

**Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)  
Edward Grant Steel**

30799. Lieutenant.  
Royal NZ Infantry Regiment.  
161 Recce Flight

NZ Gazette Number 29 dated 29 March 1972

**CITATION**

Lieutenant Steel graduated from the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, on 17th December 1965, and was posted to the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment. He first served in South Vietnam as a Platoon Commander with Whisky One Company from **November 1967 to November 1968**.

After returning to New Zealand, he subsequently qualified as an Army pilot and **arrived back in South Vietnam on 18th March 1971**, as a rotary wing pilot with 161st (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight.

During his tour of duty in South Vietnam, Lieutenant Steel has been an above average reconnaissance pilot. His experience, gained while serving as an Infantry platoon commander during his previous tour in South Vietnam, has enabled him to quickly recognise signs of enemy activity and he has contributed much valuable information on enemy movement and installations. He has displayed a very high order of determination and skill in seeking out the enemy, flying his unarmed helicopter at low speed and at tree top height over known or suspected enemy areas.

On 15th November 1971, while conducting a visual reconnaissance north of Long Son Island, Phuoc Tuy Province, he located an occupied enemy camp but before he could report this information, he was engaged by at least three enemy automatic weapons. Although his aircraft was badly damaged, being hit by 12 bullets, Lieutenant Steel, by his quick reaction and flying skill was able to control the aircraft and land in a relatively safe area, thus saving his passenger and himself from injury.

The courage, determination and skill displayed by Lieutenant Steel during his tour of duty have been an inspiration to the other pilots of the unit and reflect great credit upon himself, his Regiment and the New Zealand Army.