

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 2022 INVESTITURE
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
BALL ROOM, 2.30 PM THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2022

[VICE-REGAL SALUTE IS PLAYED]

Please be seated.

It is with great pleasure that my husband and I welcome you to this investiture ceremony at Government House.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their enduring culture. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I commit to a future that listens to and respects Aboriginal stories, culture and history.

Meritorious Awards recognise outstanding and distinguished service by public servants, members of an Australian police force, fire, ambulance, corrections, intelligence or emergency service, or in support of outstanding work with an Australian Antarctic expedition. The Governor-General makes these awards on the recommendation of the responsible Ministers. Awards are announced on Australia Day and The Queen's Birthday weekend in June.

The Meritorious Awards consist of the Ambulance Service Medal, the Australian Antarctic Medal, the Australian Corrections Medal, the Australian Fire Service Medal, the Australian Intelligence Medal, the Australian Police Medal, the Emergency Services Medal and the Public Service Medal.

Conspicuous Service Decorations were instituted for the purpose of recognising service in non-warlike operations. They are awarded primarily to members of the Australian Defence Force and are awarded in two levels: the Conspicuous Service Cross and Nursing Service Cross, and the Conspicuous Service Medal. Conspicuous Decorations are awarded by the Governor-General on the advice of Minister of State for Defence.

Members of the public cannot nominate someone for a Meritorious or Conspicuous Service Award.

In January 2021, the Australian Government announced that individuals recognised for their contribution, service or achievement relating to COVID-19 would feature on a dedicated COVID-19 Honours Roll as well as the official Australian honours database.

Since then, some 242 names have been added to the Honour Roll, including seven of those who will receive Honours this afternoon.

Our own Government House Deputy Official Secretary, Colonel David Hughes, received his Conspicuous Service Cross earlier this year and is named on the Honour Roll.

You have detailed information about the wonderful contributions of the award recipients; however, I would like to say a few words about each of them after each citation has been read.

I warmly congratulate you all. And it is my privilege to invest with insignia these worthy Tasmanians.

Official Secretary ...

Commander Mark Tandy CSC, RAN has had nearly 40 years of naval service, as a communications specialist and as a tri-Service instructor in a number of countries.

As Warrant Officer of the Navy, he was part of the Navy senior leadership group.

Since commissioning in 2012, Commander Tandy has been posted to staff and operational positions at sea and shore. After completing a three-year posting as Australia's Assistant Defence Adviser in New Zealand, he then posted to Cairns in 2020 to assume the role of Officer-in-Charge of Navy's Indigenous Development Program.

He reinvigorated the program and made positive impact on the lives of participants, by better consultation and involvement with community groups and upgrades to the program facilities and equipment.

Commander Tandy is one of only 25 others, who have received the CSC and Bar since its introduction in 1989.

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Ms Jennifer Gale has served the State of Tasmania for over 41 years. Appointed Director of the Office for Educational Review in 2000, she has held leadership positions in our public service. In 2016 she was the first woman to be appointed as Secretary, Department of Education.

In 2017, she was appointed Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and Head of the State Service, positions that have enabled her to make significant contributions to policy development and implementation.

Ms Gale has most recently demonstrated exemplary leadership in keeping Tasmanians safe from COVID-19. She has demonstrated exceptional skills of ensuring collaboration across multiple agencies and stakeholders.

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Commissioner Darren Hine, as State Emergency Management Controller, assumed responsibility for coordination of the whole of Tasmanian government emergency response to COVID-19. He had to coordinate all the government agencies and Australian Defence Force response.

He issued restrictions on those entering the state, to limit the spread of COVID-19. These directions, made in conjunction with Public Health and government actions, were instrumental in controlling COVID-19 in our Tasmanian community. He commands the respect and trust of his officers and of our Tasmanian community for his decision-making and actions.

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Ms Kathrine Morgan-Wicks assumed the new role of State Health Commander created during the early stage of the pandemic. She led and coordinated Tasmania's health service response to COVID-19. She was new to the health portfolio and managed the pandemic on top of a \$2 billion budget and over 16,000 employees.

