



ISSUE # 5, April 2008

## Welcome from the New Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support



I take great pleasure in introducing this issue of the Defence Honours & Awards Newsletter. As the new Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, one of my responsibilities is to oversee the Directorate of Honours and Awards. As an ex-regular Australian Defence Force (ADF) member and current reservist I see this as a great challenge and a privilege.

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) is a special institution which not only serves our security but is also the guardian of many of our fundamental values, forged through a tradition that all Australians respect. I believe that there is no finer thing in life than to be than a soldier, sailor, airman or airwoman in the ADF.

This belief stems in part from the military service of my forebears. My grandfather, Benjamin Joseph Kelly, along with other members of my family, was in the volunteer Light Horse. He went to World War II as part of the 2nd/3rd Machine Gun Battalion. He fought in the Middle East before being captured by the Japanese in Java, and he spent the rest of the war working on the Burma-Thai Railway.

I spent 20 years in the Army and I only left last year to enter politics. I remain on the Army Standby Reserve list. During my time in the ADF I served in conflict zones in Somalia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Kenya, East Timor and Iraq. My experiences ranged from the fundamental infantry tasks of toting a rifle and radio on patrol to helping direct operations, establishing the rule of law and in postconflict reconstruction.

From Iraq in particular, I left carrying with me the ghosts of some special people. One was Lieutenant Colonel Chad Buehring. Chad was a bloke everyone liked. He loved kids and was a wonderful family man. On one particularly dark day - among many in Iraq - Chad was with me and many of our colleagues when our building came under sustained direct fire and was struck with 27 rockets.

Chad, like the true soldier he was, rushed to the window with his M16 to try to return fire. Chad took the force of a rocket strike against his window and had half his head and his left hand blown away. He did not die immediately but there was nothing that could be done for him. We took 20 casualties in that attack, and I was to lose countless other friends amongst UN workers, Iraqi colleagues and my coalition brothers and sisters in my year in Iraq.

Experiences such as these make me highly conscious of the fact that I am the only war veteran represented in parliament since the retirement last year of Graham Edwards. I feel a particular responsibility to be a voice for our veteran and ex-service community and to do what I can to support the men and women of the ADF.

One important way to do this is with the appropriate recognition of military service. In particular our honours and awards system affords the nation a visible and enduring means of demonstrating its gratitude for special effort, courage and achievements in the service of our country. The Australian Government, in its *Plan for Defence*, highlighted its strong desire to reward military service while preserving the integrity of the Australian honours and awards system. In order to achieve this balance, the Government is establishing an independent tribunal to oversee Defence honours and awards.

Among other issues, the tribunal will consider the eligibility criteria for the Australian Defence Medal and the claims of the US Army Small Ships for Imperial recognition.

I am looking forward to working on promoting the values of the ADF and the nation through our honours and awards system. In this endeavour I will be ably supported by my staff and by the excellent and hard-working team in the Directorate of Honours & Awards.



**The Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM MP**  
Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support

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## Honours & Awards to Visit Your Capital City

On Anzac Day the Directorate of Honours & Awards (DH&A) is visiting all state and territory capital cities.

DH&A will have an information tent at Anzac Day marches in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney.

There will be displays of medals, information about military honours and awards, applications forms, and staff will be available to answer your questions. There will also be some special giveaways!

For details of where we will be in your capital city, see our website: [www.defence.gov.au/medals](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals)

## Clarifications

### Service Readiness Badge

In the previous edition of this newsletter, an article about the wearing of medals by actors referred to the Sea Readiness Badge. 'Sea Readiness Badge' is a commonly used term for this award, but the conditions of the award cover more than being 'ready' for sea.

Its correct name is the **Service Readiness Badge** and in order to wear it sailors need to meet the Royal Australian Navy's individual readiness requirements. It is mandatory for qualified personnel to wear the badge, and a member does not have to be serving at sea in order to wear it.

### Merchant Marine Medals

Also in the last issue of this newsletter, we published a list of non-official, private commemorative medals and stated that they are available for purchase.

The list included the Merchant Navy Service Cross and the Merchant Navy Service Medal.

However, Merchant Marine medals **are not** available for purchase. They can only be issued by the Australian Merchant Navy Awards Council.

