

Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Defence Awards

Terms of Reference

The following were the terms of reference for the Committee:

1. Examine claims for recognition of categories of service;
2. Identify any categories of service, including those which involved non-Defence personnel in operational areas, which we considered should be recognised by an Australian award;
3. Examine the appropriateness of extending the eligibility of existing awards for such purposes;
4. Consider the need, if any, to introduce additional awards to recognise service in past defence-related activities of either a warlike or non-warlike nature;
5. Consider any other relevant matters in relation to defence-related awards; and
6. Make appropriate recommendations.

The Committee was not to inquire into honours and awards of gallantry or meritorious or distinguished service for individuals or units for which appropriate award procedures existed or now exist, nor was it to be concerned with entitlements under the Veterans' Entitlements Act.

Membership Of The Committee Of Inquiry Into Defence Awards

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Preface

On 28 February 1993, the then Minister for Administrative Services, Senator the Honourable Nick Bolkus, and the Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Honourable Gordon Bilney, announced the Government's intention to establish a comprehensive public inquiry into the Australian system of honours and awards. On 27 May 1993, the Minister for the Arts and Administrative Services, Senator the Honourable Bob McMullan, and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, Senator the Honourable John Faulkner, announced that the Inquiry would be conducted in two stages. The first stage was to be a comprehensive review of Defence and Defence-related areas of interest, including the application of present Australian awards in recognition of service by Australians in defence-related activities. The second stage, which will follow the completion of the first, will examine the existing system of honours and awards to ensure that it meets the needs of all sections of the community.

It is important to note that this process, initiated by the Government represents the first time that the Australian public has been consulted on the nature and operation of its national system of honours and awards. We believe this is an important process. A national system of honours and awards should encapsulate the essence and express the aspirations of the people that it serves as well as celebrate those individuals and events which stand above the everyday and mark the extraordinary in our society. To involve the community in getting right the settings and the details of the system is both necessary and appropriate.

As the Committee appointed for the first stage, we have a deep sense of responsibility to reflect accurately the views that have been put to us and to deal fairly with the issues. We also have a strong sense of obligation to do justice to the quality of service that has been rendered by the Defence Force personnel of this country, and to the strength of feeling that has been expressed by many groups of veterans and others associated with Australian military activities.

As is often the case with such inquiries, our recommendations to Government will bring solace to some, disappointment to others. We can only say that we have sought to be fair and even-handed while, at the same time, remaining true to the principles that we have seen as core elements of the Australian system of honours and awards. We have used these principles to guide our deliberations.

In reviewing the past 50 years the Committee has been confronted with many anomalies. In seeking to address these anomalies, we have of necessity, approached them through the eyes of 1994. In doing so, we have not sought to criticise decisions which were made in the past and under Australia's Imperial system of honours and awards. Rather, we would like to recognise the fact that today the nation may well judge matters differently.

In looking at the Imperial system of honours and awards and in examining decisions made at the time the Committee has confronted a frequently expressed view that this system was not an Australian one, and therefore Australians who have received awards under it for campaign service have been recognised by another country (Britain) but not by their own.

The Committee has not accepted this view. The Imperial system of honours and awards was applied across many countries in the Commonwealth of Nations but the system was administered independently in each country. Awards within the system were bestowed by the governments of each of those countries. Australians who received Imperial campaign medals for service in the Australian armed forces received these awards from a grateful Australian Government and people. Their service **has** been recognised by the nation. This being the case the concern of our Committee has been more with those who have received no recognition or perhaps inadequate recognition for their service.

It has also become apparent to the Committee that the depth of feeling expressed by some about the lack of recognition through not receiving an award or medal stems from a general sense that society has failed to appreciate or acknowledge the sacrifice these people have made in the service of the nation. Most Australians by nature are reluctant to seek out or bestow honours. The Committee believes that a formal word of thanks at the time the service was rendered might have gone a considerable way to reducing the depth of feeling which has been expressed to us during our deliberations.

