

VALOUR

On 24 April 2007, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada, announced nine Military Valour Decorations to members of the Canadian Forces who have displayed gallantry and devotion to duty in combat. Concurrently, seven Mentions in Dispatches (MiDs) were announced for individuals whose specific achievements have brought honour to the Canadian Forces and to Canada. Of note, all seven MiDs have been awarded for courageous actions taken while under fire in combat conditions.

The recipients will be invited to receive their decoration or insignia at presentation ceremonies conducted at a later date. Readers should note that the ranks used in this column reflect the substantive ranks held by the recipients at the time of the respective combat incidents.

Canada's three military valour decorations, the Victoria Cross, the Star of Military Valour, and the Medal of Military Valour, were created by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, on 1 January 1993. The decorations may be awarded posthumously.

The **Victoria Cross** is awarded for the most conspicuous bravery, a daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice, or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy.

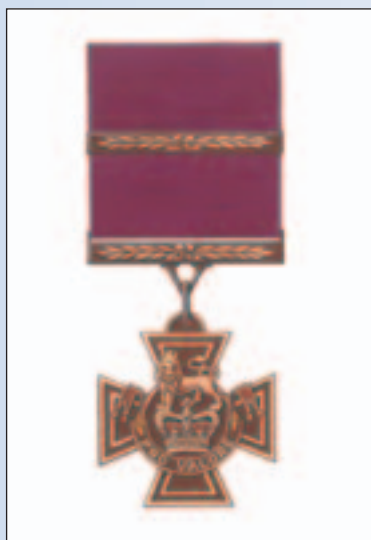
The **Star of Military Valour** is awarded for distinguished or valiant service in the presence of the enemy.

The **Medal of Military Valour** is awarded for an act of valour or devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy.

The **Mention in Dispatches** was created to recognize members of the Canadian Forces on active service and other individuals working with or in conjunction with the Canadian Forces for valiant conduct, devotion to duty, or other distinguished service. Recipients are entitled to wear a bronze oak leaf on the appropriate campaign or service medal ribbon.

The 16 most recently honoured soldiers are:

- Corporal Sean Teal – *The Star of Military Valour*,
- Private Jess Randall Larochelle – *The Star of Military Valour*,
- Corporal Chad Gerald Chevrefils – *The Medal of Military Valour*,
- Corporal Jason Funnell – *The Medal of Military Valour*,
- Master Corporal Sean Hubert Niefer – *The Medal of Military Valour*,
- Private Michael Patrick O'Rourke – *The Medal of Military Valour*,
- Corporal Clinton John Orr – *The Medal of Military Valour*,
- Captain Michael John Reekie – *The Medal of Military Valour*,



Victoria Cross



Star of Military Valour



Medal of Military Valour

VALOUR

- Corporal Joseph Jason Lee Ruffolo – *The Medal of Military Valour*,
- Sergeant Brian Vincent Adams – *The Mention in Dispatches*,
- Corporal William Jonathan Elliott – *The Mention in Dispatches*,
- Corporal Nigel Jason Gregg – *The Mention in Dispatches*,
- Master Corporal Richard James Alan Harris – *The Mention in Dispatches*,
- Sergeant Dan James Holley – *The Mention in Dispatches*,
- Master Corporal Dwayne Robert Alvin Orvis – *The Mention in Dispatches*,
- Private Timmy Dean Wilkins – *The Mention in Dispatches*.

Citations for Military Valour Decorations

Corporal Sean Teal, SMV

Petawawa, Ontario; and Dartmouth and Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia
Star of Military Valour

On September 3, 2006, during *Operation Medusa*, the light utility vehicle driven by Corporal Teal, a member of 7 Platoon Charles Company, was hit and destroyed by enemy rocket-propelled grenade fire. Despite being wounded, Corporal Teal assessed the situation and, under heavy enemy fire, moved to report the situation and bring assistance. He then returned twice to the vehicle to provide treatment to his severely wounded comrades, including the platoon medic, and to evacuate all personnel injured or killed. His brave and professional actions saved lives and allowed the orderly withdrawal of his platoon under heavy fire.

Private Jess Randall Larochelle, SMV

Petawawa, Ontario
Star of Military Valour

On October 14, 2006, Private Larochelle of the 1st Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group was manning an observation post when it was destroyed by an enemy rocket in Pashmul, Afghanistan. Although he was alone, severely injured, and under sustained enemy fire in his exposed position at the ruined observation post, he aggressively provided covering fire over the otherwise undefended flank of his company's position. While two personnel were killed and three others were wounded in the initial attack, Private Larochelle's heroic actions permitted the remainder of the company to defend their battle positions and to successfully fend off the sustained attack of more than 20 insurgents. His valiant conduct saved the lives of many members of his company.

