

# The Police National Honours Handbook

A Complete Guide to making a Nomination for Awards










## Foreword

 In a world that often presents unforeseen challenges and dangers, our police service stands as a pillar of strength and safety for our communities. The Police National Honours Handbook is a resource for you to use to ensure that the remarkable acts of bravery, commitment, and service by our police officers and police staff receive the recognition they deserve.

Please use this guide to help you write a nomination which will honour those who, in moments of peril, choose courage over fear, and in their daily duties, exemplify the highest standards of professionalism and integrity. It is designed to assist those within the police community in navigating the nomination process, making it more accessible and comprehensive.

Recognising police contributions means more than medals; it acknowledges sacrifices and unwavering dedication to our communities. Your nominations highlight bravery and excellence, inspiring others and fostering a culture of honour.

It's our responsibility to ensure gallant acts and remarkable commitment don't go unnoticed. Thank you for supporting this cause and honouring those who protect us with courage and dedication.

**Clare Moody**  
The Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Avon and Somerset







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“The object of giving medals, stars and ribbons is to give pride and pleasure to those who have deserved them. At the same time a distinction is something which everybody does not possess. If all have it, it is of less value. There must, therefore, be heart-burnings and disappointments on the borderline.

A medal glitters, but it also casts a shadow. The task of drawing up regulations for such awards is one which does not admit of a perfect solution. It is not possible to satisfy everybody without running the risk of satisfying nobody. All that is possible is to give the greatest satisfaction to the greatest number and to hurt the feelings of the fewest.

**Winston Churchill (Prime Minister) – 22 March 1944**



## The principal Government committee concerned with honours and awards is the Inter-Departmental Committee on the grant of honours, decorations and medals (the HD Committee).

The Permanent Under Secretary in the Ministry of Defence and the Defence Services Secretary are both members of this committee, and the Defence Services Secretary is the normal service channel to the committee, through the committee's secretary. The Secretariat of the Committee is the Head of Honours and Appointments Secretariat at the Cabinet Office. The HD Committee provides the mechanism for discussion of all matters relating to United Kingdom honours and awards and the committee is the only channel through which proposals for additions to, or changes in, the system, may be submitted to The Sovereign.

A sub-committee of the HD Committee, the George Cross (Military) Committee, is responsible for maintaining the standards of the gallantry awards (George Cross, George Medal, King's Gallantry Medal, King's Commendation for Bravery and King's Commendation for Bravery in the Air).

## Orders, Decorations, Medals and Commendations

United Kingdom awards comprise orders, decorations, medals and commendations. Individuals may be appointed to an order e.g. Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) or Companion of the Distinguished Service Order (DSO), be awarded a decoration e.g. Conspicuous Gallantry Cross (CGC) or Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), awarded a medal e.g. George Medal (GM), King's Volunteer Reserves Medal (KVRM), Operational Service and War medals; Jubilee and Coronation medals and medals for Efficiency and Long Service (e.g. Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and Meritorious Service Medal) together with King's Commendations complete the range of State awards. These awards may only be worn by properly entitled personnel. Entitlement is usually derived by announcement in the London Gazette or through an entry on a service person's record of service which can be verified at the Ministry of Defence Medal Office.



## Wearing of Ribbons, Miniatures and use of Post-Nominal Letters

The ribbons of the orders, decorations and medals are to be worn once the award has been announced in the London Gazette, or otherwise authorised by the relevant service honours and awards authority. The appropriate miniature may also be worn with immediate effect from this date even though there will be a lapse before the full-size insignia is presented.

An individual may use the authorised post-nominal letters as soon as the award has been gazetted. A higher class in a junior order takes precedence over a lower class in a senior order as regards the arrangement of all post-nominal letters, e.g. KBE precedes CB. Where bars are subsequently awarded asterisks may be added to a post-nominal within titles and correspondence to denote this, e.g. DSO\*, DSO\*\*.

## Honour of Knighthood

An officer appointed to a class in an order carrying the Honour of Knighthood (e.g. KCB, DCB or KBE) may use the title 'Sir' or 'Dame' immediately once the award is announced in the London Gazette and need not wait until they have been invested by The Sovereign.

## Presentation of Honours and Awards, Decorations and Medals

In general, personnel granted honours & awards and decorations at Levels 1 – 3 will be presented with their award by The Sovereign or His representative at an Investiture. The presentation of Level 4 awards; King's Commendations and Mention in Despatches, will be made under single service arrangements.

**Guidance on the Wearing of Medals and Ribbons: always refer to the most up-to-date uniform policy for your respective force.**

Medals, commendation with star and ribbon broach bars may only be worn if authorised

by the Sovereign or the Chief Constable.

Only official honours, decorations, medals, or emblems which you have been awarded on behalf of the Sovereign, and approved for acceptance may be worn. Awards will be worn in accordance with the official 'Order of Wear', published by The London Gazette.

Unofficial, commemorative, and family member medals will not be worn whilst in uniform.

**All medals** must be either court mounted, or swing mounted onto a medal bar at the officer's or staff member's own private expense. Unmounted or loose medals will not be worn.

**Mounted medals** will be worn at appropriate, authorised events and ceremonies, on the left breast of the ceremonial uniform (tunic), or civilian clothing for police staff, with the medal bar mounted above the ribbon bar(s). Medals will not be worn on any other police uniform style.

**Medal ribbons** may be worn mounted on appropriate ribbon bar(s) and will be worn on the left breast on the tunic, either centred over the pocket button or centred and horizontally in line with the bottom of the left lapel. Ribbon bar(s) may also be worn on the left breast of the body armour cover.

**Each ribbon bar** will not exceed four ribbons width. Additional ribbon bars may be mounted, but senior ribbons will move to the top, closest to the lapel. Incomplete rows will be centred above. See images below.





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Section 1	Writing an Honour Nomination
Section 2	Completing the Administration Fields on the Online Form
Section 3	Letter of Support and Validation of Nominations
Section 4	Top Tips and Other Information

## How do I write a nomination?

The most important thing is to provide evidence of what they have done and how they have made things better for others.

Your nomination form doesn't need to be a work of art – it doesn't matter whether it's typed or handwritten or whether it has pictures. There isn't a right way or a wrong way to write a nomination and it doesn't need to be particularly formal. There's no "right length". Every nomination is different. But your nomination must tell the story of what your candidate has done.

Give examples of how they have demonstrated outstanding quality. Show how your candidate has:

- Contributed in a distinctive way to improving the lot of those less able to help themselves.
- Devoted themselves to sustained and selfless voluntary service.
- Shown innovation or creativity in delivering lasting results.

A good nomination should also describe as vividly and precisely as possible the difference their contribution has made. Try to answer the following questions:

- How were things before they began?
- How are they now?
- What makes your candidate different from others doing the same thing?

Give details to support these claims. Show how your candidate has:

- Earned the respect of their peers and become a role model in their field.
- Produced, perhaps against the odds, sustained achievement which has required moral courage, vision, the ability to make tough choices or determined application and hard work.

As long as they are accurate, do not be afraid of using superlatives. Honours exist specifically to recognise superlative achievement. But remember that superlatives without an explanation are just hot air. Take care always to support any assertions with hard evidence. Do not just say that an achievement has had a widespread effect: describe what that effect has been and show why it has been important.

## How do I find the right words?

Effective nominations often include nouns such as: determination, commitment, respect, drive, sustainability, recognition, innovation, creativity, selflessness, impact, zeal, performance, ambassador.

**Adjectives such as:** trusted, unstinting, conscientious, wise, inspirational, peerless, persuasive, passionate, exemplary, resourceful, enthusiastic, fair, tenacious, sympathetic, admired, unflustered, supportive, vibrant, dogged, articulate, diligent, dedicated.

**Phrases such as:** making a difference, going the extra mile, role model, overcoming obstacles, head and shoulders above the rest.







## What shouldn't I do?

There's no wrong way to write a nomination but remember that honours committees judge candidates' merits on the information provided to them. A good nomination is the foundation for that. Only the strongest nominations will result in an honour.

To write a good nomination, there must be enough information in the nomination form to make a good case. So, your nomination shouldn't be:

- An extended CV.
- A list of educational achievements.
- A list of appointments, awards or posts.
- A job description showing what the person is meant to do.

Because poor nominations often list these things, a frequent complaint from committees is that the person recommended is "doing no more than their job" or "doing nothing that stands out".

Instead, your nomination should describe what is special about your candidate's achievements and show memorably and persuasively how and where they have made a difference.

You should also ensure that letters written to support your nomination form are written by people who know the nominee personally. It doesn't matter who the supporters are, but they must be able to talk about the nominee from first-hand experience.

## Section 1. Writing an Honour Nomination

Here are some disguised examples from persuasive nominations:

### Example 1

She has devoted most of her spare time to running a social club for elderly people with learning difficulties. She says such people are sadly neglected in society and, although she is in full-time employment in a Tesco store, she runs this

club with two helpers, a small budget and a lot of hard graft. Over the past five years, more than 200 people have benefited from the facilities, as well as their carers who have been given valuable respite from their responsibilities.

This nominee is helping others voluntarily and in doing so has helped and made life better for many others. It's very clear that she is the key person getting the club going and the nomination also makes clear the number of people who have benefited from her work.

### Example 2

He lived on an estate with high numbers of single mothers and disaffected young people but, instead of moaning about the youth of today, he started to listen to them and, as a result, started a club with sporting activities and facilities for mothers and their children. This is now used by 500 local teenagers. He had to work hard to gain the support of police and other agencies but was determined to succeed. Now, an once crime-ridden, hugely unpopular estate, is thriving with a real sense of purpose and achievement and crime rates have plummeted.

