

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

Police Officer S **Police Officer, New Zealand Police**

Date of action: 8 September 2015

Date of award: 4 June 2018

Citation

On 8 September 2015 a man entered the McDonald's restaurant on Main and Wakefield Streets in Upper Hutt carrying a .303 rifle in a soft carry case. It was a busy lunch period with around 30 to 40 people in the restaurant. He removed the rifle from its case and pointed it at counter staff, demanding that everyone leave the building. He then pointed the rifle at the ceiling and fired a single shot, at which point staff and customers began to flee the building.

Police Officer S responded to the incident and while he and another Police officer approached the restaurant across open ground, the gunman took an aimed shot at them from the restaurant entrance. The officers dropped to the ground and the shot narrowly missed and passed through the window of a parked car.

Police Officer S and the other officer moved forward behind the cover of a truck, before observing the gunman move away from the restaurant and begin walking towards the Wakefield Street intersection. Police Officer S moved towards the intersection and took cover behind a concrete pillar. Police Officer S made himself visible and challenged the gunman to drop the rifle. The gunman responded by repeatedly challenging Police Officer S to shoot him. Police Officer S observed that the gunman was holding the rifle with only one hand and the barrel pointed at the ground, which did not convey an immediate threat at the time; he continued to challenge the gunman to drop the rifle and surrender peacefully.

The gunman then approached a civilian on the footpath and Police Officer S yelled at the civilian to move away, which she did and the gunman turned back towards Police Officer S. At this point two officers around the corner on Main Street challenged the gunman to drop the rifle and released a police dog. The gunman turned and raised his rifle at the officers in a manner Police Officer S perceived as an immediate risk to his fellow officers. Police Officer S fired a shot hitting the gunman. The gunman fell to the ground and Police moved to restrain him and apply first aid. Despite these efforts the gunman died at the scene. The gunman's rifle was found to have a live .303 round chambered.

Police Officer S demonstrated bravery in engaging an unpredictable armed offender to attempt a peaceful resolution, having already been shot at directly during the incident, and acted swiftly to prevent harm to his fellow officers when they were threatened by the gunman.