

CHANCERY HANDBOOK

TOPIC L – RECOGNITION: AWARDS FOR BRAVERY

I have gathered together in this document everything you need to know about the Order's Bravery Awards. The source documents are the Statutes, the Regulations and Grand Council Instruction No 16 and the relevant extracts are reproduced below in Times New Roman font in text boxes.

STATUTES

Recognising attempts to save human life at personal risk is one of primary objectives of the Order (Statute 4(d)):

4. **Objects and Purposes of The Order**

The Order is an ancient Christian brotherhood and its objects and purposes shall be:

...

(d) The award of medals, badges or certificates of honour for special services in the cause of humanity, especially for saving life at imminent personal risk;

The process is managed by the Order Honours and Awards Committee or OHAC (Statute 16):

16. **The Honours and Awards Committee**

...

(2) The Honours and Awards Committee shall advise the Grand Council on all matters relating to ... the eligibility for the award of The Life-Saving Medal ...

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of Statute 16(2) the Honours and Awards Committee shall:

...

(d) keep under review and where it thinks fit make recommendations to the Grand Council in respect of the criteria for the award of the Life-Saving Medal; ...

At present, the award of the Life-Saving Medal **has not** been delegated to Pories (Statute 17(b)):

17. **Delegations to Pories in respect of Honours and Awards**

The Grand Council shall have the power to delegate to Pories in all cases subject to such conditions as it may from time to time prescribe:

...

(b) the award of The Life-Saving Medal;

The detailed procedures are to be covered in the Regulations (Statute 52(1)). The award of medals is made by the Grand Prior on the recommendation of the Grand Council (Statute 52(2)), which is itself advised by OHAC (as per Statute 16(2) above). The medal may be forfeited (Statute 52(3)) [see Discussion Point 4 below]:

52. **Medals**

- (1) The Order may award Medals, Certificates of Honour ... in accordance with such provision as may from time to time be made by Regulations.
- (2) The award of medals shall be made, in the name of the Sovereign Head, by the Grand Prior on the recommendation of the Grand Council and where appropriate of a Priory Chapter, save that in the case of the Life Saving Medal an immediate award may, where the circumstances so justify, be made by the Grand Prior on the advice of the Lord Prior.
- (3) If any person to whom a medal has been awarded shall be deemed by his or her subsequent conduct to have become unworthy of it, his or her name may be erased by the Grand Prior on the recommendation of the Grand Council and where appropriate of a Priory Chapter from the Register of those upon whom the medal of the Order has been conferred, and he or she shall thereupon cease to be entitled to wear it.

Note that at present there is no Register of recipients of the Life-Saving Medal (also Statute 52(3)) [see Discussion Point 3 below].

REGULATIONS

The relevant Regulations as per Statute 52(1) are Regulations 30 and 36; the latter refers forward to Appendix III to the Regulations:

30 **Recommendations for the award of the Life Saving Medal, Certificates of Honour ...**
The Secretary-General shall report to the Grand Prior the recommendations of the Honours and Awards Committee and of Pories in relation to awards of Life Saving Medals, Certificates of Honour ... and on receiving his approval shall arrange for the awards to be made.

36 **Medals, Certificates of Honour ...**
Appendices III ... shall have effect for the purposes of Statute 52 under which provision may be made concerning the award of Medals, Certificates of Honour ...

**APPENDIX III
(Regulation 36)
AWARDS FOR BRAVERY
PART ONE - INTRODUCTION**

1 **Awards**
The Order may award for the purpose of recognising bravery:
a. the Life Saving Medal; or
b. the Certificate of Honour.

In Part Two of Appendix III to the Regulations, the basic conditions for the award of the Life-Saving Medal are detailed (Paragraph 3) and the categories are specified (Paragraph 4). The following key features are also described:

- Recipients (Paragraph 5)
- Bars (Paragraph 6) – but there is scope for confusion here [see Discussion Point 1 below]

- Non-duplication of Awards (Paragraph 7) [see Discussion Point 2 below]
- Certificate (Paragraph 8) – not to be confused with a Certificate of Honour
- Engraving of name of recipient and year of act (Paragraph 13)
- Awards made by Grand Prior on the recommendation of the Grand Council (Paragraph 15)
- Posthumous awards may be made (Paragraph 16)
- The medal and its ribbon are worn on the right breast (Paragraph 17) [Comment A below]

**APPENDIX III
(Regulation 36)
AWARDS FOR BRAVERY
PART TWO – THE LIFE SAVING MEDAL**

3 The Life Saving Medal

The Life Saving Medal may be bestowed on a person who:

- a. has performed a conspicuous act of bravery;
- b. in performing that act has endangered his own life; and
- c. has performed that act in saving or attempting to save the life of one or more other persons.