This nominee has taken the initiative to do something to help his community. He has identified a need and started something from scratch to make things better for others. And he has been very successful: the figures in the nomination make clear the level of the impact he has had.

### Example 3

For over 40 years he has been a prolific fundraiser in the community. Since 1970 he has stood outside the local supermarket every Saturday in all weathers rattling his tin for good causes. He has during this time raised around £40,000 for the local hospice and the Old Rectory Club for disabled people. On retirement in 1990 he began to organise bingo nights three times a week at three different village halls and also arranges a monthly dance. These activities have brought the community together and have helped to raise over £15,000 for several local charities.



This nominee has given his time and effort over decades and in doing so has both supported local causes and helped to support the community in his rural area.

## Example 4

She is unusual because she is a black woman farmer in a rural county, but she is keen to rid the world of stereotypes and uses her status to promote diversity and encourage women from non-British ethnic backgrounds to try different careers, particularly in male dominated industries like agriculture.

This nominee is a role model for others, achieving in her field of activity but also supporting other people.

## Example 5

Although in full-time employment in local government, he gives up two evenings a week and all-day Sunday to helping in the hospice. He has managed their very complex finances and is prepared to help behind the scenes or on the frontline, wherever he is most needed. He has contributed his services consistently for the last 32 years.

This nominee has made a sustained contribution over a long period, devoting much of his free time to others. He has offered unconditional support to the benefit of others.

As shown in the examples above, the nomination is your opportunity to set out a compelling story for your nominee - start with a strong sentence that sets out why your nominee should receive an honour and grabs the reader's attention. Please use plain English, so your nomination can be understood by someone who is not a specialist in your nominee's area of work/voluntary service.

Talk about the nominee's key achievements. If you have several good examples, use two or three of the most recent and relevant.

- Focus examples of the achievement and the outcomes from them on the last five years or the nomination may seem dated.

- Highlight how your nominee's contribution has affected the organisation or community and the outcomes of their activity.
- Provide relevant facts and figures to show the impact your nominee has had and evidence the nominee has gone above and beyond what is expected of their usual role.
- Highlight what your nominee has done differently. Honours Committees are keen to hear about innovative projects and new approaches; don't be afraid to emphasise how the nominee has challenged the status quo.
- The successes of the nominee's organisation or team might be relevant, particularly if your nominee has had a leading role; but remember to focus on what your nominee's personal contribution has been, i.e. 'He/she did' - not 'they did'.
- Only include information about your nominee's education or early life where it's relevant to the nomination. You can talk about their earlier career or activities if this gives context or demonstrates a sustained contribution.
- Please **don't** list job titles or roles **without indicating** what your nominee has done.
- Please **don't** provide quotes: you can use the material from a quote in an unattributed form.
- Please **don't** use unsubstantiated comments on the nominee's performance.
- Please **don't** use valedictory comments at the end of the nomination. The time you've taken to compose a nomination is evidence that you believe the nominee is worthy of an honour.
- Spell out acronyms and avoid using words or expression that a non-specialist wouldn't understand. You can use technical terms but build a simple explanation into the sentence.





- Use 'his/her' and 'he/she' instead of the nominee's name. This is a convention for honours citations and uses less characters than someone's name.
- Keep your sentences short - no more than 15 to 20 words.
- **Don't** put in paragraph breaks or bullet points as this uses up character spaces.

## Voluntary and charitable contribution field

This should describe your candidate's charitable or voluntary contribution - which may form the majority of the nomination or may be in addition to a contribution in a paid role. Activity done in the nominee's own time which is not paid for should go in this section. A wider contribution will make a strong story for your nominee even more compelling. If you don't know whether the nominee carries out any voluntary/charitable work, please leave the box blank.

## Section 2. Completing the Administration Fields on the Online Form

### 1 - About the nominee

- Apart from the name and title fields, please ensure the date of birth field is completed.
- Post nominals: If you happen to know that they already have an honour, please express as a post-nominal, e.g. MBE, QFSM, QPM, JP.
- Please ensure the Nationality field is completed. If they are a dual national, write nationality in the Nationality field. If you're not sure of their nationality but you do know that they are not British, tick the 'foreign national' box, let us know when you're providing the citation form and try to establish their nationality as soon as possible. Successful nominees who aren't British citizens receive what is known as an honorary honour.

- Complete the address; contact number and e-mail address (if known) fields. This should be the nominee's home address; telephone/personal mobile number, and their personal e-mail address, rather than work contact details.

### 2 - Citation

- Please complete the Short Citation (250 words). It should contain the person's job title, organisation followed by 'For services to [insert the area of their contribution] - e.g. Higher Executive Officer, Home Office. For services to Health and Wellbeing.
- 'Time in current role' and 'time in voluntary and charitable service' - please round up to the nearest year as you should only enter two digits.
- Please complete the 'Leaving Post' field if your nominee is leaving/retiring from the post they are being nominated for, so we know when it is the nominee's last chance to be considered for that work. This should be within a year of their departure from the role.
- The '**For State Committee nominations only**' sections should only be completed when the nominee is a civil servant. Please include 'Grade' e.g. HEO. Also, state, in years, how long they have been in the Civil Service and the time in their current grade in brackets. Use only numbers. So, 30 years in the Civil Service and 10 years in grade would be expressed as 30 (10).
- Nominations for stakeholders, please complete 'the total length of service' - please round up to the nearest year as you should only enter two digits.





## Section 3. Letters of Support and Validation of Nominations

If you do not have enough information, letters of support can provide useful additional resources. Try to identify the right person to talk to and request specific information which will supplement the information you already have, so you don't receive a letter stating how pleasant or deserving the candidate is but without useful, additional evidence. Letters of support are only seen by the internal Home Office Honours Panels, they cannot be sent for consideration by the independent Committees, so any important information needs to be incorporated into the -nomination form.

Consider asking for letters of support from:

- A senior person in the organisation or community that your nominee works with.
- Someone who regularly works with your nominee.

Ask for letters that:

- Include significant, recent achievements your nominee has made (generally from the last five years, unless part of the story is about a long-term voluntary contribution or charity work).
- Describe the impact that the person has had on their organisation or community.
- Confirm that the person is doing what they are being nominated for and that they are known to the organisation they are associated with (see 'Validation' below).

### Support from other departments

If you have supporting comments from other areas of government or partner organisations, list them in the 'Support from other departments' box. If you have copies of emails or letters offering support for your nomination, please provide them to the Honours Liaison Officer when sending them your nomination, making sure that any key information is incorporated in the \*citation.

## Validation

Cabinet Office requires departments to validate their candidates. This ensures that if a nominee is recommended for an honour, no negative information comes to light about them subsequently which may bring the honours system into disrepute.

We need assurance that the nominee is carrying out/has carried out the work in the citation. If you don't have a letter/letter of support from organisations the nominee works closely with which confirms this, the Home Office honours team will need you to seek written verification, in the form of an e-mail (or letter) from the organisation(s) concerned.

Nominators who contact an organisation for verification (or letters of support) should take care not to accidentally speak to the nominee when making enquiries.

Please ensure that the correct personal details of the nominee: full name; date of birth and home address are recorded. When the Cabinet Office carries out checks or contacts the nominee, it is important the correct details have been provided (e.g. to avoid issues with duplicate/very similar names). A personal email address and telephone number – one used solely by the nominee – is also very helpful.

## Section 4. Top Tips and Other Information

Do your research so you know what you want to say. If you have a clear idea about why you are nominating someone for an honour before you start to write the citation, it will be much easier to put it down on paper. A good nomination should vividly and precisely describe the difference your candidate's contribution has made. Try to answer the following questions:

- What was the situation before they began?
- What is it now and why is it better?
- What makes your candidate different from others occupying the same role?







- When did they carry out their work?
- Why should they be recognised now? If the timing is a relevant factor - an anniversary, a launch, completion of a project, closure of the organisation, a particular target reached or some other success - mention it in your nomination.

## Discussing the nomination

**You can (and should) contact people who know your candidate**, such as people at their workplace or their previous managers – it is a myth that honours nominations cannot be discussed. As long as you stress that your conversation is confidential and that nothing can be guaranteed regarding an award, feel free to speak to whoever is required to get the relevant information to enable you to present the strongest possible case for the person you are nominating – **EXCEPT** for the nominee themselves. **They should not know they are being nominated.**

## Other Information

- **If this is your nominee's second honour:** First, check that any previous honour was received at least 5 years ago, and that your new nomination is not covering the same achievements which have already been recognised. There is a field on the form that enables you to state when they received their last honour (which also includes a list date). This information can be checked online.
- **Previous honours and dates** (1994) CBE (2000). If you think they may have an honour but aren't sure, or don't know when it was received, please say so in your covering email and we will check the records we hold or ask the Cabinet Office. Please note that we will need their full name at the time, an accurate date of birth (and ideally also their home address) to request this information.

## Common Questions

### Can I tell my nominee that they have been put forward for an honour?

No, please don't – the competition for honours is extremely high and so a nomination may not be successful, however good it is. The first time a nominee should know about a nomination is when they receive a letter/email telling them they have been recommended for an award and asking if they wish to accept it.

### I want to nominate a colleague. Do I have to ask their line manager first?

Technically, no. However, we strongly recommend that you enlist a manager's support as they may be a useful source of knowledge of an individual's career history, to determine and summarise the nominee's most significant achievements, and to get their home contact details for the forms. They may also have an informed view on whether it is a good time to put them forward.

