

THE NEW ZEALAND BRAVERY DECORATION (N.Z.B.D.)

Ross Elliott TOMLINSON

Date of action: 3 September 2021

Date of award: 6 December 2024

Citation

Mid-afternoon on 3 September 2021, a man, who had been under intense Police surveillance, entered a supermarket in New Lynn, Auckland and acquired a large kitchen knife, which he used to indiscriminately attack people across several aisles of the store. Within minutes, the offender caused significant injuries to five individuals and attempted to attack members of the public and staff who had barricaded themselves in a storeroom, before being fatally shot by Police officers.

Mr Ross Tomlinson was present in the supermarket at the time of the attack. He heard screams and saw shoppers rush out of the store. He witnessed the offender standing over a wounded woman on the floor. Mr Tomlinson, who had paramedic experience, moved towards the woman intending to assist, telling the offender to drop the knife. Other shoppers joined Mr Tomlinson in attempting to distract the offender.

The offender swung his knife at other shoppers who had gotten closer to him before moving towards Mr Tomlinson. Mr Tomlinson grabbed a stanchion for protection from the supermarket counter area. Mr Tomlinson and other shoppers followed the offender to keep him distracted, using stanchions and trolleys to maintain distance and barriers. The shoppers retreated to either end of an aisle, with the offender in the middle, his attention split between the groups. At this time, two Police officers arrived to confront the offender, who was subsequently fatally shot. Mr Tomlinson then used his paramedic experience to assist the wounded with first aid.