The Committee has received over 800 written submissions, all of which have been carefully considered. The cut-off date for submissions was 6 August 1993 though we accepted submissions until the beginning of our consultations with applicants, which commenced in Sydney at the end of September. A large number of late submissions was also received, most of which raised issues similar to those already considered by the Committee. In addition, the Department of Defence referred to us the many submissions that it received over recent years on matters relating to honours and awards. In relation to substantive issues raised in the submissions, the Committee has held consultations with almost 150 persons representing a total of some 80 veterans, ex-service and other organisations, groups and individuals in each Australian capital city and in Newcastle.

Although the Committee has not met with each group or individual who approached the Committee, we have examined carefully and taken into account the full diversity of issues raised. Our report has not addressed the personal circumstances of everyone who has made a submission, rather it has taken a thematic approach by dealing with issues.

The Committee has held discussions with the Commonwealth Departments of Administrative Services, Defence, Veterans' Affairs, Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Headquarters of the Australian Defence Force, the Australian War Memorial, the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General, the British High Commission, the Canadian High Commission and the Embassy of the United States of America. We would like to thank these organisations and their staff for their assistance and contributions to our deliberations.

In conclusion, we would like to express our special thanks to those many persons who shared with us their extraordinary experiences in rendering service to our nation in arduous and difficult circumstances and who sacrificed something of themselves in supporting the interests of Australia. If one accepts the view that the prosperity of a nation is based on the strength and resilience of its people, then our experience on this inquiry gives us every confidence about Australia's future.

General Peter Gration AC OBE
Major General William (Digger) James AO MBE MC
Dr Michael McKernan
Ms Clare Petre
Mr Noel Tanzer AC

Summary of Recommendations and Proposals

Australian Service Medal 1945–75

The Committee **recommends** the establishment of an Australian Service Medal 1945–75 to recognise service in a prescribed peacekeeping or non-warlike operation for the period 1945–75 where recognition has not extended previously through an award (page 9).

World War II Issues

The Committee **recommends** that the Government agree that all those who participated in the Syrian Campaign [8 June 1941 to 11 July 1941] should receive the Africa Star as well as the 1939–45 Star, and for those who did not receive the Africa Star for prior or subsequent service, that the Government examine whether there exists executive authority in Australia to deem service in Syria to be qualifying service for the award of the Africa Star (page 17).

The Committee **recommends** that the area of the Northern Territory north of latitude 14° 30'S should be considered an operational area for purposes of the 1939–45 Star, for the period 19 February 1942 to 12 November 1943 [the period of the Japanese bombing] and that the Government examine whether there exists authority in Australia to issue the 1939–45 Star for service in this area in this designated period (page 26).

The Committee **proposes** that the matter relating to the service of the 2/110 General Transport Company and other issues relating to the administration of awards discussed at Chapter 11 be examined by Defence in consultation with the Administrative Review Council (page 27).

The Committee **recommends** that a new and distinctive Civilian Service Medal 1939–45 be instituted in the Australian system of honours and awards, to sit just below the proposed Australian Service Medal 1945–75. This award should be made to members of designated civilian groups not previously recognised by an existing World War II award, including the Australian Women's Land Army (AWLA), the Northern Australian Railway (NAR) and perhaps the Civil Constructional Corps (CCC) who served in Australia in arduous circumstances in an organisation subject to military-like organisation and conditions of service in support of the war effort between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945. There may be other groups that fall into a similar category, including those members of the Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) who did not become members of the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (AAMWS). The qualifying period should be 180 days of service (page 30).

Occupation of Japan

The Committee **recommends** the awarding of the Australian Service Medal 1945–75 with clasp 'Japan' to Australians who served with Australian forces in the occupation of Japan from 3 September 1945 to 30 June 1947, with the qualifying period of 90 days (page 36).

Korean War

The Committee **recommends** the awarding of the Australian Service Medal 1945–75 with clasp 'Korea 1953–57' for service in Korea from 28 July 1953 (signing of the armistice) until the Australian troops were withdrawn on 26 August 1957, with the relevant qualifying period of 30 days (page 41).

Malayan Emergency 1948–60

The Committee was made aware of Australian ex-servicemen who were recruited to serve as Police Lieutenants in Malaya and who participated in actions against communist terrorists. The Committee notes that members of civilian police forces and other approved civilian forces could qualify for the General Service Medal (GSM) clasp 'Malaya'. Subject to their meeting the other qualifying criteria, there appears to be no obstacle to these personnel receiving the GSM. The Committee **recommends** that the Interdepartmental Committee on Honours and Awards to Defence Force Personnel is an appropriate body under whom claims by persons who rendered such service can be verified against the qualifying criteria for the GSM (page 47).

