

THE NEW ZEALAND BRAVERY MEDAL (N.Z.B.M.)

James Phillip COLLINS Constable, New Zealand Police

Date of action: 22 December 2009

Date of award: 2 December 2013

Citation

Shortly before 4.00am on 22 December 2009, a Police constable was shot four times, suffering life-threatening injuries, at a residence in Papatoetoe. He collapsed in the yard of the property, which was at the end of a long, shared driveway.

An immediate action team was formed of experienced Police officers, led by Sergeant Turnbull, and including Detective Constable Cater (now Detective), Constable Collins, Detective Constable Luxford, Constable Mulder, Constable Pham and Constable Warne.

The immediate action team made a rapid approach in two vehicles, positioning the vehicles for cover. The first vehicle contained the team that provided cover, comprising Detective Constable Cater, Constable Mulder, and Sergeant Turnbull. The rescue team, consisting of Constable Collins, Detective Constable Luxford, Constable Pham and Constable Warne, was in the second vehicle.

The teams advanced up the driveway on foot, and found the wounded officer. He was seriously injured, including a fractured leg and significant blood loss. Clearly he needed to be evacuated quickly.

Constable Collins, Detective Constable Luxford, Constable Pham and Constable Warne carried him while Detective Constable Cater, Constable Mulder, and Sergeant Turnbull stayed in the property to cover their withdrawal. The wounded officer was carried to one of the patrol cars used in the approach, a distance of about 103 metres, and then driven at speed to the ambulance waiting on the street.

The immediate action team then blocked the driveway with a patrol car and took up observation positions as the gunman had not yet been located. The officers held these positions until relieved by a Crime Squad.

Throughout this operation, the location and number of offenders were unknown. The officers could have waited for the Armed Offenders Squad to arrive, but instead chose to put themselves at risk to rescue their colleague.