



Mr P Rush
Assistant Secretary
Awards and Culture Branch
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
1 National Circuit
BARTON ACT 2600

Dear Mr Rush

I am enclosing a nomination which may be of interest to the Australian Bravery Decorations Council. The nomination relates to the actions of the Australian Embassy Close Protection Team during a terrorist attack at the Serena Hotel located in Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 January 2008. The nominees are detailed below:

s 47F

I would appreciate it if you could make inquiries for possible consideration of this matter at a future meeting of the Australian Bravery Decorations Council. Police and other emergency service reports, statements from those involved in the incident and eye witness accounts would be of particular assistance to Council members during their deliberations.

Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Assistant Director
Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat

29 August 2011

Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii) (Bravery Awards Officer)
Telephone: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Facsimile: s 22(1)(a)(ii)



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE

Mr Paul Foley
Ambassador to Afghanistan
Kabul Bag
c/- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Locked Bag 40
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Dear Ambassador

In my role as a Commonwealth *ex officio* member of the Australian Bravery Decorations Council (ABDC), I have been provided with the attached bravery nomination for seven members of the Australian Embassy Close Protection Team for their actions during a terrorist attack at the Serena Hotel in Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 January 2008.

I have been asked to make inquiries about the incident, so that further details can be brought to the attention of the ABDC. Any independent evaluation of the incident and/or the actions of the team members that you can provide would be helpful, e.g. reports of police or other emergency services, or other eye-witnesses. Objective assessments made available to the ABDC help to ensure fair and appropriate consideration of nominations.

If possible, I would appreciate a response by end October 2011. Many thanks for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Peter Rush
Assistant Secretary
Awards and Culture Branch

6 September 2011

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: Paul Foley
Sent: Sunday, 18 September 2011 7:23 PM
To: Rush, Peter
Subject: Bravery Nomination: Serena Hotel Attack 2008 [SEC=IN-CONFIDENCE:HONOURS]

IN-CONFIDENCE:HONOURS

Peter

Thank you for your letter of 6 September concerning the nomination of then-members of the Australian Embassy CPP team for bravery awards associated with the attack on the Serena Hotel in January 2008.

I was not here at the time so cannot comment authoritatively. The incident as set out in the attachment accords with my general understanding of what happened and the SAO in the Embassy at the time Stuart Shaw, has provided a supportive statement.

If you have not done so you may wish to seek comment from the charge d'affaires at the time, Angela Tierney, who I understand is on posting in Buenos Aires currently.

Local authorities will not have a record of the event that would be useful to you, nor would ISAF, as that event is close to ancient history in a military headquarters. As the Embassy moved from the Serena after the attack, we have not kept much in the way of records.

You may wish to enquire of the Diplomatic Security Branch of DFAT if they have any after action reports on file.

with best wishes

Paul Foley
Ambassador
Australian Embassy, Kabul
Mobile: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Personal Assistant s 22(1)(a)(ii)

IN-CONFIDENCE:HONOURS



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE

Mr Stuart Page
Assistant Secretary
Diplomatic Security Branch
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
RG Casey Building
BARTON ACT 0221

Dear Mr Page

In my role as a Commonwealth *ex officio* member of the Australian Bravery Decorations Council (ABDC), I have been provided with the attached bravery nomination for seven members of the Australian Embassy Close Protection Team for their actions during a terrorist attack at the Serena Hotel in Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 January 2008.

I have been asked to make inquiries about the incident, so that further details can be brought to the attention of the ABDC. Any independent evaluation of the incident and/or the actions of the team members that you can provide would be helpful, e.g. reports of police or other emergency services, or other eye-witnesses. Objective assessments made available to the ABDC help to ensure fair and appropriate consideration of nominations.

