

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

David Joseph GOLDFINCH Constable, New Zealand Police

Date of action: 19 June 2020

Date of award: 6 December 2024

Citation

Mid-morning on 19 June 2020, Constable Matt Hunt and Constable David Goldfinch were on traffic duty in West Auckland in a Police vehicle. A vehicle approached from the opposite direction which caught the officers' attention, and a check of the Police system found that the vehicle owner was the subject of several Police alerts. They activated their lights and followed the vehicle, intending to perform a traffic stop.

The vehicle sped off and, as the officers followed, it lost control and crashed into a parked vehicle, which was being loaded by a member of the public, who was injured in the collision. The fleeing vehicle sustained crash damage making it inoperable. Constable Goldfinch exited the Police vehicle intending to provide first aid to those involved in the crash. However, the occupant of the crashed vehicle exited and pointed a semi-automatic firearm at Constable Goldfinch. Constable Goldfinch was unarmed and attempted to reason with the offender to put down his weapon. The offender responded by firing at Constable Goldfinch.

Constable Goldfinch ran and took cover behind parked vehicles across the road, as the offender fired in his direction. The offender attempted to locate and shoot Constable Goldfinch as he moved around a parked vehicle, eventually firing through the roof of the vehicle in Constable Goldfinch's direction.

Constable Goldfinch ran further down the road in a zig-zag pattern to avoid being hit, as the offender continued to fire at him. Constable Goldfinch was struck by bullets four times, sustaining wounds to his hip and calf. Despite his injuries, he ran down a driveway, jumped over a fence and took shelter. He radioed the Police Comms Centre with the offender's details and their location.

The offender returned to the Police vehicle where he fatally shot Constable Hunt, retrieved a second firearm from his crashed vehicle and threatened a nearby resident, forcing her to drive him away from the scene in another vehicle. Constable Goldfinch, unaware of what happened to Constable Hunt, was picked up by passing workers and given first aid.