed considerable bravery and may possibly have saved the lives of several of their ship-mates, who could have been trapped as the lifeboat filled with water.