The Australian Ambassador to Afghanistan, Mr Paul Foley, has advised me that your branch may have an action report on file about the incident. I would, therefore, be grateful for any information you may be able to provide, including if no report is available, by mid November 2011.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Peter Rush
Assistant Secretary
Awards and Culture Branch

20 October 2011

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE



AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
BUENOS AIRES

Mr Peter Rush
Assistant Secretary
Awards and Culture Branch
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE

2 November 2011

Dear Mr Rush,

Thank you for your letter of 20 October 2011 in relation to the bravery nomination for seven members of the Australian Embassy Close protection team for their actions during the terrorist attack on the Serena Hotel in Kabul on 14 January 2008. It is my strong belief that the actions of the security team during the attack directly saved my life and that of several other civilians. I therefore unreservedly welcome and support this nomination.

I can confirm that I was Charge D'Affaires in Afghanistan at the time of the attack and that Stuart Shaw was the only other Australian diplomat in the Embassy at that time. I would offer some observations on the nomination submitted by s 47F in the interests of accuracy (none of which detract from the actions of the security team in any way):

- All references to the 'Ambassador' in s 47F submission should read as 'Charge d'Affaires' (the Australian Ambassador, Mr Brett Hackett, was in Australia at the time of the attack)
- It is now widely accepted that there were two terrorists involved in the attack – one who detonated his suicide vest in the carpark at the entry to the hotel and another who entered the hotel and killed a number of people with an AK47 before removing his suicide vest and being captured - therefore, all references to terrorists #2 and #3 likely refer to the same individual.

I would note that a nomination process for bravery citations for the security team was commenced in DFAT in 2008, and revived in 2009, however stalled due (to the best of my knowledge) to turnover of staff in DFAT - and not because of any adverse decision regarding the nomination which I understand did not proceed beyond the gathering of witness statements. Therefore the witness statement enclosed (previously provided twice to DFAT) was written a short time after the event and I am confident of its accuracy. I have also enclosed a personal account of the attack setting out the sequence of events from my experience which I wrote in the days following the attack.

I am aware that the Government of the United Arab Emirates made a request through the Australian Embassy in Abu Dhabi for permission from the Australian Government (in accordance with accepted protocol) to award bravery awards to members of the security team for saving the lives of two UAE diplomats, one of whom had been shot. I am not sure whether such permission was ever granted or medals awarded. Should you require additional witness statements, you may wish to try contacting the two UAE diplomats assisted by the security team either through the UAE Embassy in Canberra or the Australian Embassy in Abu Dhabi.

Mr John Langtry (john.langtry@dfat.gov.au) was Assistant Secretary of Diplomatic Security Branch, DFAT at the time of the attack and liaised extensively with the Head of Control Risks Group, Australia immediately following the event. He would be best placed to confirm the sequence of events and actions of security team members from DFAT's perspective.

While I have no hesitation in recommending bravery awards for all members of the security team, I would single out the actions of four members in particular. Firstly, s 47F and s 47F who repeatedly put themselves in extreme danger to bring me and others to safety. And secondly, s 47F and s 47F who also faced repeated direct hostile threats when re-entering the hotel to provide security to the Embassy and its personnel.

I believe that recognition of the high degree of courage and professionalism displayed by the security team on 14 January 2008 is not only appropriate and deserved, but long overdue. I have no hesitation whatsoever in supporting the nomination and am at your disposal to provide further information, as required.

Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Angela Tierney
Deputy Head of Mission
Australian Embassy
Buenos Aires

angela.tierney@dfat.gov.au

Work: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Home: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Mobile: s 22(1)(a)(ii)



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE

Ms Angela Tierney
Australian Embassy, Argentina
Buenos Aires Bag
c/- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Locked Bag 40
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Dear Ms Tierney

In my role as a Commonwealth *ex officio* member of the Australian Bravery Decorations Council (ABDC), I have been provided with the attached bravery nomination for seven members of the Australian Embassy Close Protection Team for their actions during a terrorist attack at the Serena Hotel in Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 January 2008.

