



The Higgins & Langley Memorial Awards are acknowledged internationally as the premier recognition for accomplishments in swiftwater and flood rescue. The awards were established in 1993 in honour of Earl Higgins, a writer and filmmaker who lost his life in 1980 while rescuing a child who was swept down the flood-swollen Los Angeles River, and Jeffrey Langley, a Los Angeles County Fire Department firefighter-paramedic and swiftwater rescue pioneer, who lost his life in a helicopter incident in 1993.

The Higgins and Langley Memorial Awards are not intended as recognition of heroism only, but acknowledge individuals and swiftwater rescue teams that have utilised this specialized technical rescue discipline for lifesaving, increased awareness about the need for swiftwater and flood rescue training, promoted worldwide training standards of certification, and inspired other agencies to develop viable water rescue programs.

These attributes should be highly considered in the creation of a submission package.

## Submission Categories:

The Higgins and Langley Memorial Awards Board will confer an award strictly based on submitted information. Lack of complete or invalidated information may delay or deter the Board's decision. The Board has the discretion to not accept an application, change the category or not confer an award if they feel a submission does not merit recognition. There are five categories of awards:

**Outstanding Achievement Award:** This award recognises excellence in swiftwater and flood rescue. It signifies an intense dedication to the field and a genuine desire to benefit the larger community responsible for the service. Safety, competence, and far reaching impact are key criteria. Only one award may be presented in any calendar year.

**Program and Team Development Award:** Presented to individuals or agencies that commit time, resources, education, and training for successful swiftwater and flood rescue team development. The program must reflect excellence and defines state-of-the-art advancement for swiftwater and flood rescue. Program model exemplifies the science and safety of water rescue. Long-range outcomes are a fundamental criterion. Multiple awards may be presented in any calendar year.

**Incident Award:** A specific water rescue, recovery operation, or prolonged mission that clearly demonstrates outstanding training, skill and preparedness in a swiftwater or flood rescue. Incident nomination can be individual, multiple individuals, and/or teams. Multiple awards may be presented in a calendar year.

**Special Commendation Award:** Recognises the breadth of possible contribution in the field of swiftwater and flood rescue. The award can be for media contribution, product innovations, strategic planning, individual heroism, esprit de corps, or recommendation by the Higgins and Langley Board of Directors. Multiple awards may be presented in a calendar year.

**Lifetime Achievement Award:** Reserved for those few individuals who (because of their work, actions, influence, and dedication) make a significant and lasting impact in the field of swiftwater and flood rescue. Criteria include time-honored or notable results. Lifetime Achievement Awards represent the pinnacle accomplishment for an individual's career.

## Eligibility:

Although each Category recognises a different facet related to swiftwater or flood rescue, criteria to be considered for all submissions:

- Any individual or team worldwide is eligible.
- Swiftwater and flood rescue training used by participating personnel must meet internationally recognised standards, or be equivalent to recognised standards in cases where such training is not readily available.
- Recipient(s) reflect(s) a high standard of integrity, safety, training, equipment, preparedness and dedication in relationship to available resources, utilising them to effect or attempt to effect rescues of persons and/or animals in distress.
- Anyone who expands the knowledge for other personnel, teams, units, agencies or the community about the importance of swiftwater and flood water safety, training, and preparedness.
- Incident Awards are limited to those conducted during the previous calendar year; certain exceptions may be considered. Other awards often span careers and agency program development timelines.

## Nomination Process:

Complete the Nomination form and submit to appropriate Manager for sighting.

[Nomination form via QFES Gateway](#)  
[Nomination form via QFES Website](#)

- Managers are responsible for considering nominations regarding the eligibility criteria and ensuring the nomination is progressed.
- Manager sighted nominations are to be submitted to the relevant Assistant Commissioner (AC)/Executive Director (ED) for approval.
- AC/ED approved nominations are submitted to QFES Honours, Reward and Recognition (HRR) Team.
- The HRR Team conduct various credential checks and submit integrity checks to the Workforce Liaison Unit. Any adverse integrity checks are sent directly to the Chair, HRR Advisory Panel for consideration.
- All nominations meeting the eligibility criteria and are clear of integrity checks are progressed to the HRR Advisory Panel for recommendation to the Commissioner.
- Once the Commissioner has approved, the HRR Team will submit to Higgins and Langley.