

For Immediate Release  
Bridgestone media contact: Annie Gant  
+61 8 8267 6888 or 0434 611 399  
Australian Trucking Association media contact: Kathleen Horne  
02 6253 6900 or 0409 524 120

**Bridgestone Australia Ltd.**  
196 Greenhill Road  
Eastwood, S.A 5063, Australia  
Phone: +618 8206 0200  
Fax: +618 8206 0399  
URL: [www.bridgestone.com.au](http://www.bridgestone.com.au)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **BRAVE TRUCK DRIVER RECOGNISED WITH BRIDGESTONE BANDAG HIGHWAY GUARDIAN AWARD**



Truck driver **Garth Hayes** has been announced as the latest recipient of the **Bridgestone Bandag Highway Guardian** award, acknowledging his brave rescue of an injured cyclist on Sydney's M2 motorway last year without any regard for his own safety.

The incident happened at 6am when a cyclist collided with another rider and was thrown onto the busy motorway. After witnessing the accident, Mr Hayes stopped his truck and ran straight out into the oncoming traffic to prevent the cyclist from being run over.

"Mr Hayes' choice of action in that split second was outstanding," said Bridgestone Australia and New Zealand Managing Director **Andrew Moffatt**.

"He made the safety of the cyclist his absolute priority and took immediate steps to rescue him. It was still dark and would have been a very scary situation for all involved.

"We commend Mr Hayes on his brave and selfless act – he is certainly a very worthy candidate to receive the Bridgestone Bandag Highway Guardian award."

In the time it took Mr Hayes to pull over and put his hazard lights on, he saw several vehicles swerve around the cyclist, who was lying unmoving in the middle of the road.

"He'd landed headfirst in lane one and just didn't move – his helmet had been thrown off, and I initially thought he was dead," Mr Hayes said.

"I ran straight out with my orange hi-vis vest and my torch into the traffic, waving the torch to get people to go around him."

The cyclist's friend, who had also fallen off his bike, helped Mr Hayes to stabilise the man and move him into the breakdown lane.

"It was a cool morning, and freezing with all the cars going past. His friend came out and helped me get him to the side of the road, where we put him in recovery and kept him warm," he said.

It was only after the incident that Mr Hayes realised the danger he was in while protecting the downed cyclist.

"Once police and medical attention arrived, I just moved on with my day," he said.

"I got down the road and the adrenaline just wore off – I suddenly started worrying about what could have happened, and what that would do to my little girl. But it was just instinct to help, and he has children too – he got to go home to his family, that's my reward.

"I'm not a hero. The man was in trouble, I had to help. I'm a bit humbled by all the attention – I'm sure there are others out there who have done much more, but just never got noticed."

Chief Inspector **Phil Brooks** from the NSW Traffic and Highway Patrol Command congratulated Mr Hayes on his swift response.

"It is not uncommon for truck drivers to be first on the scene of a crash, providing first aid, comfort and support to injured road users, and then calling in emergency services to assist," Chief Inspector Brooks said.

"What Mr Hayes did was the right thing, and I congratulate him and his employer, Hanson Group, for their road safety focus in this event."

Australian Trucking Association Chair **Noelene Watson** said the incident really showed the big heart of the trucking industry.

"Garth responded quickly and effectively to help a fellow road user, and was instrumental in making sure that this cyclist survived what could have been a truly devastating event," Mrs Watson said.

"We are very proud to recognise his exceptional bravery and quick thinking by presenting Garth with the Bridgestone Bandag Highway Guardian award."

The Bridgestone Bandag Highway Guardian award honours the great community service performed by professional truck drivers who go above and beyond the call of duty to assist those around them during the course of their normal work.

Potential Bridgestone Bandag Highway Guardian candidates can be brought to the Australian Trucking Association's attention at any time by emailing [ata@truck.net.au](mailto:ata@truck.net.au). For more information about the award, go to [www.highwayguardian.com.au](http://www.highwayguardian.com.au).