\*Once you have submitted your online nomination and subject to it being put forward you will be contacted by the Honours Team who will request a long citation. They will be able to give you guidance based on the details that you have already submitted in your nomination. This is your opportunity to set out a compelling story for your nominee - start with a strong sentence that sets out why your nominee should receive an honour and grabs the reader's attention. Please use plain English, so your citation can be understood by someone who is not a specialist in your nominee's area of work/voluntary service.

A long citation: **2,700 characters (with spaces)** is the maximum across the 'long citation' and 'Voluntary and charitable services' fields combined. It's easier to edit the text in a Word document and check the length in Word's 'Review' function before cutting and pasting it into the form in **Arial font, size 9**. If the citation is longer, any additional characters will be cut off at the next stage. Please stick to the limit – it saves the Honours Team a lot of time.



# National Honours - Orders and Medals

**We are looking primarily for potential honours nominees (both civil servants and stakeholders or partners) who are active in the areas of Home Office priority: cutting crime, preventing terrorism and reducing immigration**

The contribution of each nominee is unique, but there are features that are common at each level of award. The following pages set out the expectations of a potential nominee at each level of honour, with an overall descriptor, followed by examples drawn from actual successful nominations, which have been made generic (so they are not identifiable to a particular individual).

The Home Office portfolio covers a wide range of activity. Examples of the diverse areas of Home Office work that people have received honours for in the past include: prevention of gang crime; knife crime; illegal migration; domestic violence; countering extremism; protecting the border; child protection and

safeguarding; disruption of organised crime; refugee integration; prevention of modern slavery; prevention of sexual exploitation; forensics and forensic pathology; disaster victim identification; supporting humanitarian protection; prevention of road traffic accidents; prevention of drug and alcohol abuse; seizure of illicit commodities at the border; preventing female genital mutilation (FGM); building community relations with law enforcement agencies; preventing illegal working; preventing hate crime; and applying technology or innovating with technology to improve or support Home Office areas of work.

If a nominee's contribution is in another area, or cuts across a number of areas, we can refer the nomination to another Department, e.g. if someone is active in youth activities such as Guides, Scouts, cadet movements, sporting activities, we will direct the nomination according to where the work is carried out. If it is through a school, or schools, for example, we would consider referring the nomination to the Department for Education.





## King's Police Medal (KPM)

The KPM is awarded to police officers and specials who have exhibited distinguished service within United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and any territory under UK's jurisdiction or protection.

KPM recipients are required to show evidence of the following which were used as a guide for qualifications for the grant of the medal under the King's Police Medal (KPM): -

- A specially distinguished record in administrative or detective service, or other police service of conspicuous merit.
- Success in organising police forces, or in maintaining their organisation under special difficulties.
- Special services in dealing with serious or widespread outbreaks of crime or public disorder, or fire.
- Valuable political and secret services.
- Special service to Royalty and Heads of State.
- Prolonged service; but only when distinguished by very exceptional ability and merit.



## Knight/Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire (GBE)

A record of exceptional achievement in a nationally prominent role.

A substantial impact at an international level.

Instigating significant change which has demonstrably brought long term benefit to the country, involving significant vision and innovation, and tough, complex choices.

Sustained contribution with significant achievements over a period of time.

Respected by peers and those who work for them as a role model, exemplifying the very highest standards of behaviour.



## Order of the Companions of Honour (CH), Companion of the Order of the Bath (exclusive to Civil Servants/Senior Military Personnel) (CB)

The Companion of Honour is a special award granted to those who have made a major contribution to the arts, science, medicine, or government lasting over a long period of time. The members, of which there are 65 at any one time. Motto: "In action faithful and in honour clear".

**For civil servants** - Showing committed and exemplary public service in one area, or a number of areas of Home Office responsibility over a period of time, which goes above and beyond what is expected at the nominee's grade and has had a significant and lasting impact at national level. Evidence of charitable or voluntary contribution outside the nominee's daily role provides additional strength to a nomination.

### Examples could include the following:

- Able to translate operational problems into effective long-term solutions, which resonate with the public and peers, and to harness the conviction and expertise of others as a result.
- Progressing through the ranks in an operational area, showing excellent results at each level during career.
- Extensive understanding and experience of the area of work.
- Intensive involvement in incidents with high public impact - bringing them to a successful conclusion.
- Able to work with stakeholders in very different organisations, building trust and confidence.
- Inclusive approach: mentoring and encouraging others to overcome challenges to succeed.
- Sensitivity in difficult situations, resilient when involved in difficult issues in the public spotlight: continuing to see through the necessary course of action.
- Building agreements with other countries which support the interests of the UK.
- Achieving significant, lasting improvement in a customer-facing service, whilst also saving money.
- Finding innovative ways to promote the UK's financial interests overseas.
- Implementing new infrastructures which provide a lasting legacy by being resilient to new threats.
- Responsibility for building a completely new and unique service or winding up a legacy organisation.
- Leading staff to work together in new and different ways to increase effectiveness and efficiency.
- Able to navigate through the most difficult and sensitive issues in national security and the law.
- Bringing together deep expert knowledge with creative, solution focused thinking.
- Confronting vested interests to pursue necessary modernisations for the improvement of services, despite strong opposition.
- A trailblazing role model



## **Knight Bachelor, Knight/Dame of the Order of the British Empire (Kt, KBE)**

A record of exceptional achievement in a nationally prominent role, with their impact potentially being on an international stage as well.

Instigating significant change which has demonstrably brought long term benefit to the country.

An inspiration to others.

### **Examples could include the following:**

- Leader in an entirely new, or new type of organisation providing a new service and/or advice with influence on public policy at a senior level which brings significant benefits for stakeholders.
- Real ability to work across boundaries and achieve solutions, winning respect from all parties.
- Exercising good judgement in making difficult choices.
- Thought leader, independent thinker, exemplifies impartiality and integrity.
- Making a substantial contribution to charity or voluntary work in addition to the day job.
- A very significant contribution on a national or international stage.
- An outstanding role model.
- Significant results delivered against a strong vision, backed by visible leadership.
- Bringing together partner organisations to make real improvements for the public benefit. Finding new ways to work together and/or in collaboration, to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Deep and successful community engagement.
- Successful re-engineering of a significantly sized/highly important organisation.
- Willingness and energy to confront and tackle really challenging, ingrained issues.
- Re-establishing confidence in the organisation or service after highly publicised scandals or other similarly challenging circumstances.
- Overseeing significant national level through to successful conclusion or outcome.
- Championing diversity and inclusivity in a clear and visible way.
- Making highly effective use of available resources, targeting these for maximum impact: managing the impact of significant resource reductions to minimise the impact for the public.



## **Knight/Dame Commander of the Order of the Bath (exclusive to Civil Servants/Senior Military Personnel) (KCB/DCB)**

A record of exceptional achievement in a nationally prominent role, with their impact potentially being on an international stage as well.

Instigating significant change which has demonstrably brought long term benefit to the country.

Seen as truly inspirational by peers.

Permanent Secretary level or equivalent.

## Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)

### For stakeholders/partners -

An exceptional and/or longstanding contribution and record of achievement in the service of an organisation which has helped to bring significant and lasting change and improvement - with national and potentially international impact in the particular area of the nominee's contribution.





## Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

For stakeholders/partners - An exceptional and/or longstanding contribution and record of achievement in the service of an organisation which helps to improve life in or for a community - with an impact at a national level and potentially, at international level, in the area of the nominee's contribution.

### Examples could include the following:

- Preventing violence and abuse towards people from certain groups by promoting tolerance and reducing hostility.
- Establishing a charitable foundation or association of people with a common interest.
- Raising awareness, creating respect and understanding through educational group work.
- Contributing to government policy making forums in the area of expertise, through deep understanding of the issues.
- Reaching out to build and/or strengthen relationships with partners at national, European and international level.
- with international law enforcement partners.
- Exemplary contribution to the knowledge base in area of expertise, using technical knowledge and skills.
- Significant innovation from personal efforts which saves money.
- Working in high-risk environments.
- Bringing about a significant change in the way the nominee's area of expertise is viewed by the wider public, through their personal effort and contribution, potentially leading to legislative changes.
- A passionate activist for a cause in the sphere of Home Office interest.
- Ability to reach out to a wider audience using a variety of communication channels, with a clear message.
- Producing accessible material to help those most vulnerable to a particular type of crime.
- Nationally recognised, deeply expert authority in a complex subject area, contributing to changes which are recognised as national 'best practice'.
- Bringing partner organisations together around a particular agenda, leading to a reduction of demand for services across all the organisations involved.
- Collaborating with others in order to improve economies of scale and thus reduce costs.
- Earns respect through compelling and persuasive argument, proactive and sensitive stakeholder management.
- Representing the Department in significant cases with reputational/national impact.
- Overcoming substantial challenges in systems, resources and motivation to provide excellent customer service to a substantially sized customer group.



## Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

For stakeholders/partners - An exceptional and/or longstanding contribution and record of achievement in the service of an organisation which helps to improve life in or for a community – generally with a wider reach (e.g. across a metropolitan area, regionally, county or area) than at BEM level, e.g. the achievements may have had impact at a regional or national level in the particular area of the nominee's contribution.