The Committee **recommends** that service with the RAAF on Labuan Island in support of counter terrorist operations in Malaya between 8 March 1951 and 7 June 1957 should qualify for the GSM 'Malaya', subject to meeting the qualifying period of service prescribed for the award (page 48).

The Committee **recommends** that the Government continue to pursue with the British Government the eligibility of RAN vessels serving in the Far Eastern Strategic Reserve for the Naval General Service Medal (NGSM) 'Malaya' with a view to identifying those HMA Ships, if any, which qualified for the award (page 52).

Malaysia post 1960

The Committee **recommends** the awarding of the Australian Service Medal 1945–75 with clasp 'Thailand-Malaysia border' to those Australian troops who served in anti-terrorist operations between 1 August 1960 and 16 August 1964 inclusive in the Thailand–Malaysia border area, with a qualifying period of 30 days. The Committee also **recommends** that those RAAF personnel who took part in operations in support of ground forces in the Thailand-Malaysia border area in the same period should qualify for the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp 'Thailand-Malaysia border', with the relevant qualifying service being one operational sortie. In addition, any member of air crew who in the period 17 August 1964 to 30 March 1966 flew an operational sortie in the Thailand-Malaysia border area but did not otherwise qualify for an award of the GSM 'Malay Peninsula' should also qualify for the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp 'Thailand-Malaysia border' (page 56).

Thailand

The Committee **recommends** that service of Australian personnel at the Royal Thai Airforce base at Ubon be recognised through the Australian Service Medal 1945–75 with clasp 'Ubon'. The relevant qualifying period should be 30 days (page 59).

The Committee **recommends** that members of 2 Field Troop Royal Australian Engineers and other Australian personnel who participated in Operation 'Crown' and served in Ban Kok Talat between January 1964 and May 1966 should also be awarded the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp 'Ubon', with the relevant qualifying period of 30 days (page 59).

Vietnam

The Committee **believes** that the service rendered by HMAS *Vampire*, HMAS *Quickmatch*, HMAS *Quiberon* and HMAS *Queenborough* seems comparable for the purposes of the award of the RAS Badge (page 64).

The Committee **believes** that the evacuation of casualties from a war zone should be considered an operational activity for the purposes of the Vietnam Medal and **recommends** that a medical evacuation sortie over Vietnam or Vietnamese waters by air crew and nurses on the posted strength of a unit allocated for direct support of operations in Vietnam be regarded as qualifying service under the terms of paragraph 7 of the Royal Warrant governing the Vietnam Medal (page 66).

The Committee **recommends** that civilian surgical and medical teams and other civilian groups who served in Vietnam under Government jurisdiction and in support of the Australian national effort be eligible for the Vietnam Logistic Support Medal (VLSM) under the prescribed conditions (page 69).

Recognition of overseas humanitarian service

The Committee **recommends** that the Committee charged with investigating stage two (the non-Defence elements) of this comprehensive review of the Australian system of honours and awards, explore further whether service by civilian volunteers rendering humanitarian service overseas in hazardous areas should receive formal recognition by a medal (page 69).

Papua New Guinea

The Committee **recommends** that service in the territory of Papua New Guinea from the formation of the Pacific Islands Regiment in 1951 until the independence of Papua New Guinea on 16 September 1975 be recognised through the award of the Australian Service Medal 1945–75 with clasp 'PNG', with the relevant qualifying period of 180 days. This applies to Australian nationals of all Services including RAN personnel posted to HMAS *Tarangau* and attached vessels (page 76).

On balance the Committee does not believe service post 1975 meets the criterion of 'clearly and markedly more demanding than normal peacetime service' and therefore does not recommend an award. Nevertheless, the Committee **suggests** that the Department of Defence consider all the circumstances in relation to this matter, and would not object should a decision be made to proceed with an award (page 78).

The Committee has been unable to establish why the matter relating to the Vanuatu General Service Medal has not been progressed since 1989 and **believes** that the Australian Government should accept the offer made by the President of Vanuatu (page 78).