4 Categories

The Medal is awarded in one of three categories according to the degree of bravery evinced, namely:

- a. gold;
- b. silver; and
- c. bronze.

5 Recipients

The Medal may be awarded to a person irrespective of:

- a. whether or not he is a member of the Order or one of its Foundations;
- b. his nationality or country of residence; or
- c. the place in which the act was performed

and in deciding whether to make an award regard shall be had to the existence in the country in which the person is resident or of which he is a national of any applicable national bravery awards or awards made by other bodies of standing.

6 Bars

A bar to the Medal may be awarded in any of its three categories.

7 Non-duplication of Awards

7(1) The Medal or a Bar is not awarded to a person who for the same act has received a national bravery award or an award from another body of standing.

7(2) Where the Order is minded to award the Medal or a Bar to a person and an intimation is made to that person that a State or other body of standing is minded to make to him a national or other bravery award for the same act then that person shall elect which he wishes to receive.

[contd over]

8	<p>Certificate of Award of Medal or Bar</p> <p>A person who is awarded the Medal or a Bar shall also receive a Certificate of the award. The Certificate shall be signed by a Great Officer and by the Secretary-General and shall be issued under the seal of the Order.</p> <p>...</p>
13	<p>Naming</p> <p>The Medal is engraved on the rim and the Bar is engraved on the reverse with the name of the recipient and the year of the act of bravery for which it was awarded.</p> <p>...</p>
15	<p>Authority for the Award of the Medal and Bars</p> <p>The Medal and Bars are awarded by the Grand Prior on the recommendation of the Grand Council.</p>
16	<p>Posthumous Awards</p> <p>The Medal and Bars may be awarded posthumously.</p>
17	<p>Wearing</p> <p>The ribbon of the Medal whether or not the medal is suspended from the ribbon is worn on the right breast.</p>

In Part Three of Appendix III to the Regulations, the basic conditions for the award of the Certificate of Honour are detailed (Paragraph 19):

<p>APPENDIX III (Regulation 36) AWARDS FOR BRAVERY PART THREE – CERTIFICATES OF HONOUR</p>	
19	<p>The Certificate</p> <p>A Certificate of Honour may be awarded to a person who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. has performed a conspicuous act of bravery; b. has performed that act in saving or attempting to save the life of one or more other persons; and c. has performed that act in circumstances which do not merit the award of the Life Saving Medal.
20	<p>Further provisions</p> <p>The provisions of paragraphs 5 (Recipients) and 16 (Posthumous Awards) apply to Certificates of Honour as they do to the Medal.</p>
21	<p>Signatures and sealing</p> <p>The Certificate of Honour shall be signed by a Great Officer and by the Secretary-General and shall be issued under the seal of the Order.</p>

Tacked on to the end of Part Three, there is permission for Priors to institute their own life-saving bravery awards that complement and, most importantly, do not conflict with the Order's Life-Saving Medal and Certificate of Honour (Paragraph 22):

22 **Priory recognition of acts of bravery**

Priorities may recognise acts of bravery in such manner not being inconsistent with these Regulations as they think fit.

GRAND COUNCIL INSTRUCTION

To amplify the detail in the Regulations, Grand Council Instruction No 16 has recently been issued, replacing Grand Council Instruction No 1. The key factors to be taken into account are elaborated, including risk (Paragraph 9.3.a), persistence (Paragraph 9.3.b) and environment (Paragraph 9.5). There is further information on injury (Paragraphs 9.6 and 9.7), strength (Paragraphs 9.8, also 9.9), gender (Paragraph 9.10, also 9.11) and age (Paragraph 9.12). Finally there is discussion of special cases (Paragraph 10), ineligible acts (Paragraph 11) and time limits (Paragraph 14).

**GRAND COUNCIL INSTRUCTION NUMBER 16
ORDER AWARDS FOR BRAVERY**

9 **Factors taken into Account**

...