### Examples could include the following:

- Work that involves bringing together several or many different agencies, providing focus to a particular issue and leading the way ahead, strong commitment to multi-agency and/or partnership working.
- Acting as a positive role model and an asset when representing the Department or an organisation.
- Creating and/or setting up new systems and processes, or changing existing ones, with an immediate significant impact and which may be used as a blueprint for similar activities in the future.
- Promoting excellent teamwork, leading by example, supporting colleagues.
- Deep individual expertise in specialist area, consulted by stakeholders for knowledge and advice.
- Responsible for establishing a team's reputation for national or international expertise in a particular subject area, having contributed personally to that reputation.
- Saving substantial sums of money for the benefit of the Government/taxpayers.
- Supporting and promoting an inclusive workplace.
- Undertaking a supportive and counselling role with colleagues; being the 'go to' person.
- Applying rules/regulations from a position of deep knowledge and understanding of their importance, putting in time and effort beyond regular duties to see these are applied for the benefit or protection of UK citizens.
- Setting up projects to raise awareness of issues and/or helping to tackle them, securing substantial funding for project.
- Creating training or assistance materials that improve lives, build confidence, guiding people to make choices that result in better outcomes for the individual and for the community they live in.



## British Empire Medal in the Order of the British Empire (BEM)

A longstanding contribution and/or record of achievement in a “hands-on” role in the service of an organisation which helps to improve life in or for a local community – could be a government, volunteer or charitable organisation.

Raising money to support charities or voluntary organisations or a local cause.

Involved in the set-up of a voluntary or charitable organisation.

### Examples could include the following:

- Exemplary service at a local level to volunteer organisations e.g. Neighbourhood Watch; Home Watch; Crimestoppers; as a police volunteer.
- Working with stakeholders in a local community to promote mutual understanding; to find a way forward in conflict resolution or community tension.
- Sharing knowledge to assist others.
- Showing commitment to inclusivity – involving people from all backgrounds, especially under-represented groups.
- Applying technology to bring people with a common interest together.
- Coaching or mentoring services to prevent involvement in crime, or to escape from a criminal pathway.
- Sport, art or music groups, cadet movements: which provide young people with activities to divert them from involvement in criminal activities.
- Other voluntary service for organisations such as Scouts, Guides, as a school governor, on the board of a charity, as a non-executive director should be mentioned, but the greater part of the nomination should be for the nominee’s contribution in an area of Home Office interest.





## The Humanitarian Medal

The **Medal for Humanitarian Service** was approved in principle by The Late Queen in 1999 and reapproved in 2018.

The HD Committee (which advises The Sovereign on Honours and medals policy) considered a proposal for the broad remit of the Humanitarian Medal when it met on 21 May 2020. It was agreed that the Medal will be principally aimed at those individuals who are directly involved in crisis response on the 'frontline', in circumstances which have direct contact in helping or saving people and in particular where there is a level of personal risk or exposure in hazardous circumstances. The description of the medal has been kept broad in order to provide scope for the Medal to be utilised in a range of scenarios.

The Humanitarian Medal will be awarded to **those in public service** and members of organisations that contribute on behalf of HM Government, such as charities, which respond in support of **human welfare** during or in the aftermath of a crisis - for example, in combating a life-threatening crisis; providing disaster relief or aid provision; whether in hazardous circumstances such as conflict zones or otherwise; both in the UK and internationally.

The **type of service given must focus on humanitarian crisis** rather than more broadly humanitarian welfare (response rather than the recovery) and must be in line with humanitarian principles in an international context. With that in mind, the following types of qualifying service could be applied:

Qualifying service should include at least one of the following:

- **Hazardous service** - Conditions which are unsafe (war zones, areas affected by natural disasters); insecure (threats to life, whether natural, biological or human); rapidly changing; or at heightened risk (from ongoing natural disasters, increased exposure to potential harm);
- **Sustained service** - People who gave a long-term frontline service in response to the emergency of which conditions were on-going rather than immediate; and/or
- **Significant service** - Persons who contributed in direct response to the emergency, assisted with the protection of lives and property and performed extraordinarily. This may be shorter in duration but characterised by a particularly serious immediate threat to life.

### Presentation

Recipients of the Humanitarian Medal will receive their medals from a senior official, for example a Chief Constable or Lord-Lieutenant.



# Step by Step Guide to Making an Online Honours Submission

Nominations for non-gallantry National Honours Medals are to be submitted via the official Government website, this can be access via the following link:

[Nominate someone for an honour or award: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/nominate)

EXCEPT nominations for the Humanitarian Medal are to be made via the Chief Constable's Staff Office.

**You will need to refer to the guidance** within this document when completing the on-line application.

Do ensure you have the required information before you begin, and it is advisable to have a copy of the details you are submitting just in case you encounter any technical difficulties. When you are ready to complete your nomination go to [Nominate someone for an honour or award: Nominate someone who lives and contributes in the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/nominate) and follow the onscreen prompts as illustrated on pages 28 & 29.

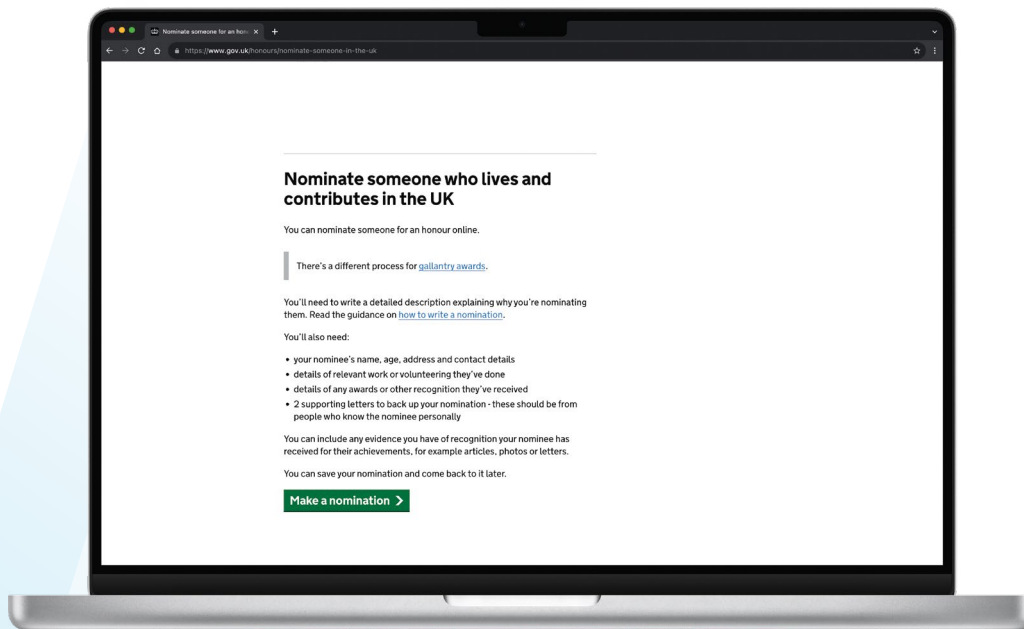


**Please note** that Chief Constable's and their Staff Office may have an option to use an alternative submission method through a long-established authorised process with the Cabinet Office. This process is strictly only available through direction from the respective Chief Constable and this guide does not prevent that process from continuing.

