



## Australia's Highest Military Honour awarded to Trooper Mark Donaldson

On 16 January 2009, Trooper Mark Donaldson became the first Australian to be awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia, the country's pre-eminent award for acts of valour in wartime.

In a ceremony held at Government House Canberra, Trooper Donaldson received the award for conspicuous gallantry in Afghanistan, following his heroic actions when his patrol was ambushed in the Oruzgan Province, on 2 September last year.

A synopsis of Trooper Donaldson's citation follows:

"On 2 September 2008 Trooper Donaldson was outstanding in the manner in which he fought during a prolonged and effective enemy ambush. On numerous occasions, he deliberately drew the enemy's fire in order to allow wounded soldiers to be moved to safety. As the battle raged around him he saw that a coalition interpreter was lying motionless on exposed ground. With complete disregard for his own safety, on his own initiative and alone, Trooper Donaldson ran back eighty metres across exposed ground to rescue the interpreter and carry him back to a vehicle. Trooper Donaldson then rejoined his patrol and continued to engage the enemy while remaining exposed to heavy enemy fire.

Trooper Donaldson's acts of exceptional gallantry in the face of accurate and sustained enemy fire ultimately saved the life of a coalition force interpreter and ensured the safety of the other members of the combined Afghan, US and Australian force. Trooper Donaldson's actions on this day displayed exceptional courage in circumstances of great peril. His actions are of the highest accord and are in keeping with the finest traditions of the Special Operations Command, the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force." 2▶



Trooper Mark Donaldson VC

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## Honours & Awards receives Chief of the Defence Force Commendation

On Friday 5 December 2008, Chief of the Defence Force Air Chief Marshal (ACM) Angus Houston AC AFC, presented a Chief of the Defence Force Commendation to the Directorate of Honours and Awards (DH&A) in recognition of outstanding achievement.

Over the past few years, the Directorate set about reviewing, analysing and implementing improved business practices in order to achieve a goal of delivering on-time customer service to both the current and ex-Service ADF community by mid-2008, and met that challenge.

In congratulating DH&A staff, ACM Houston commented that DH&A had established a "model for doing business", which reflects the objectives and broader Defence Support Group commitment to efficiency and best business practice.

ACM Houston went on to note that "The efforts and achievements of the Directorate have been of the highest level and carried out in the finest traditions of the Australian Defence Organisation".



◀1 The Victoria Cross for Australia was instituted in the Australian honours and awards system by Letters Patent on 15 January 1991. It is awarded to persons who, in the presence of the enemy, display the most conspicuous gallantry; a daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice; or extreme devotion to duty.

Her Majesty The Queen agreed to the creation of the Victoria Cross for Australia thereby allowing Australians to remain eligible for the prestigious gallantry award within the new Australian system of honours and awards. Other than a name change, the medal itself remains completely unchanged.

Prior to 1991, Australians were eligible for the Victoria Cross, created by Queen Victoria in 1856, under the Imperial system of honours and awards.

Ninety-six Australians have been awarded the Imperial Victoria Cross since its inception in 1856 for gallantry in the Boer War, World War 1, North Russia, World War II and, most recently in 1969 during the Vietnam War.

The Victoria Cross is a Maltese Cross, originally cast in bronze from Russian cannons captured during the Crimea War (1854-1856). Since this source was exhausted in 1914, almost all crosses cast have been from gunmetal of the Chinese trophy cannons at Woolwich Arsenal.

The insignia of the Victoria Cross for Australia is identical in composition and design to the Imperial Victoria Cross and is still handmade by Hancocks and Company (Jewellers) of London which has manufactured the Victoria Cross since its original establishment in 1856.

Trooper Donaldson VC has loaned his newly awarded medal to the Australian War Memorial and it can be viewed by the general public in their *Conflicts 1945 to today* gallery.

## The Purple Heart

The Purple Heart Medal (usually referred to simply as the Purple Heart) was instituted in 1932 by the United States War Department and in 1943 was made an award to recognise wounds or death in action only.

Entitlement to the visually attractive Purple Heart is earned as a result of death in action or wounds in action serious enough to require admission to a military medical facility for treatment.

The Purple Heart is one of only two US military decorations that may not, by law, be awarded to non-US personnel (the other is the Medal of Honor).

The Directorate of Honours and Awards regularly receives requests to either approve the wearing of a Purple Heart 'awarded' to a former member of the ADF or to pursue the issue of the medal that a former ADF member believes was awarded to him at some time in the past. The Directorate is unable to help with these requests.

