



MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Presented to

Benic van der Merwe

From 11 to the 13 April 2022, days of heavy rain across KwaZulu-Natal led to deadly floods. Particularly hard-hit were areas in and around Durban. At least 435 people died across the province, with an unknown number of people still missing as of 13 April 2022. Several thousand homes were damaged or destroyed. Critical infrastructure, including major roads, transportation, communication and electrical systems, were impacted by the flooding, and this damage greatly hampered rescue, recovery and relief efforts.

Benic van der Merwe is being recognised for his courage and determination on 11 April 2022 when he and members of his NSRI Station, along with the national and local emergency services, rendered aid and assistance in multiple flood-related incidents. These incidents occurred along the KwaZulu-Natal coastline and inland due to heavy rainfall, resulting in devastating floods in Durban and surrounding areas.

In particular, we acknowledge Benic's part in supporting Timothy Edwards' team and his own actions in the rescuing of numerous workers and security personnel at 3 different factories by setting up rescue lines from the trapped occupants back to the Rescue Vehicle and swimming the trapped occupants to safety at the edge of the flooded factory premises. This involved swimming in teams sometimes through 3m of water to reach trapped workers, scaling factory fences and climbing roofs of buildings to access the trapped people.

Benic van der Merwe's personal bravery that day, going to the aid of persons in trouble, in known dangerous conditions, without concern for his own safety, was in the very finest traditions of the National Sea Rescue Institute, which we are pleased to recognise with this Meritorious Service Award.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Velloza', is written over a horizontal line.

Jonathan Velloza
Chairman: Board of Directors



19 July 2024

Date