Peacekeeping

The Committee **recommends** that service from 13 August 1948 to 13 February 1975 with the United Nations including the Military Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) and the United Nations India/Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM) be recognised through the award of the Australian Service Medal 1945–75 with clasp 'Kashmir' with the relevant qualifying period being 90 days, as established for the 'Kashmir' clasp for the current ASM for service since 14 February 1975 (page 82).

The Committee **recommends** that the appropriate Defence authorities examine the service of Australian service personnel in other peacekeeping operations with a view to establishing, in light of the Committee's recommendation on service in UNMOGIP and UNIPOM, whether equivalent service has also been rendered in these other peacekeeping operations. Where it has been, it should also be recognised through an award (page 82).

The Committee **recommends** that service by Australian military personnel with the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) force in West New Guinea during the period 1 October 1962 to 1 May 1963 should be recognised through the award of the Australian Service Medal 1945–75 with clasp 'West New Guinea', with the relevant qualifying period of 30 days (page 82).

Foreign Awards

The Committee **encourages** individuals who were offered or hold unofficial foreign awards and who believe that under the 1989 Guidelines they may be entitled to receive them officially to apply using the process specified (page 46).

The Committee **recommends** that in addition to encouraging individuals to apply or reapply through the foreign government concerned, the relevant government departments and the Honours Secretariat at Government House consider practical ways in which foreign awards which were offered or accepted unofficially in the past may be re-examined for acceptance officially in the light of our 1989 Guidelines, with primary emphasis on those awards offered during the Vietnam War. This should include consideration of whether the Prime Minister or the Minister for Administrative Services as the Minister responsible for the Australian honours system can be given a discretion to waive the requirements of paragraph 2 of the 1989 Guidelines on the Wearing and Acceptance of Foreign Awards in certain circumstances, e.g. where a formerly allied government has ceased to exist (page 97).

Order of Australia

The Committee believes that issues relating to the Order of Australia are complex and that its terms of reference do not extend readily to examining matters relating to relativities between the General Division and Military Division of the Order of Australia. It **recommends** that

these issues be examined by the committee appointed to conduct stage two of this comprehensive review of the Australian system of honours and awards (page 100).

The Committee **welcomes** the advice of the Chief of the Defence Force and encourages Defence Chiefs to ensure that awards in the Order of Australia continue to be based only on merit against the criteria laid down in the Constitution of the Order (page 102).

The Committee **notes** the advice from the Chief of the Defence Force that any previous instructions issued with the ADF linking rank to the level of award have been withdrawn (page 102).

The Committee **believes** that greater flexibility should be introduced into the granting of awards in the Military Division of the Order so that recently retired members of the ADF can be recognised for their contribution to the Defence Force. The current prescription that only serving members of the Defence Force may be recognised by the Order of Australia could work unfairly in denying recognition to people who are worthy of an award (page 102).

The Committee believes that there would be advantage in making public the process by which nominations in the Military Division are formulated, handled and approved, and **recommends** that the Defence Force pursue this in consultation with the Secretary of the Order of Australia, who is also the Official Secretary to the Governor-General (page 102).

The Committee **recommends** that the words 'and other persons determined by the Minister of State for Defence' be inserted at Section 20 (1) after the words 'Members of the Defence Force' to permit nominations to be made to the Military Division of the Order of members of accredited philanthropic organisations (page 103).

The Committee had its attention drawn to the fact that no honorary awards have ever been made in the Military Division of the Order of Australia. Such awards are made to foreign nationals in the General Division in recognition of service to Australia or humanity at large, and are well received by the Australian community and overseas. The Committee **believes** that there may be bilateral and regional benefits to the nation if outstanding service to the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and to Australia's defence relations rendered by foreign nationals is recognised under the Military Division of the Order. The Committee discussed this issue with Defence Chiefs and is pleased to note that the first honorary appointment of the Military Division of the Order of Australia was announced on 28 February 1994 (page 103).

Conspicuous Service Awards

The Committee **recommends** that issues relating to the Conspicuous Service Cross and the Conspicuous Service Medal should be examined by the Chief of the Defence Force in 1996, at which time these awards will have been in place for a period of five years (page 104).

