



Australian Government

Department of Defence

Long Service



Defence
Honours
& Awards

The dedication and commitment of all Australian servicemen and women has long been recognised through the awarding of long service and good conduct medals.

The National Medal



*The National Medal –
with 1st clasp*

When the Australian system of honours and awards was established in 1975, the National Medal was intended to replace all existing Imperial long service and good conduct medals. Eligible members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and other uniformed services including police, ambulance and emergency services were entitled to the National Medal.

The National Medal is awarded for 15 years qualifying service with clasps awarded for each additional 10 year period of qualifying service.

For the first time, regular officers of the ADF were entitled to an award for long service. Previously, only officers of the various reserve elements of the ADF were entitled to such awards.

Members of the ADF, both permanent and reserve, may still be eligible for the National Medal as a result of service with other recognised non-ADF organisations such as volunteer fire services. For full list, see www.itsanhonour.gov.au.

The National Medal ribbon has alternating gold and blue stripes. These were Australia's national colours at the time of the medal's introduction.

In 1982, it was decided that there should be a long service medal introduced which would uniquely recognise ADF service. As a result, the National Medal was replaced by the Defence Force Service Awards to recognise ADF personnel.

The Defence Force Service Awards

Recognising the need to acknowledge the unique nature of serving in the ADF, in 1982 the Defence Force Service Awards (DFSA) were introduced to replace the National Medal, for ADF personnel.

DFSA are awarded for 15 years eligible service, with clasps awarded for each additional five year period of qualifying service.

This group of awards includes:



The Defence Force Service Medal

The Defence Force Service Medal (DFSM), awarded to members of the Regular forces.

Image shown with first clasp and the ribbon bar rosette emblem for the first clasp and the Federation Star emblem for the fifth clasp



The Reserve Force Decoration

The Reserve Forces Decoration (RFD), awarded to reserve officers only.

Image shown with first clasp and the ribbon bar rosette emblem for the first clasp and the Federation Star emblem for the fifth clasp



The Reserve Force Medal

The Reserve Forces Medal (RFM), awarded to members of the reserves.

Image shown with first clasp and the ribbon bar rosette emblem for the first clasp and the Federation Star emblem for the fifth clasp

A member who holds a Defence Force Service Award may continue to have qualifying service count towards clasps for the award, provided that the member continues to contribute efficient service required for that medal stream. For example, to qualify for further clasps for the Defence Force Service Medal, the member must complete permanent service.

The Defence Long Service Medal



The Defence Long Service Medal

In 1994, the Committee of Inquiry into Defence Awards (CIDA) held a review of the Defence honours and awards system.

The report recommended that the DFSA be replaced by one single long service award, the Defence Long Service Medal (DLSM). The DLSM was introduced in 1999 to allow those members who may have

accrued service across all three service categories, to have one medal that recognises a total of 15 years qualifying service.

Image shown with the ribbon bar rosette emblem for the first clasp and the Federation Star emblem for the fifth clasp

What is the Federation Star?

Ribbon bars are worn on uniform, when medals are not worn.

Rosettes are worn on the ribbon bar to denote clasps that have been awarded for long service. It was found that five rosettes could not be accommodated on the ribbon bar and so a single emblem, in the form of a Federation Star, was introduced. A single Federation Star is worn on the ribbon bar in lieu of five rosettes.

Sixth and subsequent clasps are denoted by additional stars.

Are Imperial Long Service Awards still awarded?

Imperial long service awards are no longer issued and service records are not assessed for them. It was a Government decision that from 5 October 1992 no further applications for awards under the Imperial system would be considered.

Eligibility for Defence Force Long Service Awards:

National Medal may be awarded to	<p>approved list of members of the ADF, Police Force, Fire Service, Ambulance Service, Corrective Services and the Australian Protective Service.</p> <p>Members of the ADF must have completed 15 years remunerated and efficient service (prior to 20 April 1982) and be serving on or after 14 February 1975.</p> <p>Eligibility for the award of the medal and Clasps to members of the ADF for ADF service ceased on 19 April 1982.</p>
Defence Force Service Medal is awarded to a member who	<p>has completed 15 years of efficient service prior to 20 April 1999 and must have been serving on or after 14 February 1975.</p> <p>Reserve service and Continuous Full Time service in the Reserve does not qualify towards clasps for this medal.</p> <p>A minimum of 12 years in the Regular Forces and up to 3 years in the Reserves can be counted towards the medal.</p>
Reserve Force Decoration is awarded to an officer who	<p>has, on or after 14 February 1975 and before 20 April 1999, completed 15 years efficient commissioned service in the Reserve Forces. A maximum of three years commissioned service in the Permanent Forces may be counted as qualifying service toward this award.</p> <p>Regular service does not qualify towards clasps for this award.</p>
Reserve Force Medal is awarded to a member who	<p>has, on or after 14 February 1975 and before 20 April 1999, completed 15 years efficient service in the Reserve Forces. A maximum of three years service in the Permanent Forces may be used as qualifying service for this award.</p> <p>Commissioned service does not qualify towards clasps for this award.</p>
Defence Long Service Medal is awarded to a member who	<p>has, on or after 14 February 1975, completed 15 years qualifying service in the ADF.</p> <p>This includes efficient service in either the Permanent and Reserve Forces or a combination of both.</p>

Defence Honours & Awards

Defence Honours and Awards

Website: www.defence.gov.au/medals

Phone: 1800 111 321 (toll free)

Address: Defence Honours and Awards
PO Box 7952
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

Are you researching your family's military history?
These links may assist you.

www.itsanhonour.gov.au

(medal information including Order of Wear)

www.gg.gov.au

(Office of the Governor-General)

www.naa.gov.au

(National Archives of Australia)

www.awm.gov.au

(Australian War Memorial)

www.dva.gov.au

(Department of Veterans' Affairs)

www.rsl.org.au

(Returned and Services League of Australia)

www.mod.uk

(UK Ministry of Defence)

www.veterans-uk.info

(UK Service Personnel & Veterans Agency)