DH&A apologises for the inference that these awards can be purchased rather than are awarded.

## PM Hosts First ADM Presentation for 2008

The Australian Defence Medal (ADM) recognises the service of current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) Regular and Reserve personnel, including volunteer and National Servicemen.

Ex-serving members who are eligible for the ADM can choose to have their medal presented to them by their local federal member of parliament at a ceremony in their electorate.

Fittingly, the Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, conducted the first ADM presentation for 2008 in his electorate of Griffith.

The presentation was held on 24 January and coincided with the Australia Day awards ceremony. The presentation was held at the Easts Leagues Club in Coorparoo, Brisbane. Thirty-one guests attended, including the friends and families of recipients.

Mr Rudd presented 11 medals, one of

which was awarded posthumously and was accepted by the late ADF member's son.

Air Commodore Mark Gower, who assisted the Prime Minister in presenting the medals, commended the contribution of the ex-serving personnel.

'The medal provides an opportunity to formally recognise service that has previously gone unrecognised. It acknowledges all of the circumstances of service. I would like to thank these former Australian Defence Force members for their contribution to their service, to the ADF as a whole and to Australia generally,' Air Commodore Gower said.

This year will see a further 1,300 ex-serving members receive their ADMs at presentations around the country. New applicants for the ADM can elect to have their medal presented by indicating on the application form.

For more information about the ADM and for application forms, visit our website [www.defence.gov.au/medals](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals) or call **1800 111 321**.



*The Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, with ADM recipient Edward Chapman*

## Victory Medal

For service in World War I most Australians are entitled to one or more of three main medals: the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal 1914-1920 and the Victory Medal.

The Victory Medal is unusual in that it was awarded by all of the victorious allies. Each national version of the medal reflects a common theme and all the medals share a common ribbon.



*Victory Medal*

In January 1917 the British government suggested to the governments of France and Belgium that some form of joint commemorative medal should be issued after the war. Both France and Belgium supported the British idea.

The suggestion had two advantages. First, it was a tangible way of showing the solidarity of the allies during the war. Secondly, it would forestall the possible mass exchange of medals between allied nations. While this exchange was a well-established custom, an attempt to do this would have presented major logistical and administrative difficulties.

In November 1918, Marshal Foch of France officially raised the notion of a common commemorative medal for all allied and associated nations at the Paris Peace Conference. Delegates of the Supreme War Council accepted this proposal in January 1919, and the Inter-Allied Armistice Commission was established to develop the concept and design for the new medal.

The commission settled on the name 'Victory Medal' and agreed to a moiré (or wavelike) double rainbow design for the ribbon. The name was chosen because it was short – some other suggestions were quite long – and it was the one title that Germany could not copy because the German forces had been defeated.

It is generally agreed that the ribbon design was chosen because it included all of the national colours of the various allied and associated nations but it did not display any specific national colour combination. Another theory is that the rainbow design is symbolic of a new era – the 'calm after the storm'.

The design chosen for the obverse of the medal is a winged female figure of victory, with the design amended to suit national traditions. The reverse of the medal generally carries the legend 'The Great War for Civilisation' in the local language.

For service in World War I there were two other medals issued to Australians: the 1914 Star and the Mercantile Marine Medal.

The 1914 Star was only awarded for service in France or Belgium between 5 August 1914 and midnight on 22/23 November 1914. This was before Australians were generally involved in the conflict and, as a result, only a handful qualified.

Members of the mercantile marine who qualified for the British War Medal and who could supply evidence of having served at sea on at least one voyage through a danger zone could be awarded the Mercantile Marine Medal.

### British version

The British version was issued to the troops of Australia, Canada, India, Newfoundland, New Zealand, Southern Rhodesia and various other colonial forces.

To be eligible for the Victory Medal, a member of the Australian Imperial Force had to have served on the establishment of a unit within a theatre of war between 4 August 1914 and 11 November 1918.

Members of the Royal Australian Navy earned an entitlement by giving service at sea between 4 August 1914 and 11 November 1918, or being on the establishment of a unit within a theatre of operations between these dates.

It was under the latter criterion that members of the Naval Battalion of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force that invaded and captured German New Guinea in September 1914 qualified for the Victory Medal.