Corporal Chad Gerald Chevrefils, MMV

Shilo and Pine Falls, Manitoba
Medal of Military Valour

On August 19, 2006, Corporal Chevrefils, a member of Alpha Company, 1st Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group, was the driver of a light armoured vehicle during an engagement with numerically superior Taliban forces in Masum Ghar. During the three-hour firefight, he successfully manoeuvred the vehicle through difficult terrain with consummate skill, enabling it to remain unscathed by enemy fire. He subsequently dismounted his vehicle under enemy fire to assist in the recovery of another light armoured vehicle. Corporal Chevrefils' courageous and skilful actions helped to prevent the Taliban forces from outflanking the remainder of the company and undoubtedly saved numerous lives.

Corporal Jason Funnell, MMV

Petawawa and Kingston, Ontario
Medal of Military Valour

On September 3, 2006, during *Operation Medusa* in Afghanistan, Corporal Funnell of 7 Platoon Charles Company braved intense enemy fire to come to the assistance of his comrades trapped in a disabled vehicle in an enemy kill zone. Ignoring his personal safety by twice crossing ground covered by effective enemy fire, Corporal Funnell successfully assisted in the treatment and evacuation of his injured and killed comrades while returning effective fire. His brave and professional actions saved lives and allowed the orderly withdrawal of his platoon under heavy fire.

VALOUR

Master Corporal Sean Hubert Niefer, MMV
Petawawa and Prince Edwards-Hastings, Ontario
Medal of Military Valour

Master Corporal Niefer was a member of Charles Company, 1st Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group, in Rotation 2 of *Operation Archer* in Afghanistan. On September 3, 2006, while engaged in combat operations in support of *Operation Medusa*, he selflessly ordered his vehicle into the enemy kill zone to support extraction of wounded comrades trapped by an enemy ambush. He subsequently provided covering fire from a highly exposed position to facilitate their evacuation and, by doing so, saved the lives of numerous fellow soldiers. His outstanding leadership, courage and valiant action brought great credit to Canada and the Canadian Forces.

Private Michael Patrick O'Rourke, MMV
Petawawa and Renfrew, Ontario
Medal of Military Valour

On September 3, 2006, Private O'Rourke, a member of 7 Platoon Charles Company participating in *Operation Medusa*, selflessly ignored his personal safety by braving intense enemy fire to assist in the treatment and evacuation of his comrades trapped in a disabled vehicle. Twice crossing through sustained enemy fire, Private O'Rourke returned effective fire and successfully assisted in the evacuation of the injured or killed personnel. His brave and professional actions saved lives and allowed the orderly withdrawal of his platoon under heavy fire.

Corporal Clinton John Orr, MMV
Belleville, Ontario; and Chilliwack, British Columbia
Medal of Military Valour

Corporal Orr was a member of 23 Field Squadron, 1st Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group, in Rotation 2 of *Operation Archer* in Afghanistan. On September 3, 2006, he was operating an armoured vehicle attached to 2 Troop during an assault in Pashmul. Amidst intense combat action and under direct enemy fire, he placed himself at great risk by manoeuvring to recover one light armoured vehicle, and only ceased his relentless attempts to extract a second one when informed that the vehicle's crew had withdrawn to safety. His focus on the mission and his courage in the face of danger have brought great credit to the Canadian Forces and to Canada.

Captain Michael John Reekie, MMV
Shilo, Manitoba; and Abbotsford, British Columbia
Medal of Military Valour

On August 19, 2006, while deployed with Alpha Company, 1st Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group, in Masum Ghar in Afghanistan, Captain Reekie carried out valiant actions during an intense firefight with Taliban insurgents. Displaying superb judgment, he assessed the changing tactical situation and repositioned his vehicle to maximum advantage, enabling the successful interception and defeat of a numerically superior enemy force during the ensuing three-hour firefight. His outstanding initiative prevented the enemy from outflanking the position. Captain Reekie's selfless courage and exceptional leadership undoubtedly saved the lives of numerous Alpha Company soldiers.

Corporal Joseph Jason Lee Ruffolo, MMV
Petawawa, Ontario; and Montréal, Québec
Medal of Military Valour

Corporal Ruffolo was deployed with Charles Company of the 1st Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group in Afghanistan. On September 3, 2006, while he was engaged in combat operations in the opening phase of *Operation Medusa*, a bulldozer vainly attempted to extract his light armoured vehicle and came under heavy enemy fire. Without regard for his own safety, Corporal Ruffolo placed himself in a very vulnerable position to unhook his vehicle. In a subsequent attack, he again exposed himself to enemy fire to render first aid to a casualty. His courage and professionalism under extreme duress brought great credit to the Canadian Forces and to Canada.

Of further note, on 28 June 2007, Governor General Jean announced the awarding of two additional Medals of Military Valour, two Meritorious Service Crosses, and seven Meritorious Service Medals to members of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command for gallantry and devotion to duty in combat. For security and operational reasons, recipients' names and citations are not being released.