

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **Awarding of the Meritorious Unit Citation to the Force Communications Unit – Cambodia Australia Day 2014 Honours**

#### ***Background:***

The Force Communications Unit deployed to Cambodia as Australia's main contribution to the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia under Operation GEMINI. The Force Communications Unit comprised members of the Australian Defence Force and New Zealand Defence Force and was initially tasked to provide communications between components of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, the Cambodian Supreme National Council and the military headquarters of the four political factions.

As elections in Cambodia moved closer, the Force Communications Unit was called on to provide additional logistic support to the election process, often in hostile conditions. This was whilst they maintained the communications network at 50 locations across Cambodia.

The role of the Force Communications Unit, and the conditions under which they operated, expanded well beyond what was expected or required of the Unit at the time of their deployment. It is this commitment and dedication to the United Nations mission in Cambodia that has resulted in the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation to Force Communications Unit.

#### ***What is a Meritorious Unit Citation?***

The Meritorious Unit Citation is awarded to a unit, for sustained outstanding service in warlike operations. The Honour comprises an award of a Certificate of Citation to the unit signed by the Governor-General and insignia of the Citation worn by members of the unit.

The Meritorious Unit Citation was approved for introduction into the Australian Honours System on 15 January 1991. To-date there have been 24 Meritorious Unit Citations presented.

#### ***Why is the Meritorious Unit Citation being awarded 20 years after the return of Force Communications Unit from Cambodia?***

At the time of the original Meritorious Unit Citation nomination Operation Banner was classed as a non-warlike operation and therefore, not eligible to be considered for the Meritorious Unit Citation. In 2001 the conditions of service for the operation were reviewed and the operation was reclassified to warlike service. As a result, the original nomination was reviewed. Since that time the nomination has undergone intensive research to finalise compilation of the nominal roll necessary for the award.

***Will the Honour be extended to the members of the New Zealand Defence Force who were part of Force Communications Unit Cambodia?***

Defence is making a formal offer to the New Zealand Defence Force for individuals eligible to be issued the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia.

***Who will be the custodian of the Meritorious Unit Citation as Force Communications Unit Cambodia is not an existing unit?***

The Force Communications Unit Cambodia contained members from all three Services of the ADF. The Citation will be held by the Defence Force School of Signals in Victoria. This will ensure the Citation is placed in a prominent position where it can be available to all past, present and future signallers.

***When will the investiture ceremony be occurring?***

As the Defence Force School of Signals will be the custodian of the Citation, they will be hosting and conducting the investiture ceremony in consultation with the Head of Corps Royal Australian Corps of Signals and the Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association. The ceremony is expected to occur towards the end of 2014 to coincide with the anniversary of the Force Communications Unit contingent return from Cambodia.

***What are the eligibility criteria to receive the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia?***

To be eligible to receive the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia a member must have been force assigned to the Force Communications Unit – Cambodia for at least 30 days within the area of operation during the period 15 March 1992 to 7 October 1993. A nominal roll of ADF members who have been deemed eligible for the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia was approved by the Governor-General with the Honour.

***How many members have been identified on the nominal roll as being eligible to receive the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia?***

The nominal roll approved by the Governor-General contains 913 names from across the Australian Defence Force.

***How do I find out if I am on the nominal roll and eligible to receive the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia?***

To find out if you have been identified on the nominal roll please contact Defence Honours and Awards on the toll-free inquiry line: 1800 111 321 (within Australia). This line is operated Monday to Thursday between the hours of 10.00am – 4.00pm (excluding public holidays).

***Who do I contact if I think I am eligible but my name isn't on the nominal roll?***

Members who believe that they are eligible and have confirmed through Defence Honours and Awards (1800 111 321) that they are not identified on the nominal roll

may contact Army Ceremonial by email at: [army.ceremonial@defence.gov.au](mailto:army.ceremonial@defence.gov.au) to seek addition to the roll.

The subject of your email is 'Eligibility for Meritorious Unit Citation for Force Communications Unit Cambodia' and the body of the email is to contain the following information:

- Service Number / PMKeyS Number
- Full name and Date of Birth
- Dates deployed in Cambodia
- Unit deployed with
- A brief statement detailing your duties and tasks undertaken in Cambodia

Army Ceremonial will research your involvement and notify you of the outcome.

***If I think I am eligible how do I apply to receive the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia?***

The Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia will not be issued until the Honour has been invested by the Governor-General. It is expected that some former Force Communications Unit members will seek to be present at the investiture ceremony and elect to have the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia presented to them at that time. Eligible members who are not presented the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia at the investiture ceremony will have the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia posted to them.

Applicants for the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia will need to elect how they wish to receive the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia. A specific Force Communications Unit Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia application is being designed and will be available once arrangements for the investiture ceremony have been finalised and published. It is expected that a further announcement will be made by July 2014 providing details of the ceremony. At this time applications to issue the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia are not being accepted.

***I have a family member on the nominal roll who is now deceased. How do I apply to receive their Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia?***

If you believe you are entitled to receive a deceased members Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia please complete form AD809 – *Application for the Posthumous Issue of Medals and/or Clasps*, located on the Defence Honours and Awards website and return to the postal address identified on the form. (Please be advised that a response will be received after details of the investiture ceremony have been confirmed)

***Can I be issued the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia now, or can I wear a replica?***

Members eligible to receive the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia cannot receive or wear the insignia, or a replica, until the honour has been invested.

***Will the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia WITHOUT the Federation Star be issued to members of Units that provided personnel to Force Communications Unit Cambodia?***

When a Meritorious Unit Citation is authorised by the Governor -General the insignia with Federation Star is awarded to the original members of the unit. To provide ongoing recognition of the Units achievement, members posted to the unit after the eligible period wear the Meritorious Unit Citation insignia without the Federation Star for the duration of that posting.

The Force Communications Unit – Cambodia was raised with members from across the ADF for Australia’s contribution to the United Nations Transitional Authority to Cambodia. On return to Australia this particular unit ceased to exist. As the Force Communications Unit no longer exists only insignia with the Federation Star will be issued.

***Who do I call if I have an inquiry about eligibility or application for the Meritorious Unit Citation Insignia?***

The Defence Honours and Awards website: [www.defence.gov.au/medals/](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals/) contains a list of frequently asked questions and a copy of the Citation. If you require information not contained in these documents please contact the Defence Honours and Awards on the toll-free inquiry line: 1800 111 321 (within Australia).