

before he was loaded into a helicopter and flown to hospital.

Jack has always been reticent about discussing the incident.

"It was a UN team effort that got him out, a combination of everybody," was his comment immediately after the event.

Jack received the Star of Courage in a Canberra ceremony on 19 March, 1980, and was officially commended by the President of Cyprus and by the Force Commander.

The citation for the award summarised his bravery with the words: "His cool and calculated reaction to the situation and his courageous decision to enter the minefield, well knowing the dangers, saved a life, was in the highest tradition of the service and is worthy of high official recognition."

Armed confrontation

Sergeant Vince Mylett, of Eastern Region, and Sergeant Greg Slater, of the ACT Region, were presented with UN awards and Commissioner's commendations for their bravery in an incident in the Buffer Zone on 28 August 1986.

The AUSTCIVPOL Contingent had been assigned the task of preventing citizens from entering an area where UN troops were attempting to resolve a territorial confrontation between two groups of angry, armed soldiers.

Because of security reasons, the local people had not been told of the UN military operation to defuse the situation, but the Australians were asked to stand by in case of civilian problems.

The UN operation began at about 7.30am but shortly after an elderly woman walked from her house into the street. Finding she was suddenly in danger from agitated soldiers and confused by the situation, she stood in the street blessing herself and oblivious to the calls to go back inside.

Sergeants Mylett and Slater, although unarmed, moved towards the woman. Sergeant Mylett reached her first and began to lead her to safety. Sergeant Slater met them and escorted them the remainder of the way.

The two officers were presented with awards by the UN Force Commander, Austrian Major-General Greindl, in a special ceremony on the island on 20 January 1987.

The Commander's citation reads: "Throughout the incident both Sergeant Mylett and Sergeant Slater were unarmed and clearly in danger from the agitated Turkish soldiers, threatening both Sergeant Mylett and the old woman. His prompt action and total disregard for his personal safety undoubtedly saved the elderly woman from a potentially lethal situation. In addition, his action contributed to the

overall success of the operation. He is a credit to both the Australian Civilian Police Contingent and the United Nations Force in Cyprus."

Both were awarded Commissioner's Certificates by the then AFP Commissioner, Major-General Ron Grey, for "Professionalism and bravery displayed in performing their duties in a dangerous situation within the United Nations Buffer Zone".



Chief Inspector Jack Thurgar talks with the rescued farmer and family members.

TWO-MAN UN TEAM GOES TO THAILAND

AFP officers also are involved in another United Nations Civilian Police operation — on the Thailand-Kampuchea border.

Superintendents Bill Kirk and Barry Carpenter have been posted for twelve months in Aranyaprathet, Thailand, attached to the UN Border Relief Operation (UNBRO).

They are working as part of a team of five Security Liaison Officers to liaise between UNBRO and the Displaced Persons Protection Unit (DPPU), a newly created troop of Thai Guards, to improve law and order in border camps housing 300 000 displaced Khmers.

The international policing team, including officers from Sweden, Britain and the USA, become the first western police officers based in

Thailand to improve security of Indo-Chinese refugees since the major influx of refugees in 1975.

The officers also provide training for Khmer Civilian Guards, organised and recruited by the Khmer administrations at the camps. While UNBRO provides food and medical supplies to people in the border camps, Thai authorities control them. Each camp has been allowed to establish its own Khmer administration.

The Security Liaison Officers will help the DPPU monitor the procedures and use of camp justice committees and camp jails, and assist the DPPU and the camp administrators in drawing up and implementing camp rules and procedures.