Defence Long Service Awards

The Committee **believes** that there is no place for an award based on rank in the Australian system of honours and awards (page 112).

The Committee **believes** that postnominals should be reserved for awards that recognise outstanding service rendered by an individual or some outstanding act of bravery or valour. They should not be available for diligent service based on a time qualification (page 112).

The Committee **recommends** an early implementation of a single long service award for all members of the ADF (page 112).

Order of Precedence Issues

The Committee **believes** that in future schedules of the Order of Precedence, a footnoted entry would assist to clarify that the heading 'Long Service Medals' also applies to Imperial efficiency and long service awards (page 114).

Officers and Instructors of Cadets

The Committee **believes** that officers and instructors of cadets should be included with civilian uniformed groups eligible for the National Medal, on the same basis as these groups. Aggregation of part-time service should be permitted, as should back counting of service which has not been recognised through some other long service award. Regular and Reserve members of the ADF should be excluded from the class of cadet officers and instructors eligible for the National Medal (page 115).

Administrative Review

The Committee **recommends** that the Department of Defence examines the existing decision making processes and guidelines relating to the issuing of Service medals in consultation with the Administrative Review Council (page 117).

Abbreviations

AAMWS	Australian Army Medical Women's Service
AASM	Australian Active Service Medal
AATTV	Australian Army Training Team, Vietnam
ABDA	American British Dutch Australia Area
AC	Companion of the Order of Australia
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AFO	Air Force Orders
AIF	Australian Imperial Force
AM	Member of the Order of Australia
AMO	Air Ministry Orders
AO	Officer of the Order of Australia
ASM	Australian Service Medal
AWAS	Australian Women's Army Service
AWLA	Australian Women's Land Army
AWM	Australian War Memorial
BCFK	British Commonwealth Forces Korea
BCOF	British Commonwealth Occupation Force
CCC	Civil Constructional Corps
CMF	Commonwealth Monitoring Force and Citizen Military Forces
CSC	Conspicuous Service Cross
CSM	Conspicuous Service Medal
DEE	Disposal of Enemy Equipment
DFM	Defence Force Medal
DFSM	Defence Force Service Medal
DMZ	Demilitarised Zone
EATS	Empire Air Training Scheme
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
GSM	General Service Medal
HMAS	Her Majesty's Australian Ship
MFO	Multinational Force and Observers
NAR	Northern Australia Railway
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NGSM	Naval General Service Medal
NKPA	North Korean People's Army
OAM	Medal of the Order of Australia
ODF	Operational Deployment Force
ORBAT	Order of Battle
PIR	Pacific Islands Regiment
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PNGDF	Papua New Guinea Defence Force
PNGIM	Papua New Guinea Government Independence Medal
QEA	Qantas Empire Airways
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAF	Royal Air Force

RAN	Royal Australian Navy
RANVR	Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve
RAR	Royal Australian Regiment
RAS	Returned From Active Service
RASB	Returned From Active Service Badge
RCN	Royal Canadian Navy
RFD	Reserve Force Decoration
RFM	Reserve Force Medal
RFSM	Reserve Force Service Medal
RN	Royal Navy
RNZN	Royal New Zealand Navy
RVNAF	Republic of Vietnam National Armed Forces
SAS	Special Air Service
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organisation
UN	United Nations
UNIPOM	United Nations India/Pakistan Observer Mission
UNMOGIP	United Nations Military Group in India and Pakistan
UNTEA	United Nations Temporary Executive Authority
USAF	United States Air Force
VAD	Voluntary Aid Detachment
VDC	Volunteer Defence Corps
VLSM	Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal
WRANS	Women's Royal Australian Naval Service
WAAF	Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Chapter 1: Introduction and Statement of Principles

The practice of bestowing honours and awards for outstanding service, gallantry and participation in military campaigns became widespread through European countries in the nineteenth century. By any measure, Australia's system of honours and awards is recent, the first elements being put in place on 14 February 1975. The traditions of our system, however, lie in the Imperial System. The Victoria Cross, which stands pre-eminent amongst Australian awards, was established in 1856 in the Imperial System to recognise conspicuous gallantry, daring or pre-eminent acts of valour or self-sacrifice, or extreme devotion to duty in the face of the enemy. The Victoria Cross, while continuing in the Imperial System, has also been adopted into the Australian System of Honours and Awards through Australian Letters Patent signed by the Queen of Australia.

