

News story: Life-saving officer honoured for heroic actions

A quick-thinking mariner who jumped into freezing waters to save a stranger's life has been given the top maritime honour for his bravery.

Stephen Chamberlain is one of [19 people who are receiving the Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service](#) for going above and beyond in their service to the maritime industry.

Mr Stephen Chamberlain awarded the Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service for an act of bravery in saving a life.

The Wightlink deck officer risked his own life in February (2018) to help a man struggling in the cold water in Portsmouth Harbour at 11pm. The crew on the St Clare ferry spotted the man in danger and Mr Chamberlain saw he was not able to reach the flotation device. The officer jumped in and kept the man, who was suffering from hypothermia, from drowning.

Another winner is Captain Belinda Bennett – the first black female captain in the commercial cruise industry, whose maiden voyage was a cruise to the Caribbean aboard a 148-passenger Windstar ship.

Maritime Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

Our merchant navy is crucial to keeping the UK thriving – helping deliver goods, energy and food to our homes.

These 19 people are a credit not just to the maritime industry but to the wider nation. They have gone above and beyond their duty for the benefit of others.

Stephen's heroic act and Belinda's trailblazing are just two examples of the outstanding service provided by our mariners.

Captain Belinda Bennett awarded the Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service for services to the promotion of the maritime sector.

This is the third year the Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service will be awarded to those who have set an outstanding example to others.

Among the other winners this year are Captain Timothy Charlesworth who, on top of his service, provides sailing opportunities for people with mental health and addiction problems, Captain Michael Reeves who has 5 decades of merchant navy experience – much of which has been spent promoting seafaring to young people – and Captain Antonio Gatti who has played a crucial role in scientific research on board a Royal Research Ship during his 33 years of service.

The medals will be awarded by Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, at a ceremony in Trinity House on Wednesday, 26 September 2018.

Nominations have been put forward for those working in the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets of the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.

This state award replaces the shipping industry's previous Merchant Navy Medal which was awarded annually from 2005 to 2015 by the Merchant Navy Medal Fund.

Press release: UK Government response to recent loss of life in Yemen

A UK Government spokesperson said:

The Government expresses serious concern at the tragic loss of life in Yemen over the last month. In the first two weeks of August alone, over 400 Yemenis lost their lives, including young children, and many more continue to face egregious violations of their basic human rights.

We are also deeply concerned by the tragic incidents of 2 August, 9 August, and 23 August in which so many Yemenis were killed. We offer our sincerest condolences to the families of the victims.

We welcome the speed of the investigation into the incident of 9 August, and the Coalition's announcement of regret and action to address the recommendations of that investigation. We are reviewing the investigation's conclusions.

We welcome the Coalition's announcement of an investigation into the incident of 23 August and encourage the publication of the outcomes of this investigation as soon as possible. We also call for clarification of the circumstances around the incident of 2 August.

The Government condemns the attacks against Red Sea shipping, and

regular missile attacks against Saudi Arabia which have been launched by the Houthis with Iranian support. These attacks have targeted residential areas and shown no regard for civilian life. Coalition countries have a legitimate right to defend their own territory.

The UK urges all parties to the conflict to do everything possible to protect innocent civilians and to demonstrate their commitment to International Humanitarian Law.

This conflict began following a seizure of power in some parts of Yemen by the Houthis, forcing out the legitimate government from these areas. The urgency now is for everyone to enable and support the UN-sponsored political process beginning with talks in Geneva on 6 September.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

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Further information

Published 2 September 2018

[Press release: UK Minister Mark Field attends Pacific Islands Forum to lead global effort on climate change](#)

Mark Field, Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will travel to Nauru for the three-day (3-6 September) Pacific Islands Forum where climate change is top of the agenda.

The UK is leading global solidarity on action to tackle climate change, and Mark Field's visit is the second successive year a UK Minister has attended the Pacific Islands Forum, where climate change is threatening the very existence of several island nations.

The Pacific Islands Forum comprises 14 countries, of which 11 are Commonwealth members. The UK will be stepping up its engagement in the region with three additional diplomatic missions in Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu. This will enable greater joint working on climate change issues, as well as further regional work to promote the rules-based international system.

Minister Field said:

Britain has proudly led the way on tackling climate change around the world and, as a developed country, we have a moral imperative to help those around the globe who stand to lose most from the consequences of man-made climate change.

The message I am taking to this important Pacific Islands Forum is that unless we work together, with our Commonwealth friends and those who share our values in the region, we risk the very real

tragedy of some of these islands literally disappearing off the map.

The UK is among the largest contributors of international climate finance and in the four years to 2020 will be giving developing countries over £5.5 billion to help them mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. This will build on commitments made at the Commonwealth Head of Governments Meeting in London earlier this year, including the Blue Charter and the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance.

Further information

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