



THE ASSOCIATION OF ANAESTHETISTS
of Great Britain & Ireland

PRESS RELEASE

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Front-line doctors receive awards for their distinguished service in Iraq

More than a hundred military personnel have been honoured for their contribution to the medical care of the armed forces in Iraq by the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland (AAGBI).

General Sir Richard Dannatt, former head of the British Army, presented the Pask Certificates of Honour to regular and reserve members of the Defence Medical Services today (22 January). The ceremony took place at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London, where the AAGBI is holding its WSM London winter conference.

Named after Professor E A Pask, a distinguished anaesthetist and experimental physiologist in the Royal Air Force Medical Branch during World War Two, the awards were established in 1977 to honour the gallantry of a registrar anaesthetist in the Moorgate Underground Disaster.

They are given to individuals who have rendered distinguished service, either with gallantry in the performance of their clinical duties, in a single meritorious act or consistently and faithfully over a long period.

In his citation to the 113 men and women who have been honoured, Group Captain Neil McGuire, Defence Consultant Adviser in Anaesthesia and a co-opted member of the AAGBI Council, paid tribute to the anaesthetists, who all served in Iraq during Operation Telic, from March 2003 until June 2009.

“Consultants and trainees alike were mobilised to provide medical support to operations from the initial action until the conclusion of the mission” he said.

“During that time Medical Officers from the Royal Navy, the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Royal Air Force performed their duties with great skill and professionalism.

“Many personnel undertook their roles under fire and with great threat to their personal safety on a regular basis. On some days more time was spent lying on the

floor sheltering from mortar and rocket attacks than was spent standing up, but despite this the task of treating the injured continued virtually uninterrupted.”

Two of the award recipients also shared their first-hand experiences of providing medical care on the front line with delegates during a special session on Iraq.

Col Peter Mahoney OBE, Defence Professor of Anaesthesia at the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine in Birmingham, focused on military trauma resuscitation.

“Trauma managed in the conflict setting is very different to standard civilian practice” he explained. “In the current conflicts, blast and ballistic injury mechanisms predominate which have demanded new approaches to casualty care.”

He stressed the importance of multi-disciplinary care teams and close liaison between experts on the front line and those providing care to casualties when they return to the UK.

Fellow award recipient Lt Col Tom Woolley RAMC, who joined the British Army in 1999, explored the problems of haemorrhage, one of the leading causes of death in modern-day conflicts.

He pointed out that although this is largely uncontrolled catastrophic haemorrhage, a large number of patients have clotting problems – known as ACOTS - which is thought to be due to trauma shock.

“Aggressive treatment of ACOTS can potentially improve morbidity and mortality and has a significant role to play in damage control resuscitation” he said.

AAGBI President Dr Richard Birks paid tribute to the courage and skill of Col Mahoney, Lt Col Woolley and the other award recipients.

“These brave men and women work behind the scenes, selflessly and tirelessly, providing high-quality healthcare in incredibly difficult circumstances” he says.

“They deserve our thanks, our admiration and the greatest respect for the work they do. That is why the AAGBI is so proud to honour its front-line colleagues today for their extraordinary dedication and courage.”

The recipients of the 2009 Pask Certificate of Honour are:

Lt Col Dominic Aldington, Maj Clare Ackroyd (Deceased), Flt Lt Claire Bairsto, Wg Cdr Jonathan Ball, Lt Col Clem Barraclough (Retired), Surg Cdr Richard Bateman, Wg Cdr Robin Berry, Surg Cdr Banu Bhanumurthy, Wg Cdr Kristina Birch, Surg Cdr David Birt, Gp Capt David Blake, Wg Cdr Jim Bradley, Surg Cdr Steve Bree, Surg Capt Andy Burgess, Col Richard Cantelo, Maj Mary Cardwell, Capt John Chambers, Surg Cdr Dan Connor, Wg Cdr Phil Dalrymple, Maj Mark Davies, Sqn Ldr Matt Davies, Surg Cdr Barrie Dekker, Surg Lt Cdr Allister Dow, Maj Derek Dye (Retired), Sqn Ldr Deborah Easby, Surg Cdr Charlie Edwards, Lt Col Glynn Evans, Lt Col Jeremy Field, Sqn Ldr Maxine Fletcher, Lt Col Scott Frazer, Brig Jonathan Freeman, Capt Greg Furness, Lt Col Brian Gallagher, Surg Cdr George Gardiner, Sqn Ldr Phil

