

# Dedication leads to top honour

A CAR accident involving his brother inspired Forrestfield man Darren Mudge to ditch his career in computers and become a paramedic.

Now, almost 10 years of dedication to pre-hospital care has earned him an Ambulance Service Medal in this year's Australia Day honours.

"I was humbled by it but, more than anything, I was surprised," Mr Mudge said.

Mr Mudge (37) was working in New York City when his parents called to tell him his brother Cameron had been involved in a serious accident near the family farm at Holt Rock.

"He was driving between farms on an isolated road when it happened and he wasn't expected home until the evening," Mr Mudge said.

"The only sign that something was wrong was that the dogs came home. So they went out to look for Cameron and found him stuck in the ute."

Mr Mudge said he flew home after the accident and started contemplating what he would do if faced with a similar situation.

"I thought about doing a first-aid course and then I saw an ad for an EMT (emergency medical technician) course and I thought that would be better," he said.

Mr Mudge started working with St John Ambulance in WA in 1999. His nomination for the award recognises his role working in regional WA, including postings at Kalgoorlie, Wyndham and Kununurra, and a stint as station manager at Kalgoorlie.

"People are passionate in the country. They are really enthusiastic," he said. "That's what makes it more enjoyable."

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**Darren Mudge received an Ambulance Service Medal on Australia Day.**

*Picture: Matthew Poon*

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