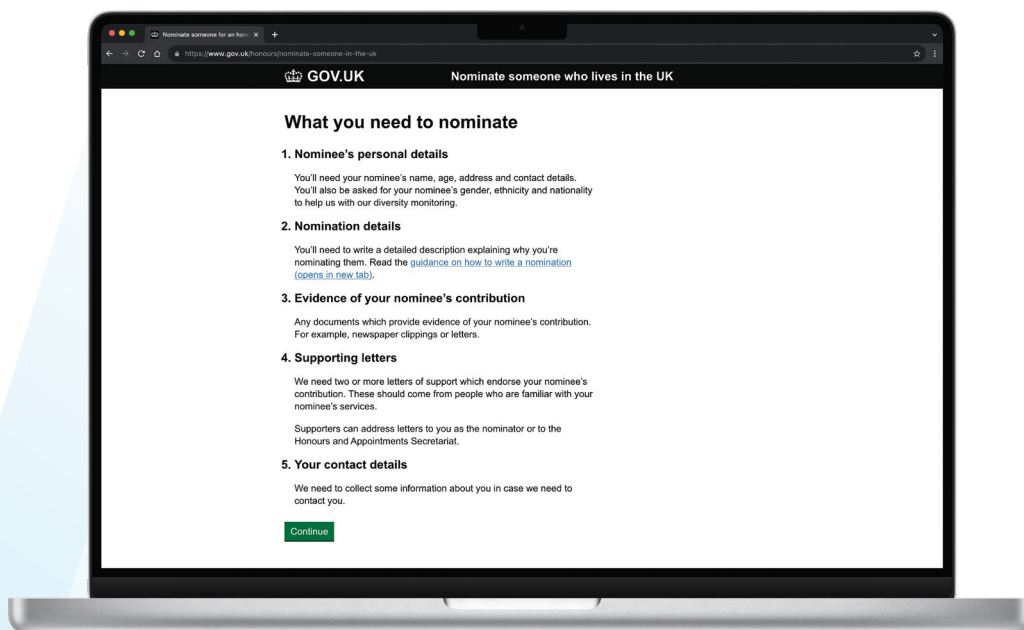


# Step by Step Guide to Making an Online Honours Submission

## Step 1



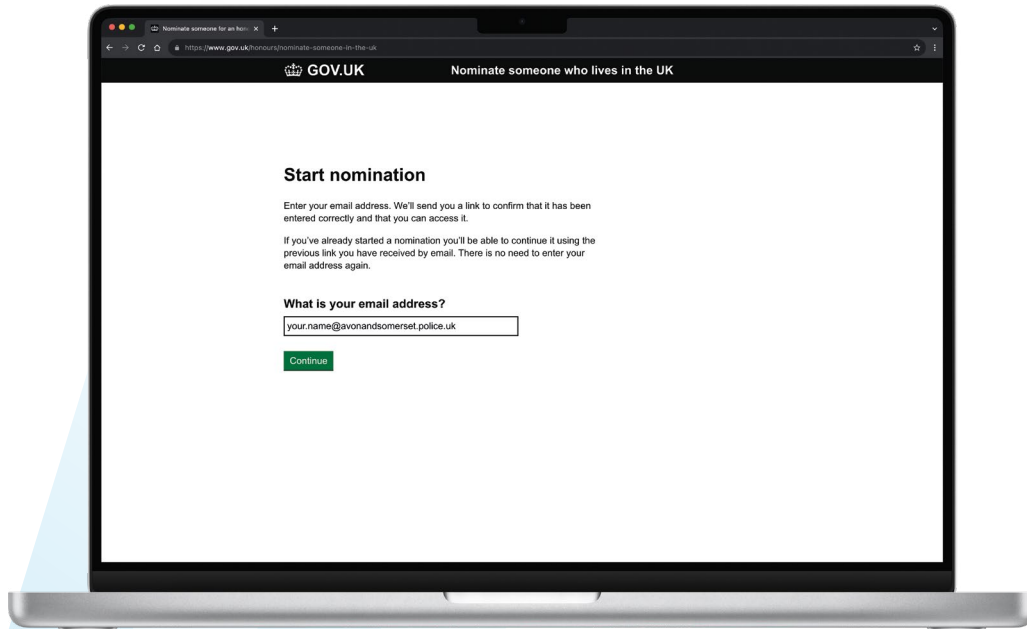
## Step 2



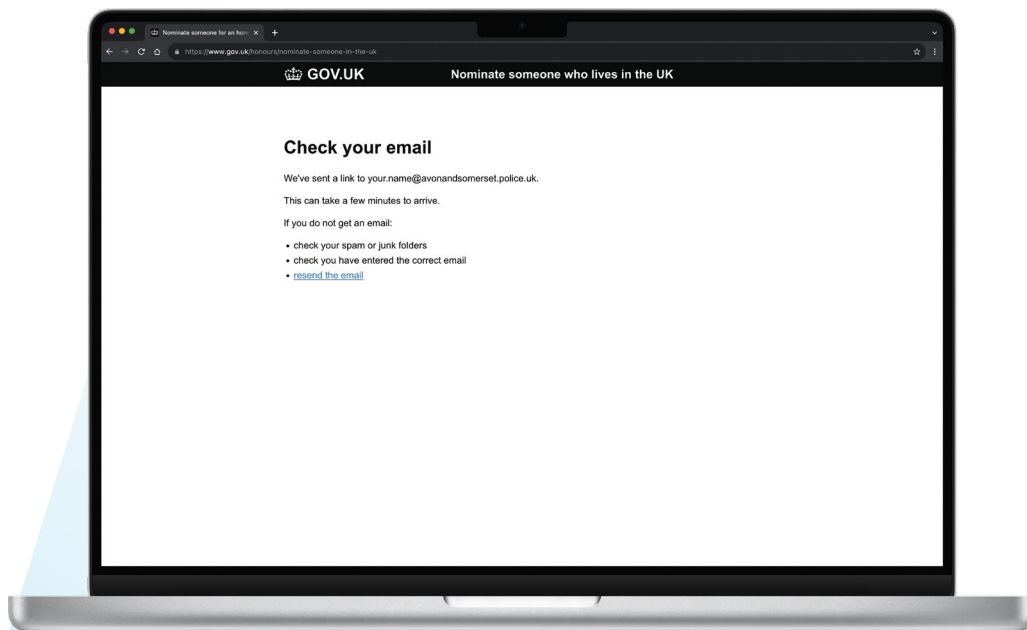


# Step by Step Guide to Making an Online Honours Submission

## Step 3



## Step 4



On 9 March 2024, the Government announced the introduction of The Elizabeth Emblem. This commemorative emblem is awarded as a mark of recognition to the next of kin of those who lost their lives in the course of undertaking eligible public service.

His Majesty The King has graciously approved a recommendation by the Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals for a commemorative emblem, as described below, as a mark of recognition for those who lost their lives in the course of undertaking eligible public service. This will include: (1) Employment in a role by, on behalf of, or formally funded by, an eligible body. An eligible body will be defined as the UK Government, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government, the Northern Ireland Executive, local government, a Crown Dependency or a British Overseas Territory; (2) Working - either in a paid or voluntary capacity - at the behest of an eligible body. This will include any person who has a formal contract or agreement to work for the eligible body or who has been ordered to provide a service; and (3) Working as part of emergency services personnel in a paid or voluntary capacity, dealing with emergencies either directly or indirectly as part of their conditions of service. Emergency services personnel will include: control room staff and civilians working for the police services, ambulance services and fire and rescue services of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland or a Crown Dependency or British Overseas Territory, as well as persons working for mountain, cave and water rescue services, weather and natural disaster response services, and coastguard services.

**Eligibility Criteria and Applications for the Elizabeth Emblem** can be submitted by completing The Elizabeth Emblem application form, this can be found along with additional information about the Elizabeth Emblem via the following link:

[The Elizabeth Emblem - application guidance and eligibility - GOV.UK](#)

### Application process

Applications can be submitted by completing The Elizabeth Emblem application form. Completed forms should be submitted to the Cabinet Office:

[elizabethemblem@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:elizabethemblem@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

### After you submit the application for The Elizabeth Emblem

The Honours and Appointments Secretariat will arrange for your application to be verified to ensure that it meets the eligibility criteria. **It is important to note that it is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the required evidence in order for the application to be considered by the George Cross Committee.** If the evidence does not provide the necessary information, the Secretariat will be in touch to discuss next steps.

The George Cross Committee will assess applications before a recommendation is made to the Prime Minister and HM The King. Awards are announced in the [London Gazette](#) and on gov.uk.





# Types of Gallantry Awards

You can recommend someone for awards for gallantry not in the face of an enemy:

- **George Cross** (a first-level medal for bravery, for acts of great heroism and courage in extreme danger)
- **George Medal** (a second-level medal for bravery, for acts of great bravery)
- **King's Gallantry Medal** (a third-level medal for bravery, for inspiring acts of bravery)
- **King's Commendation for Bravery/Bravery in the Air** (a fourth-level medal for bravery, for acts which involve risk to life)



**Acts of gallantry in the police service normally attract the George Cross, George Medal or King's Gallantry Medal.**

**Acts of bravery attract the King's Commendation for Bravery.**





# Types of Gallantry Awards

## **1** The George Cross

The **George Cross (GC)** is the highest award bestowed by the British government for non-operational gallantry or gallantry not in the presence of an enemy.

The George Cross, since its introduction in 1940, has been equal in stature to the Victoria Cross, the highest military gallantry award. It is awarded “for acts of the greatest heroism” or for most conspicuous courage in circumstance of extreme danger, not in the presence of the enemy, to members of the British armed forces and to British civilians.



## **2** The George Medal

The **George Medal (GM)** instituted on 24 September 1940 by King George VI, is a decoration of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth, awarded for gallantry, typically by civilians, not in the face of an enemy, or circumstances where military honours are not appropriate.





## 3 The King's Gallantry Medal (KGM)

The **King's Gallantry Medal (KGM)** is a United Kingdom decoration awarded for exemplary acts of bravery where the services were not so outstanding as to merit the George Medal, but above the level required for the King's Commendation for Bravery.



## 4 The King's Commendation for Bravery

The **King's Commendation for Bravery** is a United Kingdom award, open to both military personnel and civilians and was established in 1994.

The award is granted for bravery entailing risk to life and meriting national recognition, but not to the standard required of the King's Gallantry Medal.

Classed as 'level 4' awards by the Ministry of Defence, it is the lowest level of bravery award, alongside a mention in dispatches.





# Gallantry Award Nomination Guide

To nominate someone for a Gallantry Award you will need to carefully follow this guide, you can also visit the Government's own online guide to Gallantry Award Nominations - <https://www.gov.uk/honours/recommend-bravery-award>.

You will need to follow the guidance below before completing form GA1, which is available from the Chief Constable's Office - see pages 34 to 37.

Once complete, **please contact the Chief Constable's Staff Officer** to discuss your nomination. They will be able to provide further advice, guidance and ratification to proceed with **seeking approval from the Home Office to make the nomination**.

The **Chief Constable's Staff Officer** will supply the nominating Officer/Staff member with the contact details of the **Authorising Officer within the Home Office**.

The submission is then your responsibility to email/post your completed supported entry form GA1 to the: **Honours and Appointments Secretariat**.

**Email:** [honours@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:honours@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

**Post:**

Honours and Appointments Secretariat  
Cabinet Office  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London  
SW1A 2H

## What happens after you've recommend someone for a gallantry award?

All recommendations will be assessed by the George Cross Committee, which makes recommendations to the King, who awards the honour.





# Gallantry Award Submission Flow Process

1

Read the Gallantry Award Submission guide carefully, further advice can also be found on the Government website: Recommend someone for a gallantry award - <https://www.gov.uk/honours/recommend-bravery-award>.



2

**Contact the Chief Constable's Staff Office** to obtain the **form GA1 (also available within this handbook on pages 34 to 37)**. Once complete, discuss your nomination with the Chief Constable's Staff Officer who will be able to provide further advice, guidance and ratification to proceed with **seeking approval from the Home Office to make the nomination**.



3

The **Chief Constable's Staff Officer** will supply the nominating Officer/Staff member with the contact details of the **authorising Officer within the Home Office**.



