

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

Stephen James SMITH
Advanced Paramedic, St John Ambulance Service

Date of action: 7 May 2009

Date of award: 2 April 2011

Citation

On the morning of 7 May 2009 Advanced Paramedic Stephen Smith was the St John Ambulance Service on-call Duty Manager for the Hawkes Bay area. While attending a civil defence meeting, he was called to attend the incident at Chaucer Road South, Napier, and coordinated the deployment of St John resources, including two ambulances. Having first provided immediate medical assistance to one wounded Police Officer, Mr Smith took up a position with the cordon at the northern junction of Chaucer Street South and Guys Hill Road. While there, he was approached by the Police commander at that location and asked if he would assist with the retrieval of a wounded Police Officer who was located very close to the gunman's known position and needed medical attention before being evacuated. Mr Smith agreed and, having been fitted with a ballistic vest by one of the Police Officers and briefed on what to do if fired upon, he joined the evacuation team and began a steady walk down Chaucer Road towards the house where the casualty was located at No. 45. The last few metres to the house were in the line of fire from the gunman's last known position.

On arrival, Mr Smith immediately treated Senior Constable Grant Diver for a serious lower abdominal wound and prepared him for evacuation. He realised that Senior Constable Diver required surgery as soon as possible if he was to survive. Having placed him on a stretcher, the evacuation team began the walk back up Chaucer Road South to the Police cordon and the waiting ambulance, where Mr Smith was able to provide further treatment and comfort to Senior Constable Diver. The ambulance, with Mr Smith on board, took Senior Constable Diver to a point where a helicopter was waiting to take the wounded officer to hospital.

Mr Smith did not have to accompany the evacuation party as it was not a requirement of his job to put himself in harm's way. He acted bravely by doing so, and ensured that urgently needed medical attention was made available to a seriously wounded Police Officer at the earliest possible moment, significantly increasing his chances of survival.