I have been asked to make inquiries about the incident, so that further details can be brought to the attention of the ABDC. Any independent evaluation of the incident and/or the actions of the team members that you can provide would be helpful, e.g. reports of police or other emergency services, or other eye-witnesses. Objective assessments made available to the ABDC help to ensure fair and appropriate consideration of nominations.

The Australian Ambassador to Afghanistan, Mr Paul Foley, has advised me that you were the Charge D'Affaires in Afghanistan at the time and you may be able to provide some information in relation to the incident. I would, therefore, be grateful for a response, including if you are unable to provide any information, by mid November 2011.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Peter Rush
Assistant Secretary
Awards and Culture Branch

20 October 2011

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE

Mr Paul Foley
Ambassador to Afghanistan
Kabul Bag
c/- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Locked Bag 40
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Dear Ambassador

In my role as a Commonwealth *ex officio* member of the Australian Bravery Decorations Council (ABDC), I have been provided with the attached bravery nomination for seven members of the Australian Embassy Close Protection Team for their actions during a terrorist attack at the Serena Hotel in Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 January 2008.

I have been asked to make inquiries about the incident, so that further details can be brought to the attention of the ABDC. Any independent evaluation of the incident and/or the actions of the team members that you can provide would be helpful, e.g. reports of police or other emergency services, or other eye-witnesses. Objective assessments made available to the ABDC help to ensure fair and appropriate consideration of nominations.

If possible, I would appreciate a response by end October 2011. Many thanks for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Peter Rush
Assistant Secretary
Awards and Culture Branch

6 September 2011

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE

* the attachment can be found at document 8. and is exempt in full under sections 22(1)(a)(ii), 47C, 47E(d) and 47F of the FOI Act.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director
Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat
Government House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Thank you for your letter of 29 August 2011 enclosing a bravery nomination for seven members of the Australian Embassy Close Protection Team for their actions during a terrorist attack at the Serena Hotel in Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 January 2008.

As requested, I have made inquiries about this incident. The Assistant Secretary, Diplomatic Security Branch in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has provided the attached information regarding the terrorist attack.

I trust this information will assist the Australian Bravery Decorations Council in its deliberations.

Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Peter Rush
Assistant Secretary
Awards and Culture Branch

14 November 2011

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE

Mr Stuart Page
Assistant Secretary
Diplomatic Security Branch
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
RG Casey Building
BARTON ACT 0221

Dear Mr Page

Thank you for your letter of 8 November 2011 enclosing information in relation to the bravery nomination for seven members of the Australian Embassy Close Protection Team for their actions during a terrorist attack at the Serena Hotel in Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 January 2008.

I am grateful for the prompt attention you have given to my request and will forward your advice to the Australian Bravery Decorations Council for consideration.

Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Peter Rush
Assistant Secretary
Awards and Culture Branch

14 November 2011

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE

Ms Angela Tierney
Australian Embassy, Argentina
Buenos Aires Bag
c/- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Locked Bag 40
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Dear Ms Tierney

Thank you for your letter of 2 November 2011 enclosing information in relation to the bravery nomination for seven members of the Australian Embassy Close Protection Team for their actions in Kabul on 14 January 2008.

I am grateful for the prompt attention you have given to my request and will forward your detailed advice to the Australian Bravery Decorations Council for consideration.

Yours sincerely,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Peter Rush
Assistant Secretary
Awards and Culture Branch

30 November 2011

HONOURS-IN-CONFIDENCE



Mr P Rush
Assistant Secretary
Honours, Symbols and Territories Branch
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
1 National Circuit
BARTON ACT 2600

Dear Mr Rush

I am enclosing a nomination with supporting information attached, which relates to the actions of seven men during a terrorist attack at the Serena Hotel at Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 January 2008.

The nominees are:

s 47F

The nomination was considered by the Australian Bravery Decorations Council meeting held on 30 April 2012. s 47C

s 47C

Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director
Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat

7 May 2012

Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii) (Bravery Awards Officer)
Telephone: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Facsimile: s 22(1)(a)(ii)