

Units from the Avon Fire Brigade were called to the scene.

The Fire Brigade arrived to find minor explosions occurring within the individual tank compartments within each tanker, causing them to rupture and spill their contents to form a flowing liquid fire. Furthermore, four other road tankers were in the process of loading petroleum spirit at two adjacent gantries. These vehicles all had their tank lids open with the gantry loading arms in position in the tank compartments. Although the fuel supply had been switched off shortly after the fire commenced, there was a high risk of ignition of the vapours rising from the tanks. By now a heat and smoke layer had built up beneath the loading bay roof and was descending to a level close to the tops of the threatened tankers, which could give rise to a serious flashover. A message was relayed by a fire officer to increase the number of Water Tenders required from four to ten, four being insufficient to provide cooling jets for the tankers whilst a simultaneous attack was made on the fire.

As it was becoming increasingly urgent to move the four vehicles, Sub Officer Lloyd mounted one of the gantries and proceeded to remove the loading arm, having been shown how to do so by one of the tanker drivers. The vehicle, which had been immobilized and required de-isolating before it could be started, was driven away to safety by one of the road tanker drivers. Sub Officer Lloyd mounted the gantries twice more to remove the loading arms of another two vehicles, de-isolating them before he drove them away to safety. The fourth vehicle was made safe and driven to safety by another fireman. While the vehicles were being moved a further explosion erupted from one of the burning tankers. After a concerted attack using foam and cooling jets, the fire was brought under control at 7.12 p.m.

Sub Officer Lloyd displayed devotion to duty and gallantry of a high order when faced with conditions of extreme danger, caused by a serious outbreak of fire in an oil terminal. To release three road tankers near the seat of the fire, he three times mounted the loading gantries to remove the loading arms from them. He himself then drove two of the vehicles to a place of safety.

Derek Peter MURPHY, Constable, Merseyside Police.
Kenton Robert OWEN, Constable, Merseyside Police.

At 12.20 a.m. on Thursday, 21st January 1988, Constables Murphy and Owen were on mobile patrol in a police vehicle. They saw a van parked in a public car park with its headlights on, the engine running and the windscreen wipers operating, despite the weather being dry. The officers decided to investigate.

Constable Owen drove the police vehicle to within a few feet of the van stopping in front of it to prevent the van being driven off by the occupant. Both constables alighted from the police vehicle and approached the van to find a man in the driver's seat who appeared to be asleep. Constable Murphy roused the man and began to question him. As the man failed to give a satisfactory account of himself, Constable Owen decided to check the van's registration number through the Police National Computer. Information received revealed a discrepancy between the registered number and the type of vehicle. When questioned further, the occupant of the van reached into a holdall which was on the front passenger seat. Constable Owen saw him withdraw a double barrelled sawn-off shotgun. The officer immediately shouted a warning to

Constable Murphy. As the man alighted from the van he pointed the gun first at Constable Murphy's stomach, and secondly at Constable Owen's head, in both cases at close range. Constable Murphy realising that his colleague was in immediate danger grappled with the gunman. A violent struggle took place during which the gun was discharged twice by the gunman, on the first occasion at Constable Owen's head and then at Constable Murphy's stomach, missing both officers fractionally. The gunman broke free and ran towards his van. He appeared to be re-loading the gun. Constable Owen ran to the police vehicle and drove it towards the gunman, trapping him in the doorway of the van. When the police car reversed, the gunman attempted to run off, holding the gun. Constable Owen made a further attempt to stop the gunman by driving into him, knocking him to the ground. As the gunman attempted to run off again, Constable Murphy tackled the man, unaware that the gun was now lying on the ground. He was joined by Constable Owen. The man, who was in fact a wanted criminal, was eventually overcome, subdued and taken into police custody. The man was subsequently charged and convicted of a number of serious crimes.

Constables Murphy and Owen displayed gallantry of a high order, in overpowering an armed, violent and highly dangerous man, after he had discharged his weapon at them twice at close range.

James Joseph Lawrence PARKES, Reserve Constable, Royal Ulster Constabulary.

For Bravery in Northern Ireland.

Gerald Joseph TOAL, Assistant Manager, H. Samuels, Jewellers, Glasgow.

On 3rd August 1987 at approximately 1.15 p.m. a man entered a jeweller's shop and asked the Assistant Manager, Mr. Toal, to show him a tray of diamond rings that were on display in the window.

Mr. Toal returned to the counter with the rings to find the man pointing a handgun at him. The man grabbed the tray of rings and ran out of the shop and into the street, pursued by Mr. Toal. During the chase the gunman stopped twice, turned round and aimed the gun threateningly at Mr. Toal before running into a department store. Mr. Toal continued the chase catching up with the robber within the store. Mr. Toal tackled the gunman and a violent struggle followed, during which the gun was discharged three times, without injury. Meanwhile Mr. Toal's colleague, who had also given chase, arrived and assisted Mr. Toal to overpower, disarm and detain the robber until the arrival of the store security officer and the police.

Mr. Toal displayed devotion to duty and bravery of a high order, when, following a hold-up, and without regard for his own safety, he tackled an armed gunman, who during the struggle discharged his weapon three times before he was overpowered, disarmed and detained.

Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct

Brian BALDOCK, Ambulance Driver, Oxfordshire Health Authority.

For services leading to the immediate treatment and later rescue of a badly injured motorist who was trapped in his car when it was crushed beneath a tanker, with a risk of fire.

Brian Roger BIGGS, Constable, Avon and Somerset Constabulary.