The current policy on award of the Purple Heart as stated in the US Department of Defence 'Manual of Military Decorations & Awards' is:

*AP1.1.21.2 Awarded to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or any civilian national of the United*

*States who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity with one of the U.S. Armed Forces, after April 5, 1917, has been wounded, killed, or who has died or may hereafter die of wound received.*

Further information on who may be awarded the Purple Heart is contained in:

- War Department General Orders 3 of 1932 (WDGO 1932-3)
- Executive Order 11016 (EO 11016) of 25 April 1962 (President John F. Kennedy)
- EO 12464 of 23 February 1984 (President Ronald Reagan)
- Public Law 98-925 of 19 October 1984



The Purple Heart



Air Chief Marshal A.G. Houston, Chief of the Defence Force with some staff members of the Directorate of Honours & Awards.

## War Badges – World War I

In the early stages of World War I (1914-1918) the British authorities became aware of acts of harassment and humiliation aimed at honourably discharged members of the armed forces who were targeted by over-zealous members of the civilian (often female) population who could not understand why young men of military age were not in uniform. Many of these men, who in some cases had suffered extensive wounds or crippling illness, found themselves the target of verbal and physical abuse as they went about their daily business. One of the classic forms of abuse was having a white feather, the symbol of cowardice, handed to them by a woman.

To counter this, the British government established the 'Silver War Badge' on 12 September 1916. The badge, which was to be worn with civilian dress only, was authorised for issue to members of the armed forces of the British Empire who had served since 4 August 1914 and who:

- In the case of officers had retired or relinquished their commissions.
- In the case of other ranks had been discharged on account of age, wounds or sickness, such as would render them permanently unfit for further service.

While members of the Australian forces were eligible for, and issued with, the Silver War Badge, Australia issued its own series of badges to recognise those who were not able to enlist because of disability or reserved occupations. All of these badges were issued for wear on civilian dress only.

The *Discharged Returned Soldiers Badge* was issued to officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers who returned to Australia from active service and who were discharged in honourable circumstances.

The *Discharged Returned Sailors Badge* was issued to discharged members of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) under the same criteria as the Discharged Returned Soldiers Badge.

The *Volunteer Home Service Badge* was authorised for issue to employees of the Department of Defence who had volunteered for active service abroad but had been informed in writing by the department that permission to serve was withheld due to

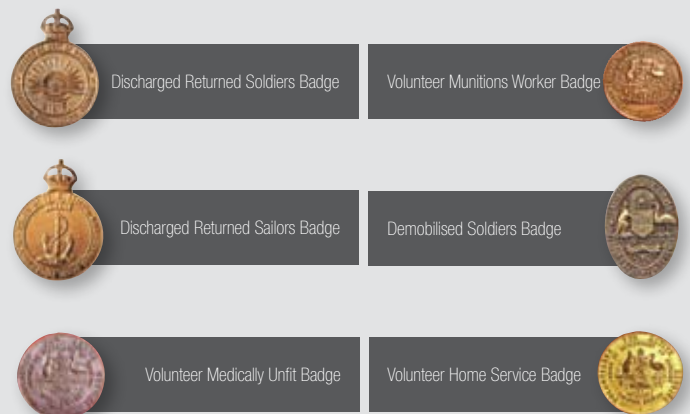
the applicant's services being required in Australia. The badge was also issued to medical and veterinary students on signing an agreement to be available for active service immediately on passing final exams.

The *Volunteer Medically Unfit Badge* was issued to persons who had volunteered for active service abroad, after 1 July 1915, and who had been officially certified by a Medical Officer as medically unfit for service.

The *Volunteer Munitions Worker Badge* was issued to persons who had volunteered for active service abroad but had been advised in writing by either the Secretary, Munitions Committee, or the Secretary, Department of Defence, that they were debarred from service due to their services being required in the munitions industry.

The *Demobilised Soldiers Badge* was issued to all Australian Imperial Force (AIF) recruits in training in Australia on the date of Armistice (11 November 1918) or to men who had been enlisted prior to that date, but not yet called into camp for training. The badge was also issued to members of the Royal Australian Garrison Artillery who had volunteered for or enlisted as reinforcements for the Siege Artillery Brigade.

In the next edition of this newsletter, we will cover World War I badges issued to next of kin to recognise having family members in service and also to recognise the death of family members in service.



## Honours and Awards statistics

# Honours & Awards

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### Breaking News – Replacement Medals Policy relaxation

The Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon. Dr Mike Kelly AM MP, announced on 20 March 2009, that the Defence Replacement Medals Policy will be relaxed for those family members who have lost the medals of loved ones in the Victorian bushfires and Queensland floods.