4

Once approval has been received from the authorising Officer within the Home Office, submit your nomination via e-mail to: **[honours@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:honours@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)** or post to Honours and Appointments Secretariat, Cabinet Office, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2H

# Police Submission For A Gallantry Award

## Form GA1 / Gallantry Award 1

This form is to be completed by the submitting Officer with the support of their Chief Inspector.

Please read the notes for completion at the end, before filling in the form.

<b>Submitting Officer and directorate/department:</b>	
---	--

### PART 1 - Case Details

<b>1. Date of incident:</b>	
<b>2. Location of incident:</b>	

<b>3. Type of incident:</b>			
Accident		Armed individual threatening lives	
Car chase		Fire (in house of other)	
Rescue		Robbery	
Other (please specify)			

<b>4. Check list (Tick relevant box)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Are all relevant witness statements attached?		
Chief Constable etc recommendations attached?		
Photographs/map etc attached?		
Have experts been consulted?		

<b>If yes, please give details below:</b>



# Police Submission For A Gallantry Award

	Yes	No
Has any court/legal action been completed?		

**If yes, state outcome. If not, indicate expected date of trial etc. Please give details below:**

## PART 2 - Description of incident

**5. Description of incident (refer to attached guide): This will form the basis of the citation published in the London Gazette. Not more than 500 words. Avoid jargon.**







# Police Submission For A Gallantry Award

## PART 3 - Details of nominee (see note (ii) if more than one nominee)

<b>6. Full name:</b>	
<b>7. Nationality:</b>	
<b>8. Rank/Occupation:</b>	

<b>9. Home address</b> <b>(If a posthumous award give name and address of next of kin)</b>	
---	--

<b>10. Previous awards (Gallantry and meritorious)</b>	
--	--

<b>11. Level of award proposed for this incident:</b>	
a) by Nominator	
b) by Department	

<b>If (a) and (b) above are different, please explain why in the box below:</b>

<b>12. Other (local or specialist) awards for which the nominee is being, or has been, considered (e.g. Chief Constable's Commendation, Royal Humane Society award.)</b>





# Police Submission For A Gallantry Award

## PART 4 – Assessment of Nominee’s actions

13. Tick the most appropriate box for each question. To succeed a nominee should have more 'X's than 'Y's.			
Tendency to:	X	Y	
Was the nominee:			
(a) fully aware			unaware of danger
(b) untrained			trained
(c) showing persistence			forced to retreat
(d) off duty			on duty
(e) unprotected and with makeshift equipment			wearing protective clothing of otherwise specially equipped
(f) unarmed			armed
(g) protecting third party			protecting self only
(h) in an unexpected or unplanned situation			taking part in a planned operation
(i) poor physical conditions (bad weather, dark, hot, cold)			good physical conditions (fine weather, good light)

**Comments:**



## Introduction

**The aim of this handbook is to assist departments in considering people nominated for civilian gallantry awards.**

Gallantry awards are made to people who have demonstrated bravery, sometimes in the course of a single event and sometimes over a sustained period as part of their job. These are national awards, conferred by the Sovereign, and are therefore used to recognise only the most significant of acts. Like other forms of honour, gallantry awards are made after consideration of merit and precedents, based on the available evidence. Unlike other honours, they may be awarded posthumously.

Anyone can make a gallantry nomination, although the majority of recommendations are made through official channels (for example by the emergency services) where there is access to official evidence such as witness statements. This guidance gives details of the factors that departments should consider when investigating a case and which will be used in the assessment of nominations.

This guidance is not exhaustive. Further advice on how civilian gallantry works and how you recommend someone for an award can be obtained from the Honours and Appointments Secretariat in the Cabinet Office: telephone **020 7276 2777** or **020 7276 2081**.





Contents	
Section 1	An Overview of the Gallantry Processes
Section 2	Departments' Responsibilities
Section 3	The Criteria for a National Gallantry Award
Section 4	The George Cross Committee and Approvals Processes
Section 5	Publication and Investitures
Section 6	Other Policy Considerations
Annex 1	A Brief History of Civilian Gallantry

## Guidance for Departmental Honours Teams

Honours and Appointments Secretariat  
Cabinet Office  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London  
SW1A 2HQ

[www.gov.uk/honours](http://www.gov.uk/honours)

020 7276 2777 or 020 7276 2081

## Section 1 - An Overview of the Gallantry Process

### Departments' responsibilities - a summary

- Every department must have a designated contact responsible for gallantry nominations. This will usually be the person with responsibility for honours (section 2).
- Departments must undertake to investigate nominations and to sponsor them to the George Cross Committee where there is thought to be a case for national recognition (section 4). Nominations to the Committee must be approved by the department's Permanent Secretary or Chief Executive (section 2).
- Departments may arrange suitable publicity of awards they have sponsored. For the award of The King's Commendation for Bravery/Bravery in the Air, departments must arrange the presentation of the award (section 5).

### The assessment process - a summary

When a gallantry nomination is made, either by a member of the public or through an official route, the lead department in that area must take responsibility for investigating the claims of the case (section 2). Cases recommended for recognition are submitted to the George Cross Committee (section 4) which makes recommendations, via the Prime Minister, to HM King (section 4). Awards approved by HM King are announced in the London Gazette and on gov.uk (section 5).

### The awards - a summary

There are four levels of gallantry (see section 2). In order of seniority:

**Level 1** - The George Cross (GC): the highest gallantry award in the UK.

**Level 2** - The George Medal (GM).

**Level 3** - The King's Gallantry Medal (KGM).

**Level 4** - The King's Commendation for Bravery (KCB) and The King's Commendation for Bravery in the Air (KCBA).

## Section 2 - Departments' Responsibilities

### Which department is responsible for what?

The Honours and Appointments Secretariat in the Cabinet Office is responsible for the honours system, including civilian gallantry policy and processes. It receives public nominations and provides secretariat support to the assessment, approval and publication processes.

Government departments are responsible for submitting recommendations for gallantry awards in those cases which fall within their areas of responsibility. The main departments are:

- Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: mining and industrial incidents.
- Cabinet Office (Constitution Group): civilians in the UK.
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office: anyone whose act of bravery occurred outside the UK.
- Home Office: police forces in England and Wales; the Fire and Rescue Service in England and Wales.
- Ministry of Defence: Armed Forces personnel involved in non-operational incidents, for example bomb disposal, intelligence and security work; or acting in civilian circumstances such as during a strike, air sea rescue etc.
- Ministry of Justice: HM Prison Service.
- Northern Ireland Executive: Police Service of Northern Ireland and Prison Service of Northern Ireland.
- Scottish Government: Police Scotland and the other Scottish emergency services.
- Department for Transport: rail, sea and air accidents and the British Transport Police (but not car accidents involving civilians - see Cabinet Office).
- Department for Work and Pensions: workplaces.

But other departments may occasionally also receive nominations.

### Who makes gallantry nominations?

Nominations originate from a number of sources. Unlike other honours, there is no standard nomination form, although the honours nomination form is sometimes used by members of the public. The public can make a nomination by writing to the relevant Government department. The emergency services identify possible cases and contact their parent department. Trial judges and coroners sometimes comment in their summing up about a person's bravery on the conclusion of a court case, which may be picked up by officials or journalists. Correspondence also comes in from MPs and other official sources. Departments should also keep an eye on incidents such as accidents and disasters, in case possible cases emerge.

### Gathering evidence

Departments must have procedures in place to identify and consider cases. The first step on receiving a nomination is to seek the advice of relevant expert advisers, officials or regulators (for example, HM Inspector of Constabulary or Air Accident Investigation Branch) and to gather as much evidence as possible to verify the facts. Evidence may include witness statements, photographs, accident investigation reports, police reports and trial transcripts. In some cases it may be necessary to liaise with other departments or agencies, if they have an interest in or can provide expert help with the assessment.





*It is essential to wait until all legal proceedings (including inquests) are complete before submitting a nomination, except in very specific circumstances where other pressures make this impossible. Such cases should be discussed with the Secretariat in advance. The aim is that a nomination should never prejudice or pre-empt legal proceedings.*

Departments should always carry out internet searches on both the nominee and the incident. This is particularly important in high-profile or potentially contentious cases but should be done as a matter of routine. Departments should highlight to the Secretariat anything which might have a bearing on the GCC's assessment of the case or which might be a presentational issue if an award is approved.

### **Confidentiality**

All enquiries made, and advice sought, in relation to gallantry nominations must be undertaken in confidence. Individuals should not be told they have been nominated for an award as it

could raise expectations of success and lead to disappointment if they are not met. Like other honours material, gallantry nominations should be held in confidence and all nomination material should be marked at least Official - Sensitive. Advice on Freedom of Information requests can be found in section 6.

### **What awards are available?**

When a department considers a nomination strong enough to submit to the George Cross Committee, it must propose a level of award. There are four levels of award for gallantry.





