



in the news

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Quick thinking ambo receives St John Emergency Services Award

Brewarrina Ambulance Officer Christine James will be awarded with an Emergency Services Award by St John Ambulance after providing life saving first aid to a patient.

In October 2006, while working at Castle Hill Station in Sydney as a probationary officer, Ambulance Officer James along with partner Adam Parker were called to a caravan park in Wisemans Ferry with reports that a man had been bitten by a snake.

The patient, Bruce Campton had inadvertently handled the snake thinking that it was a lizard.

The snake turned out to be a death adder – the worlds' ninth deadliest snake and Bruce was bitten repeatedly on both forearms a total of five times.

On arrival, Officers James and Parker quickly realised this was a serious situation as he began showing signs of systemic envenomation and went into cardiac arrest.

The Ambulance crew requested the assistance of a rescue helicopter and prepared an appropriate night landing site.

The officers applied compression bandages to both arms and successfully resuscitated Mr Campton.

The officers airway skills, patient management and early recognition of systemic envenomation, and the need for a medical team, were a major factor in this man walking out of hospital with no residual deficit.



(Left to Right): AO Greg Lawrence, SO John Murray, AO Christine James, DO Chris Patrick and AO Jeremy Kern. (AO Chris Townsend from Brewarrina was absent from the photo due to relief duties).

Doctors injected him with a record five types of anti-venom. He spent five days in intensive care in Westmead Hospital regaining feeling and movement in his hands and limbs.

Members of the NSW Police Service, Fire Brigade and NSW Ambulance Service received St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) State Council Emergency Services Award for outstanding first aid efforts.

“St John is proud to honour Australians who work tirelessly to provide vital emergency services to the community,” said Sean Gavin, CEO, St John (NSW).

“The people and organisations receiving these awards have performed extraordinary first aid, and in many cases have directly saved lives by providing first aid during the crucial first few minutes,” said Mr Gavin.

St John is Australia's leading first aid organisation and promotes the importance of providing life saving first aid skills after any life threatening injury or incident.

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Public Affairs**