9.3 The primary factors to which [OHAC] has regard are:

- a. The degree of risk, and so the likelihood of death, which the Nominee knowingly undertakes; and
- b. The degree of persistence shown by the Nominee in voluntarily continuing with his or her endeavours.

...

9.5 The surrounding circumstances can increase the degree of risk or the degree of bravery. Examples are:

- a. darkness;
- b. fog, mist or other factors affecting visibility;
- c. extreme heat;
- d. extreme cold;
- e. escape of hazardous chemicals or radiation;
- f. the collapse of a building, bridge or cliff edge;
- g. a strong tidal or river current;
- h. stormy conditions at sea;
- i. a mob on the rampage; and
- j. surrounding confusion.

9.6 Where the Nominee is injured in the course of performing the Specified Act:

- a. that fact is not in itself a determinant of the level of the award; but
- b. it may be evidence of the risk undertaken.

9.7 Where the Nominee is injured or disabled ... but ... persists ...

[contd over]

9.8	The physical strength of the Nominee may have particular significance ... [also 9.9]
...	
9.10	The gender of the Nominee is in general irrelevant ... [also 9.11]
...	
9.12	There is no age limit for an award ...
10	Special Cases
10.1	In the following circumstances, it is likely that no award will be made, or an award will be made at a lower level ...
	a. If the Nominee is a close relative of the person in peril ...
	b. If the Nominee has available and uses life-saving or protective equipment ...
	c. If the Nominee is in remunerated employment and rescue activities are reasonably to be regarded as forming part of the duties of that employment.
11	Ineligible Acts
	No award is made:
	a. for acts, however brave, to protect property;
	b. for acts, however brave, to save animal life;
	c. for acts of self-protection or self-preservation; or
	d. for acts where the person was caught up in a tide of events and was not able to exercise any realistic choice.
...	
14	Time Limits
	Nominations will normally be considered only if they are received by the Order within two years of the ... Specified Act. Should there be particular extenuating circumstances, such as protracted National Honours deliberations, that necessitate a longer period, such exceptional cases will be considered on their merits. ...

The information to be included when initiating a nomination is detailed at Paragraphs 12 and 13 and must be followed to avoid delaying the process.

COMMENT

A. In a letter dated 2 June 2011, the PS requested that all recommendations for Life-Saving Awards submitted to the Grand Prior's for approval include a citation.

B. Right breast wear is discussed in Spink's *Manual for the Wearing of Orders, Decorations and Medals* (2005, page 39). Such medals are worn in order of date of award.

DISCUSSION POINTS FOR CHANCERY STAFF

1. The precise arrangements for the award of bars are unclear. Does the category of the bar match the category of the medal, irrespective of the degree of bravery displayed? To elaborate:

- If a holder of a bronze medal is eligible for a silver award, does he or she add a silver bar? Or replace the bronze medal with a silver one and add a bronze bar? Or replace the bronze

medal with a silver medal and add a silver bar? Or wear two medals, one bronze and one silver?

- If the holder of a silver medal is eligible for a bronze award, does he or she add a bronze bar? Or a silver bar? Or wear two medals, one silver and one bronze?
- The same applies for gold and silver, and gold and bronze, awards.

2. The following organisations currently recognise acts of bravery in territories in which the Order is present and may need to be consulted at an early stage in the nomination process to decide on the most appropriate recognition mechanism and thus avoid duplication of awards:

United Kingdom	Overseas
Royal Humane Society (instituted 1774, Royal Charter 1959)	Royal Humane Society of Australasia (1882, Victorian Humane Society 1874-82)
Glasgow Humane Society (founded 1790)	Royal Humane Society of New South Wales (1877)
Royal National Lifeboat Institution (founded 1824, Royal Charter 1860)	Royal Canadian Humane Association (1894)
Society for the Protection of Life from Fire (established 1836)	Royal Humane Society of New Zealand (1898)
Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society (instituted 1839)	Foundation for Civilian Bravery [Sri Lanka]
Shipwrecked Fishermen & Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society (founded 1839)	
Royal Life Saving Society UK (established 1891, Royal patronage 1904)	
Carnegie Hero Fund Trust UK (established 1908, Royal Charter 1919)	

3. The creation of a register of recipients of the Life-Saving Medal since 1874 (and of what is now called the Certificate of Honour since 1884) is under discussion with the Museum of the Order and the Life Saving Awards Research Society (LSARS).

4. Forfeiture is at odds with Cabinet Office policy.