

## **THE NEW ZEALAND GALLANTRY MEDAL (N.Z.G.M.)**

### **Gerald Stewart FENTON (K55577) Corporal, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment**

Date of action: 10 August 2000

Date of award: 31 December 2004

#### *Citation*

On 10 August 2000, Corporal Fenton was attached to a Nepalese platoon in East Timor, as a Signaller. While carrying out a patrol on the border between East and West Timor, part of the platoon came under fire from a militia group and sustained casualties. The Nepalese platoon commander immediately responded by moving the remainder of the patrol towards the contact site. As this was taking place, they too came under fire. As the only English-speaking signaller on the scene, Corporal Fenton provided the crucial communications link to both the Battalion Headquarters and to the helicopters called in to evacuate the Nepalese casualties. That this evacuation was successfully completed, was in no small part due to the effective communications maintained by Corporal Fenton.

Despite the immediate threat to his life during this incident, Corporal Fenton remained focused on his job. He remained in close proximity to an English-speaking officer, so that he could obtain information quickly and relay it immediately to New Zealand and Australian operational staff of the Battalion. Throughout the incident, the language barrier made his personal safety precarious and also made his task much more difficult to carry out.

Corporal Fenton showed considerable courage and presence of mind throughout this incident and carried out his duties in a thoroughly professional manner.