<b>Level 1</b>	<b>The George Cross</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Granted only for acts of gallantry of the greatest heroism or of the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of extreme danger.</li> <li>• It may be granted posthumously.</li> <li>• It is restricted to British subjects.</li> <li>• Recipients receive their award at a Royal investiture.</li> <li>• Holders may use the post-nominal letters GC after their name.</li> <li>• Recipients of the GC receive an annual annuity.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<b>The George Medal</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Granted for gallantry of an extremely high order.</li> <li>• It may be granted posthumously.</li> <li>• It is not restricted to British subjects.</li> <li>• Recipients receive their award at a Royal investiture.</li> <li>• Holders may use the post-nominal letters GM after their name.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>The King's Gallantry Medal</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Granted for gallantry of a high order.</li> <li>• It may be granted posthumously.</li> <li>• It is not restricted to British subjects.</li> <li>• Recipients receive their award at a Royal investiture.</li> <li>• Holders may use the post-nominal letters KGM after their name.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>The King's Commendation for Bravery / The King's Commendation for Bravery in the Air</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Granted for gallantry not up to the foregoing standards but entailing risk to life and meriting national recognition.</li> <li>• Both awards may be granted posthumously.</li> <li>• Both awards are not restricted to British subjects.</li> <li>• Recipients receive their award in a local presentation.</li> <li>• These awards do not give rise to post-nominal letters.</li> </ul>	

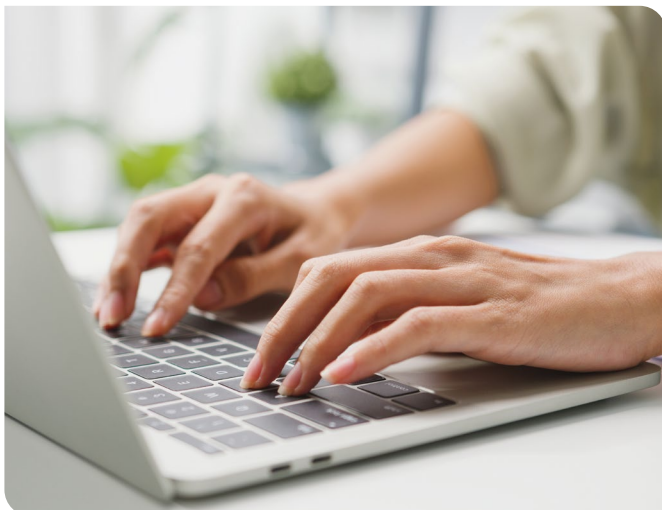
All the awards may be awarded more than once, if further acts of gallantry are performed and are considered worthy of recognition. For multiple awards, a bar is added to the ribbon of the GC, GM and KGM. Recipients of a King's Commendation may receive further Commendations.

## **Does the nomination meet the standard for national recognition?**

Gallantry awards are national honours. They are not intended to cover every act of bravery that occurs. Some acts will be more properly recognised by local awards such as the Commendations issued by Chief Constables, judges and Chief Fire Officers or awards from bodies covering specialist areas (for example St. John Ambulance or the British Red Cross) and other organisations (for example the Royal Humane Society or the Daily Mirror newspaper Pride of Britain Awards).

## **Making a nomination**

If the department considers that a national award is merited, they should complete the nomination form. This should be completed with reference to the criteria outlined in section 3 of this guidance and with as much detail as possible about the events in question. All relevant information and supporting evidence should be considered and included. If the department is aware of similar previous incidents following which individuals were considered for gallantry awards, they should also be detailed.



*Your Chief Constable is responsible for Gallantry nominations. You must obtain their explicit approval before submitting a nomination for a Gallantry award to the Honours and Appointments Secretariat for consideration by the George Cross Committee.*

## **Timing considerations**

In line with the civilian honours and military medals policies, the George Cross Committee will not consider cases for awards arising more than five years after the event for which an award is sought took place.

Submissions should be made ideally within 12 months of the incident. The only exception to this is waiting for the outcome of judicial proceedings, for example an inquest, trial of suspects or an official accident investigation report. Any late submissions must be sent with a full explanation for the delay.

You can submit a gallantry nomination at any time and it will be considered by the George Cross Committee at the next available occasion. It may take several months for a case to be considered and an award approved and published. If there are timing considerations relevant to either assessment of the award or its publication, please let the Secretariat know.

## Section 3 - The Criteria for a National Gallantry Award

Once it has been decided that there is a case for a national award, a detailed assessment of the case should be undertaken to decide the appropriate level of recognition. As with other honours, policy is to try to avoid giving a person more than one medal or commendation for the same act, although occasionally both local and national recognition may be sought, particularly if there are delays submitting a case for a national award.

*In assessing a case, departments must bear in mind the points below and use them to suggest a possible level of award. Not all criteria will apply to every case, nor do they need to be given equal weight. But the more elements which are applicable to a nomination, the stronger it is likely to be.*

### (a) Acting above and beyond the call of duty

Members of the uniformed services and civilians should be treated in the same way when determining an appropriate level of award, although it should be borne in mind that civilians are not usually as highly trained as professionals. When assessing cases from the emergency services, including officers from the HM Prison Service, and other professionals such as ships' officers or pilots, it is important to establish that the officer was acting above and beyond the call of duty.

### (b) Risk

The degree of risk should be related to the level of award: a higher known risk to life strengthens a case. The table below is a rough guide to be used in conjunction with all other factors.

## Risk of death

**George Cross** over 90%

**George Medal** 50 - 90%

**King's Gallantry Medal** 20 - 50%

**King's Commendation for Bravery** below 20%

**Note:** this is a very rough measure. External organisations providing evidence to support a nomination should not be asked to give an assessment of risk of death.

At the highest level of GC, the hallmark is one of deliberate self-sacrificial heroism, generally over a sustained timescale, and with the imminent prospect of death and which may in a high proportion of cases lead to a posthumous award. (Of the 40 or so GCs awarded to date which are not war-related, about 60% have been posthumous.) This criterion should be considered in conjunction with the information in section 6 concerning posthumous awards.

Risk must be real as well as assumed: if a nominee thought that there might be danger but in reality there was none, the Committee will give less weight to the assessment of risk in the case.



## **(c) Choice**

It is important that the individual either:

- knew of the danger before taking action and had the opportunity to make a choice before proceeding; or
- once becoming aware of the danger, made a deliberate decision to continue to act positively in the face of that danger.

If the individual was caught up in a chain of events and took no positive action (for example, was a victim of circumstance), an award must be doubtful.

## **(d) Planning**

If the act of gallantry occurred during or as a result of a planned operation or an event for which the individual had been trained and/or was equipped to tackle, the degree of risk is reduced. Action in an unknown situation (for example, when a routine incident escalates into one involving firearms) weighs more heavily than acting in a similar incident when firearms are expected and officers are trained and prepared to deal with it. This aspect may have a bearing on the assessment of the action of civilians not belonging to the emergency services when faced with situations calling for a courageous response and for which they are not prepared.

## **(e) Persistence**

Individuals must have persisted in going forward in the face of danger. The exception to this rule is when their action may have been reckless or aggravated the situation, leading to increased risk to the lives of those involved. In some cases, awards may reflect courageous action in repeated incidents over an extended but coherent timescale.

## **(f) Protecting others**

Gallantry awards are available to those who attempt to save life but not to those who seek only to protect property. In some cases (for example, searching premises in the face of an immediate threat of fire or explosion to establish if people

are inside, even if it transpires that the property is empty), it may be appropriate to consider a gallantry award, provided the action was an attempt to save life. Self-preservation does not lead to an award, but due weight should be given to deliberate self sacrifice knowingly taken in order to save others.

## **(g) Physical conditions**

The physical surroundings - darkness, extreme temperatures or confusion arising from the scale of the event - may also influence the evaluation of the degree of risk. Photographs or maps are often helpful in clarifying these factors. A similar influence may be the extent to which one individual was the sole focus of attention (say of a gunman) or was part of a larger, widely spread group all dealing with the danger.



TRAFALGAR SQUARE, LONDON

## Section 4 - The George Cross Committee and Approval Process

### The George Cross Committee

National gallantry awards are considered by the George Cross Committee (GCC). The members are:

- Head of the Civil Service;
- Principal Private Secretary to HM The King;
- Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister;
- Permanent Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Defence;
- There are also two independent members.

The Honours and Appointments Secretariat provides secretariat support to the GCC, which meets at least twice a year.

### Assessment of nominations

The Secretariat considers the information supplied by departments and adds its assessment of the case, paying particular attention to precedents. If information is missing or inadequate to assess the case properly, the Secretariat will ask the department for clarification or to seek more evidence.

- The Committee will always want to see independent evidence, preferably from an official source like the emergency services.
- The GCC sees all the evidence submitted by a department and it is considered very thoroughly.
- Evidence must be submitted in a format suitable to circulate to the Committee and to a high standard of presentation.
- The GCC may ask additional questions about a case or how it compares to other similar incidents. You may wish to refer to previous similar incidents for comparison.

As appropriate, the Secretariat may also carry out probity checks on nominees.

*As outlined in section 2, the sponsoring department is asked to make an assessment of the right level of award and explain why. The Honours and Appointments Secretariat will review that assessment and may recommend a different level of recognition. The George Cross Committee may recommend any level of award, or no award at all, based on the available evidence.*

### The approvals process

If the GCC approves an award, a formal submission is made by the Chair of the GCC, through the Prime Minister, to The Sovereign for approval. Again, a summary of the case is sent to both the Prime Minister and The Sovereign so the department must ensure that the information submitted is complete and accurate to the best of its investigations.

### Contacting recipients

Departments are informed of the outcome, including when no award has been recommended. A reason is given if the recommendation is unsuccessful or the level of award has been changed from that proposed by the department. Departments are responsible for notifying nominators of the outcome of the submission, where appropriate. Where the emergency services are the nominators, this opportunity may be used

to explain any changes to the original level of award proposed, thereby providing information and guidance for future cases.

The Secretariat writes to recommended nominees at all levels. Although traditionally nominees for gallantry awards were not “sounded” to ask if they wish to accept the award, it is now usual practice to confirm that they wish to accept. Approaches are made in confidence and a nominee may refuse without anyone else becoming aware of the offer.

The letter gives the date for the publication of the list, which will be about a month in the future.