Her decision to close, deep clean and recommission two of Tasmania's major hospitals, to suppress the further spread of disease, was I quote, "decisive action the face of great uncertainty" that prevented "a far worse outcome."¹

Ms Morgan-Wicks continues to provide outstanding leadership in Tasmania's health response to COVID-19.

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Dr Mark Veitch PSM declared a public health emergency in March 2020, following outbreaks of the then unknown coronavirus. Dr Veitch carefully kept up-to-date with the emerging scientific findings on COVID-19.

He provided evidence-based public health policy advice to our Premier and Ministers. He represented our State at the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee and translated relevant advice to our State context.

He planned public health and social measures to manage the spread of COVID-19. His actions contributed to the low incidence of serious illness in Tasmanians, and to maintaining the capacity of our health system.²

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Commander Robert Blackwood joined the Tasmanian police in 1998. Over his career, he implemented significant changes to officer safety, particularly the introduction of body worn cameras and the procurement of the multiuse integrated protection vests.

Commander Blackwood is the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management's LGBTIQ+ manager and a representative on the whole of government LGBTIQ+ reference group. More recently he has been Acting Assistant Commissioner in the Covid 19 coordination Centre. His judgement, calmness and approach to resolving conflicts are key features of his leadership.

He was appointed as Commander, professional standards in January 2022.

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Inspector James Semmens joined Tasmania Police in 2000. Since March 2020, he has worked in the Covid 19 Coordination Centre. His expertise, work ethic and professionalism regarding advice, especially in respect to the entry approval system

¹ The Examiner 13 June 2022

² The Examiner 13 June 2022

to Tasmania during peak times of lock down and quarantine, has been consistently recognised.

Inspector Semmens has a consistently excellent policing career record. He has effectively combined his academic skills with operational policing disciplines across the range of areas of general duties uniform, rural policing and criminal investigation. He is an outstanding representative of our Tasmania Police.

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Detective Sergeant Shane Sinnitt commenced with Tasmania police in 1995. He worked as a constable in Glenorchy for four years. He was promoted to sergeant in 2015, working in Hobart and Bridgewater.

He is a highly regarded and respected investigator with over 25 years of service. He was part of the investigative team which undertook a challenging, lengthy and complex investigation into one of the most high-profile murder cases in the State. His role was integral to the investigation. He also managed the subsequent appeals through the court processes. He demonstrated tenacity and commitment in regard to this investigation.

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Commander Debbie Williams joined Tasmania Police in 1990. She served in specialist areas including forensic services, prosecution and executive support. She has undertaken significant strategic projects.

In 2018 she became the first female appointed to the rank of Commander in charge of an operational district.

She has been a Critical Incident Stress Management Peer, Equity and Diversity Contact Officer and jurisdictional representative for the *Journal for Women and Policing*. She is the Commissioner's delegate on the Board of Police Legacy Tasmania.

Commander Williams played a strategic role in coordinating the emergency management response in the north-west during the state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. She activated and guided the North-West Regional Emergency Coordination Centre, assumed the role of regional controller and guided the response to the pandemic.

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Mr Glenn Aslin has been a paramedic for over four decades.

Prior to moving to Tasmania in 1995, Mr Aslin was employed as a clinical instructor and senior paramedic for the Royal Flying Doctors Service Uluru. He was also a communications centre officer with St John Ambulance.

In 1995, he began his career as a paramedic with Ambulance Tasmania. He is an active member of the Australian Medical Assistance Teams, and was sent to several high risk COVID-19 deployments. He provided direct clinical support and healthcare at Howard Springs quarantine facility and at Melbourne nursing homes.

In 2021, he was deployed to Timor-Leste where he assisted with care and containment of their COVID outbreak. He also provided support to increase vaccinations. In 2022, he was a sole responder on King Island. He is also part of a small, skilled team of Extended Care Paramedics.

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