Family members wishing to obtain replacements may now apply, using the application form which can be obtained on our website at [www.defence.gov.au/medals](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals) or by calling our toll-free Customer Response Team on 1800 111 321.

### Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme

The Directorate of Honours and Awards (DH&A) often receives enquiries from service men and women in regard to the new Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS). DH&A cannot certify service for the DHOAS.

Members who seek confirmation as to whether their service is considered warlike or non-warlike can make enquiries to the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), who administers the scheme.

Members who wish to have their dates of service reflected on PMKeyS should apply through their Unit or obtain details on how to access their service records.

Detailed eligibility information on the DHOAS can be found at [www.dhoas.gov.au](http://www.dhoas.gov.au).

All general enquiries, including application requests, should be directed to DVA on their toll-free enquiry line 1300 434 627 (1300 4 DHOAS).

### Bereavement Pins

During World War I and World War II, recognition for families who lost loved ones while on war service was limited to the issue of Mothers' and Widows' Badges to the mother, widow or nearest female relative of a member of the Australian forces who died in service (see *Defence Honours & Awards*, Issue 6, November 2008). In some ways these can be seen as the historical predecessors of the bereavement pins now being issued by the Royal Australian Navy and Royal Australian Air Force.

The Air Force Bereaved Family Pin was launched by the Chief of Air Force in May 2006, as a means of recognising "the contribution and value to service of Air Force members who have died in service." In November 2008, the Royal Australian Navy launched the Navy Bereavement Pin in conjunction with official memorial services marking the 67th anniversary of the loss of HMAS *Sydney*.

Bereavement pins are issued by the respective Services in accordance with their own criteria. There are, however, no limitations on the number of relatives who may apply for a pin in relation to a deceased family member.

Further information on bereavement pins can be obtained from the following sources:

#### **Royal Australian Navy**

Director of Military Administration – Navy

CP4-7-040

Department of Defence  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Tel: 02 6266 2285

Fax: 02 6266 3779

Email: [NAVY.BereavementPin@defence.gov.au](mailto:NAVY.BereavementPin@defence.gov.au)

Web: [www.navy.gov.au/Navy\\_Bereavement\\_Pin](http://www.navy.gov.au/Navy_Bereavement_Pin)

#### **Royal Australian Air Force**

Air Force Bereaved Family Liaison Officer

Director General Personnel – Air Force

R8-9-020

Department of Defence  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Tel: 02 6266 7865

The Navy Bereavement Pin



The Air Force Bereaved Family Pin

# 5 Medal Mounting



Medals are issued to members of the Australian Defence Force to recognise outstanding individual achievement and operational and long service. It is not uncommon these days for an individual to be awarded more than one medal, and when this is the case, there is normally a requirement to have them professionally mounted. But what should you be aware of before handing over your medals to be mounted?

The common methods used to mount medals are known as 'swing mounting' and 'court mounting'. 'Swing mounting' is when the medals are carefully hand sewn to a suspension bar and hang loose with the obverse of the medal visible. The reverse can be viewed by simply turning the medal over. When 'court mounted', medal groups are fastened by ribbons to a stiff card or plastic backing board. Each medal is then fastened to the board so that the lower half extends beneath the bottom edge. The medals are held rigidly in place and the reverse cannot be fully viewed. Both methods make use of a brooch pin to attach the medals to a uniform or civilian dress.

You should ask vendors to show you examples of their work. Most reputable medal mounters will be proud to show you their handiwork and you should easily be able to spot poor workmanship. Some of the main things to avoid include:

- the use of hot glue guns (or any glue for that matter) to secure medals to ribbons or mounting cards. Glue will cause irreparable damage to your medals. Insist that glue not be used.

- the use of glue to secure clasps to medal ribbons. There are two types of clasps; those designed to slide over a ribbon, and those that are sewn on.
- the use of old or composite brooches to extend the length of the suspension device.
- 'tacking' a medal on the end of a previously mounted group. It is better to have your medals carefully dismantled and remounted. It is not acceptable to 'tack on' a newly awarded medal.

Do ensure that you get your original medals back. Unfortunately there have been isolated instances where, unbeknownst to the recipient, one or more original medals have been substituted by replicas, probably as a means to cover for an original that has been damaged or broken. Depending on the quality of manufacture, a replica can appear thinner and shinier than the original, or have a 'tinny' feel to it. In addition, it is a lawful requirement that all replica medals be clearly marked as such.