The letter will also include a copy of the information that will be published when the award is announced (as outlined in section 5) so that the nominee has the opportunity to comment on or amend errors. They can also opt to participate in publicity.

When the intended recipient is dead, their next-of-kin, their representative or their family liaison officer should be approached. Such letters should be written with due sensitivity for the impact of the bereavement and with the understanding that the (further) publicity brought by national recognition may not be welcome.

## Section 5 - Publication and Investitures

### Publication

Gallantry lists are published in the London Gazette and on gov.uk. Unlike honours lists, they are published as and when ready rather than on a regular timetable. Civilian gallantry awards to the Armed Forces are published in Military Operational Lists. Publication is coordinated by the Honours and Appointments Secretariat which leads for all lists except those to military personnel, which are handled by the MOD.

### Citations

Unlike for other honours where a “short citation” of only a couple of sentences is published, for gallantry awards a full paragraph citation is published. The Honours and Appointments Secretariat drafts a citation from the full nomination. This will give a broad description of the incident and of the recipient’s actions. A copy of this is given to the sponsoring department and to the recipient for comments. The citation is published in full in the London Gazette and on gov.uk, with the recipient’s name and the level of the award. Where the actions leading to the award are sensitive, alternative arrangements may be made after discussion with the Secretariat.

### Publicity

Lists are published in the London Gazette and on gov.uk. The Cabinet Office undertakes a

small amount of central publicity and will work with departments and external organisations as appropriate. Each department must decide whether and how best to publicise awards to their own networks, working with their press office and referring the Secretariat as necessary.

Sensitive cases, particularly posthumous awards, need careful handling. The Secretariat can offer advice if required. If press notices are issued, they should be consistent with the details of the incident published in the London Gazette and are subject to the usual embargo rules: as with honours lists, an embargo will be set by the Cabinet Office which must not be pre-empted. Any press notice should refer to the information on gov.uk for an explanation of how and why gallantry awards are made. The Honours and Appointments Secretariat would appreciate a copy of any press notice and/or local press cuttings for its records.

### Presentation

Recipients of the George Cross, the George Medal and the King’s Gallantry Medal receive their awards at an investiture. Arrangements for attendance at the investiture are handled by the Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood at St. James’s Palace, London SW1A 2BH (tel: 020 7210 5764) and all enquiries should be addressed



to them. The Secretariat notifies the Central Chancery of the awards and recipients' personal details.

The Central Chancery will usually agree that an incident involving several people receiving different levels of awards for actions in the same incident can attend an investiture together. An example might be an air sea rescue where the person winched down to a stricken ship might be awarded The King's Gallantry Medal but the air crew might be awarded The King's Commendation for Bravery in the Air. In such cases, the Honours and Appointments Secretariat will discuss this with the Central Chancery in advance.



Recipients of The King's Commendation for Bravery/Bravery in the Air receive their medals from a senior official, for example a Chief Constable, Chief Fire Officer or Lord-Lieutenant. It is the sponsoring department's responsibility to make arrangements for the presentation. These presentations fall to departments to co-ordinate, and if necessary, fund.

## Section 6 - Other Policy Considerations

### Injuries and death

As outlined in section 3, the degree of risk encountered by the nominee is an important criterion in assessing a gallantry nomination. However, a high degree of injury or the death of the nominee during/as a result of the incident does not necessarily lead to an award (or a particular level of award). Much will depend on the extent to which the risk of injury could be clearly predicted. On the other hand, an injury may demonstrate a higher degree of risk, unless the injury or death was accidental and would not normally have been expected (for example, the person had a heart attack). Injuries suffered by the individual before the act of courage (for example, a gunshot wound or severe burns) could enhance the degree of risk if the nominee put the needs of others before seeking treatment.

There is a misconception that if a person dies during an incident then that person must have therefore acted bravely. Death does not automatically mean that the person acted courageously in saving or attempting to save someone's life in the incident. The death may have been, sadly, a very tragic accident. Even when the individual is determined to have acted bravely,

that does not mean necessarily that a high award, like the George Cross, is justified. In consideration of the other criteria affecting the assessment, it may be appropriate to consider a lower award.

### Awards to foreign citizens

The George Cross is restricted to UK nationals but all other gallantry awards may be made to citizens of countries other than the UK if they saved, or attempted to save, the life of a UK citizen either in the UK or elsewhere. The procedure for considering the merits of the case is exactly the same as that for UK cases. If an award is approved, it will then be necessary to obtain consent for the award from the government of the person's country. The Honours and Appointments Secretariat will liaise with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (and the nominating department, when not the FCO) about such cases after an award has been approved by The Sovereign. Most civilian incidents that take place overseas are dealt with by the FCO.

### Awards for saving the lives of foreign citizens overseas

Careful consideration must be given when a department wishes to nominate someone who

has saved the life of a foreign citizen. Generally speaking, UK nationals who save, or attempt to save, the lives of foreign citizens in the UK should be handled as per any other nomination: the nationality of the person saved/assisted is not relevant to assessing the act of bravery.

UK nationals who save, or attempt to save, the lives of foreign citizens abroad should be usually recognised by the relevant foreign government (with The Sovereign's permission). It is for the authorities of the country of the person saved (or in which the event occurred) to consider the case under the rules of that country. The UK will not usually make its own award to avoid the possibility of "double medalling", i.e. recognising the same person twice for the same action. However, there are circumstances in which recognition by the UK will be appropriate. Such circumstances include when the nominee has also saved British lives; is acting on behalf of the UK (for example, in a humanitarian or other official context); or has saved people whose own government is not in a position to or would not wish to acknowledge the act. Further advice on specific cases can be sought from the Honours and Appointments Secretariat or the FCO.

## Freedom of Information

Departments may receive Freedom of Information (FOI) requests about gallantry nominations and awards, for example if a high profile nomination is delayed or unsuccessful.

Generally, honours information is covered by:

- **section 37:** conferring of honours and dignities, which is subject to a public interest test;
- **section 40:** personal information, which is an absolute exemption;
- **section 41:** information provided in confidence, which is subject to a public interest test.

Information on the general principles of gallantry which are in the public domain can be given, as well as about the general approach to assessing

cases. However, as a general rule, the Cabinet Office believes that the public interest test under section 37 is not supported by releasing details of individual cases. The Information Commissioner has consistently agreed with that approach. Advice on gallantry FOI replies should always be sought from the Secretariat, which may be able to suggest an approach or appropriate lines for use in the reply. Departments should never release information about a specific case without first consulting the Secretariat and the FOI Clearing House.

## Records

To maintain a consistent approach to gallantry awards, it is helpful for departments to maintain comprehensive records of nominations considered and awards made (or rejected).

## Forfeiture

As with other honours, gallantry awards can be forfeited if the recipient brings the honours system into disrepute. The Honours Forfeiture Committee will consider cases put forward by departments. Should a potential case occur, departments are asked to contact the Secretariat for advice on next steps.

## Appeals

An honour is a gift from The Sovereign as an exercise of the Royal prerogative. There is no right or entitlement of an individual to recognition. All nominees are recommended following an assessment process and any relevant probity checks. Consequently, there is no right of appeal against the decision of the GCC not to recommend someone for a gallantry award. However, the award of gallantry medals is subject to usual considerations of fairness and consistency of approach. It is important that the processes are demonstrably followed by departments and the Secretariat to ensure that the GCC's decision-making is robust and based on clear evidence.

# Annex 1: A Brief History of Civilian Gallantry

There is a long history in the UK of gallantry awards for brave acts undertaken through military service. Civilian gallantry awards were not considered necessary until the Second World War when the civilian population in the UK was subject to bombing. Accordingly, in September 1940, King George VI authorised the institution of the George Cross (GC) and the George Medal (GM) for acts of heroism and great gallantry other than in the face of the enemy. They became the first and second levels of civilian bravery awards.

Both the GC and the GM were intended to recognise acts by civilians but members of the Armed Forces operating in civilian circumstances (e.g. as bomb disposal officers or dealing with air accidents or bomb damage to military installations) were also eligible. In fact, in the first few years after its institution, the majority of GCs were awarded to the Armed Forces. A major difference at that time between the GC and GM was that the GC could be awarded posthumously, whereas the GM could not. This was changed in 1977 and today both can be awarded posthumously.

In June 1974, Queen Elizabeth II instituted The Queen's Gallantry Medal (QGM) for exemplary acts of bravery. This medal could be awarded posthumously and replaced the British Empire Medal (BEM) for gallantry as the third level of bravery award available to civilians. (The BEM is now used exclusively as a civilian honour)

The fourth, lowest, level of award is The Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCB)\* and The Queen's Commendation for Bravery in the Air (QCBA)\*, as they are now known, which have been available since about the time of the Second World War

The Victoria Cross is the first level military award and the standard set for the GC should reflect a similar degree of heroism. The Conspicuous Gallantry Cross is the military equivalent to the GM, and the Military Cross to the QGM\*. The Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCB)\* and The Queen's Commendation for Bravery in the Air (QCBA)\* are the civilian equivalents of the military Mention-in-Despatches.

Prior to the institution of the current gallantry awards, there were a range of awards designed to recognise bravery in specific situations. The most well known were the Albert Medal (for actions at sea and later on land) and the Edward Medal (for actions in mines and later in industry more generally). Awards of both these medals ceased with the introduction of the GC and GM, and holders were permitted to translate their awards into GCs and GMs.

There are Royal Warrants for the GC, GM and QGM\* but not for the QCB/QCBA\*. There is no limit to the number of awards available.

\*now King's or K.





# The Police National Honours Handbook

A Complete Guide to making  
a Nomination for Awards

Supported by



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