### British War Medal

While the Victory Medal could never be issued without the British War Medal, it was possible for the British War Medal to be issued without the Victory Medal, and this was not uncommon.



*British War Medal*

Some Australians who went overseas in World War I rendered approved service but were never taken on strength of a unit in an operational theatre, and so they did not qualify for the Victory Medal. They received only the British War Medal.

In addition, some members of the Australian forces who volunteered for overseas service were not permitted to deploy because their services were required in Australia to support the war effort. These members qualified for the British War Medal under special regulations, but did not qualify for the Victory Medal because they never entered an operational theatre. Similarly, some who served in the United Kingdom only received the British War Medal.

### National versions

The United States version of the Victory Medal doubles as America's campaign service medal for World War I. The medal was issued with a variety of

clasps to signify general campaign and specific battle service. A total of 29 clasps were authorised for members of the US Navy and 18 clasps for the US Army.

As neither Japan nor Siam (Thailand) had a female figure of victory in their cosmology, they did not use a female figure on the obverse of the medal. Japan used the figure of the god Take-mikazuchi-no-Kami, the Valiant August Thunder God. Siam chose the image of the god Narayan, the Thai God of War or Victory.

South Africa, although part of the British Empire, issued its own version of the Victory Medal. While the obverse is identical to that of the British version, the reverse differs in having the inscription in both English and Dutch.

**The following countries issued their own version of the Victory Medal:**

 Belgium	 Italy
 Brazil	 Japan
 Britain	 Portugal
 Cuba	 Romania
 Czechoslovakia	 Siam (Thailand)
 France	 South Africa
 Greece	 USA

## Are World War I medals still issued?

With the passing of World War I veteran William (Evan) Allan on 17 October 2005, the entitlement to the replacement of World War I medals ended. Mr Allan was the last remaining Australian to have seen active service during World War I (WWI).

One Australian with service in WWI is still living – Mr Jack Ross. However, as Mr Ross's service was entirely in Australia he is not entitled to a WWI medal. (He recently turned 109!)

Even so, if a WWI medal has never been issued, it may be possible for descendants to claim the medal. A check of a person's record will show their medal entitlements and whether the medals have been issued. These records are available from the WWI personal records section of the

National Archives of Australia website – [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au)

Most WWI service records show three stamps which represent the three medals issued to Australians who served in the conflict.

- If the stamps have numbers written in them, then the medals have been issued.
- If the stamps are otherwise blank, then the medals have not been issued.
- If the stamp has been marked 'NE', this signifies that the person named in the record has no entitlement to that particular medal.

Details and an application form for the posthumous issue of medals are available on the DH&A website – [www.defence.gov.au/medals](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals) or by telephoning **1800 111 321**.

## Did you know?



**Did you know that you cannot wear two Meritorious Unit Citation emblems (pictured left)?**

Australian Defence Force members who have served with more than one unit which has been cited for a Meritorious Unit Citation (MUC) cannot wear two emblems.

The wearing of two MUC emblems is due to a mistaken belief that the MUC is an individual award. The MUC and the Unit Citation for Gallantry are not individual awards; they are a form of recognition of the high performance of a unit as a whole.

Also, the emblem that accompanies a citation is not an award in itself – it is simply a uniform dress embellishment to indicate that the wearer has served with a cited unit. The award is the certificate issued to the unit and signed by the Governor-General.

The Determination for Unit Citations states:

**Further awards**

- 6.1. Second and subsequent awards are recognised by the presentation of a further Certificate of Citation to the Unit signed by the Governor-General.
- 6.2. Only one insignia of the Citation may be worn by a member.

This means that only one MUC emblem may be worn, no matter how many units a person may have served with that have been awarded MUCs.

A copy of the Determination for Unit Citations can be found on DH&A's website under 'Gallantry and Distinguished Service Awards'. [www.defence.gov.au/medals](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals)

### What Comes First?

While the emblems for Australian unit citations are uniform dress embellishments, the rules governing the wear of citation emblems, and indeed all awards within the Australian honours and awards system, are not simply a 'uniform issue'.