When your medals are mounted they can be looked after by

- avoiding the use of abrasive cleaners and excessive polishing; and
- keeping them in a dry and dust free environment.

Enjoy wearing them on those special occasions throughout the year.

## Recognition for Post-Armistice Korea Service

In November 2008 the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM MP, announced that eligible former Australian Defence Force members who served in post-armistice South Korea would be awarded the Australian General Service Medal (AGSM) for Korea and the Returned from Active Service Badge (RASB).

The AGSM will be issued to those former Defence Force personnel who completed 30 days in South Korea during the post-armistice period between 28 July 1953 and 19 April 1956. The RASB will be linked to the criteria for the AGSM. Linking the RASB to the AGSM is consistent with linking eligibility for the badge to specific service medals for other operational service during that era.

The 30-day eligibility criterion is consistent with the recommendations of the *Post-Armistice Korean Service Review Report* which was released in December 2005.

Applications are now being accepted from those former Defence Force personnel who served in Korea during the specified period, however, only the RASB is ready for issue at this time. In January 2009 Her Majesty The Queen gave her in-principle approval to the award of the AGSM however, further processes still need to be followed before the award can be formally established within the Australian honours and awards system. This can take up to an additional 12 months to finalise.

Given the linkage of the RASB and AGSM, applicants will only need to apply once, initially for the RASB. The medal will be automatically issued once available. However, if an applicant changes their address before they receive the AGSM, they should advise the Directorate of their new address details as soon as possible to ensure they receive it.



Returned from Active Service Badge

# contact us

Please note a change of postal address for the Directorate of Honours and Awards. From 1 April 2009 please send all mail, including application forms to:

## Address

The Directorate of Honours and Awards  
Department of Defence  
PO Box 7952  
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

## Website

Former ADF members & general public  
[www.defence.gov.au/medals](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals)

Current serving ADF members

<http://intranet.defence.gov.au/dsg/sites/HonoursandAwards>

## Telephone

1800 111 321 (toll-free)

0900-1700 Mon-Fri Australian Eastern Standard Time

## Service with Defence Cooperation Program in East Timor reclassified

Defence Cooperation Program (DCP) service in East Timor until 17 August 2003 has been reclassified as warlike.

This means that those who were involved in the Army Training Support Team – East Timor and other DCP tasks are now eligible to be awarded the Australian Active Service Medal with clasp East Timor and Returned from Active Service Badge.

Members who served in East Timor under DCP arrangements should apply to DH&A using the *Application for the Issue of Medals* form that is available on the Directorate of Honours and Awards (DH&A) website [www.defence.gov.au/medals](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals)

or by calling DH&A on 1800 111 321 (toll free). To assist the assessment process, members should ensure that their PMKeyS Ops Log reflects their DCP service in East Timor.



AASAM with clasp East Timor

## Clarification – Federation Star and the DFSM

In the November 2008 edition of the *Defence Honours and Awards Newsletter*, we advised that a single Federation Star (representing service of 40 years or more) represents five clasps (one for each 5 years served) to the Defence Long Service Medal (DLSM) and the Australian Cadet Forces Service Medal (ACFSM).

We wish to clarify that the same policy applies to the Defence Force Service Awards.

Additional periods of qualifying service after the initial award of a long service medal are recognised by clasps that are worn on the ribbon of the medal. Emblems are worn on ribbon bars to signify the clasps that have been awarded.

Cupro nickel clasps are worn on all Defence long service awards, except for the Reserve Force Decoration (RFD) which has gilt clasps.

A system of ribbon bar emblems is used to signify the award of clasps. Rosettes are worn for the first four clasps awarded but because wearing five rosettes was found to be impractical a ribbon bar emblem in the form of the Federation Star was introduced to signify the award of the fifth clasp. Additional star emblems signify the sixth and any subsequent clasps.

The system of clasps and rosettes can be summarised as follows:

**Defence Force Service Medal (DFSM), DLSM, Reserve Force Medal (RFM), ACFSM:** cupro nickel clasps

**RFD:** gilt clasps

**DFSM, DLSM and ACFSM:** round cupro nickel ribbon bar emblems for first four clasps

**RFD and RFM:** oval cupro nickel ribbon bar emblems for first four clasps

The Federation Star emblem is worn on the ribbon bars of all medals listed to signify the award of the fifth and subsequent clasps.

The Federation Star ribbon emblem is not an award – it simply represents the fifth clasp that is awarded for 40 years service – a significant milestone.

These images show some examples of the clasps and ribbon bar emblems worn on Defence long service medals. More information is available on the DH&A website.



Some examples of long service medal clasps and ribbon emblems