Gillen, Lt Col Andy Griffiths, Lt Col Sanjay Gupta, Surg Cdr Richard Haddon, Maj Jim Hammond, Lt Col Hamish Hay, Maj Clare Hayes-Bradley, Lt Col Jeremy Henning, Surg Capt David Hett, Lt Col Ian Hicks, Wg Cdr Graham Hocking (Retired), Wg Cdr Simon Hughes, Wg Cdr Paul Hughes (Retired), Surg Lt Cdr Sam Hutchings, Lt Col Mike Ingram, Lt Col Soundararajan Jagdish, Lt Col Nick Jefferies, Surg Capt Charley Johnston (Retired), Col Hilary Johnstone, Lt Col David Kelly, Lt Col Stephen Laurence, Lt Col Iain Levack, Lt Col Jason Lewis, Lt Col Little, Lt Col Cath Livingstone, Lt Col Tim Lowes, Surg Capt David Lunn, Lt Col Ken MacIntosh, Lt Cdr Jenny MacLachlan, Col Peter Mahoney, Maj Malcolm Mathew, Surg Cdr Gary Matthews (Retired), Surg Lt Cdr Shane McCabe, Wg Cdr Gavin McCallum, Gp Capt Neil McGuire, Lt Col James McNicholas, Lt Col Ian Mellor, Surg Cdr Adrian Mellor, Surg Lt Cdr Simon Mercer, Maj Linzi Millar, Maj Paul Morrison, Maj Tim Nicholson-Roberts, Lt Col Julian Olver, Lt Col George Oommen, Lt Col Sam Pambakian (Retired), Col Chandi Pani, Lt Col Duncan Parkhouse, Maj Kevin Patrick, Surg Cdr Mark Patten, Wg Cdr Mike Peterson, Surg Lt Cdr Kate Prior, Lt Col James Ralph, Lt Col Peter Randall, Surg Lt Cdr Jon Read, Surg Cdr Jane Risdall, Lt Col Matthew Roberts, Wg Cdr Martin J Ruth, Maj Mark Sheridan, Wg Cdr Pete Shirley, Surg Cdr Ben Siggers, Gp Capt Denis Smyth, Wg Cdr Gareth Sowden (Retired), Col John Stone, Wg Cdr Steve Swindells (Retired), Surg Cdr Brando Tamayo, Surg Cdr Susie Tanser (Retired), Surg Cdr Mike Tennant, Lt Col Rhys Thomas, Maj Rob Thornhill, Sqn Ldr Bob Tipping, Lt Col Jeff Tong, Surg Lt Cdr Walker, Lt Col Phil Ward, Surg Cdr Jon Wedgwood, Flt Lt Jo Wheble, Wg Cdr Curtis Whittle, Surg Lt Cdr Douglas Wilkinson, Surg Cdr Stephen Wilson, Lt Col Tom Woolley.

Maj Clare Ackroyd, who received a posthumous award, died while in service, but this was not related to her duties in Iraq.

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Further information
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Notes to editors

- **The Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland** is the leading representative body for anaesthetists in the UK and overseas and is one of the UK's largest single grant providers for anaesthetic research. It currently has over 10,000 members. www.aagbi.org
- **Anaesthetists** are specialist doctors involved in the care of two-thirds of all hospital patients. Their expertise extends beyond the main operating theatre to acute and chronic pain management, leading resuscitation teams, managing Intensive Care Units, working in maternity units, accident and emergency departments and radiology, the care of some dental patients and the transfer of critically ill patients.