In the first instance, the wearing of awards is dictated by the individual medals' regulations or instruments, and second by the Order of Wearing Australian Honours and Awards. Wearing in accordance with individual Service dress regulations then follows.



*This is an extract from the service record of John Simpson (Kirkpatrick). The three stamps all have numbers written in them, which shows that the medals have been issued.*

## Oproep aan Nederlandse Veteranen - Calling Dutch Veterans



Mobilisation War Cross

The Directorate of Honours & Awards was recently approached by its counterpart in the Netherlands to assist in advising Dutch veterans living in Australia of their unclaimed medal entitlements.

If you are a Dutch veteran of World War II, the East Indies Campaign of 1945-1949 or service in Dutch New Guinea between 1949 and 1962, you may be entitled to unclaimed medals.

- Dutch veterans who served in a military capacity between 6 April 1939 and 3 September 1945 and who are not entitled to the Commemorative War Cross (*Oorlogs-Herinneringskruis*) may be entitled to the Mobilisation War Cross (*Mobilisatie-Oorlogskruis*).

- Former members of the Dutch forces who served in the Netherlands East Indies for a minimum of three months between 3 September 1945 and 4 June 1951 (or until 28 December 1949 for service in Dutch New Guinea) may be entitled to the Medal for Order and Peace (*Ereteken voor Orde en Vrede*).

- Former members of the Netherlands forces, and certain non-military Dutch nationals, who served in Dutch New Guinea for a minimum of three months between 28 December 1949 and 23 November 1962 may be entitled to the New Guinea Commemorative Cross (*Nieuw-Guinea Herinneringskruis*).



Medal for Order and Peace

In some circumstances relatives of deceased veterans, in the first or second generation, may be able to claim the posthumous award of various medals.

If you think that you or a deceased relative might be entitled to one of these medals, you can find out more by contacting the Netherlands Ministry of Defence at:

Ministry of Defence  
HDP/Honours and Awards Section  
Room 2M03  
Postbus 20703  
2500 ES Den Haag  
Nederland

or by e-mail:  
[onderscheidingen@mindef.nl](mailto:onderscheidingen@mindef.nl)



New Guinea Commemorative Cross

Medal images courtesy of Honours and Awards Section, Netherlands Ministry of Defence

Be sure to provide all your personal details, including your Dutch service number if known.

**Please do not contact the Australian Directorate of Honours & Awards about this matter.**

‘Former members of the Netherlands forces ... may be entitled to the New Guinea Commemorative Cross.’

# The numbers so far ...

Medals applications received  
by DH&A from  
1 January to 28 February 2008

7,476

Medals dispatched by  
DH&A from  
1 January to 28 February 2008

17,445

## Did you know?

**Did you know that medals issued by a foreign defence force are not to be officially worn until the Governor-General has given his authorisation?**

Some members the ADF have worn medals issued to them by a foreign force without approval.

While it is easy to think that foreign awards can be worn because they have been officially presented, this is not the case.

Only the Governor-General can approve the official acceptance and wearing of a foreign award by an Australian. This is done on the recommendation of the government under a set of established government guidelines and policies:

- The official acceptance and wearing of a foreign award will usually only follow a formal offer by the foreign government to the Australian government.
- Approval to accept and wear foreign awards is subject to the principle of national interest, and any award to

be considered for approval must have an equivalent award in the Australian system.

- The wearing of a foreign award must be formally approved by the Governor-General before it is worn in uniform.
- Foreign awards are to be worn in the order of date of authorisation, and after all Australian awards.

Recently the Governor-General approved the acceptance and wearing of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Medal by Australian Defence Force members of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.



*North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Medal*

Foreign awards which have been properly issued to an individual by a foreign government, but have not been approved, may still be worn on the right breast on appropriate occasions.

## The Rumour Mill - East Timor Presidential Peace Medal

Late last year there were media reports that the President of East Timor, Mr Jose Ramos Horta, had approved a Presidential Peace Medal to 'symbolise the sacrifice of Australian soldiers in providing safety in the fledgling nation'.

*- Canberra Times, 28 Dec 2007*

The Directorate of Honours & Awards currently has no information about this medal.

## CONTACT US



### 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



### Address

T-1-49  
Department of Defence  
CANBERRA ACT 2600