The Imperial System of Honours and Awards

The Imperial system of orders, decorations and medals had exclusive application in Australia until 14 February 1975. From that date until 5 October 1992, when the Prime Minister the Honourable Paul Keating announced that the Federal and State Governments had agreed to make no more recommendations for Imperial honours, the system continued to be either used or available to be used in Australia. Awards under the Imperial system were granted or recognised by the Sovereign as Australia's Head of State on the recommendation of Australia's Federal Government or State governments. In addition there were various awards within the Sovereign's personal gift which can still be made under our current system of honours and awards.

The Imperial system of honours and awards applied across many countries in the Commonwealth of Nations, but was administered independently in each country. Awards within the system were bestowed by the governments of each of those countries. In most cases, the elements comprising the Imperial system were regulated by Statutes, Royal Warrants or Regulations issued in the United Kingdom. Among other things they provided for the designation, conditions of eligibility and ceremonial considerations associated with each award. The Australian Government was entitled to make recommendations on altering or including matters in Royal Warrants for Imperial awards, and did so on a few occasions. In addition, two awards were instituted in the Imperial system on the recommendation of the Australian Government — the Australia Service Medal, for service in the Second World War, and the Vietnam Medal.

Briefly, the Imperial system of honours and awards consisted of operational and non-operational components.

Operational awards were made to servicemen and eligible civilians and included:

- awards for gallantry, distinguished service and meritorious service, published either immediately or in periodic lists; and
- campaign medals to recognise participation in a major campaign or theatre of war and general operation awards for minor campaigns (e.g. the General Service Medals).

Non-operational awards were made to civilians and servicemen and included:

- awards for distinguished or meritorious service, published in the half yearly honours lists; and
- awards made for bravery in peacetime, for special service, and for long service and good conduct in the civil and military Services, published at various times throughout the year.

Several non-operational awards were available to members of the armed forces and eligible civilians for actions performed or service in operational areas. Awards for distinguished service were usually made in the Order of the Bath or the Order of the British Empire while a decoration such as the George Cross was awarded for outstanding bravery not in the face of the enemy.

There was, however, a distinct group of awards available to recognise gallantry and devotion to duty by members of the armed forces in action.

Under the coordination of the Department of Defence, each Service issued its own instructions regarding standards and procedures for the processing of recommendations. The Prime Minister had the final responsibility for ensuring that the standards set out in the various Statutes, Royal Warrants, Regulations and British Command Papers were maintained. He submitted recommendations to the Sovereign and the Governor-General as appropriate.

Figure 1.1: Imperial system of honours and awards

Non-operational awards
Orders
The Most Noble Order of the Garter
The Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle
The Most Honourable Order of the Bath
The Order of Merit
The Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George
The Royal Victorian Order
The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire
The Order of the Companions of Honour
The Distinguished Service Order
The Imperial Service Order
Knight Bachelor
Decorations
The George Cross (GC)
The George Medal (GM)
The Royal Red Cross
The Air Force Cross (AFC)
The Air Force Medal (AFM)
The Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem
The Albert Medal (AM)

Medals

The Queen's Police Medal for Gallantry (QPM)
 The Queen's Police Medal for Distinguished Service (QPM)
 The Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal
 The Queen's Fire Service Medal for Gallantry (QFSM)
 The Queen's Fire Service Medal for Distinguished Service (QFSM)
 The Fire Brigade Long Service and Good Conduct Medal
 The Edward Medal (EM)
 The Polar Medal
 Military Efficiency and Long Service Decorations and Medals
 The Queen's (or King's) Commendation

Operational Awards

Orders

The Distinguished Service Order (DSO)

Decorations

The Victoria Cross (VC)
 The Distinguished Service Cross (DSC)
 The Military Cross (MC)
 Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)

Medals

The Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)
 The Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (CGM)
 The Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (Flying) (CGM)
 The Distinguished Service Medal (DSM)
 The Military Medal (MM)
 The Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM)
 War Medals and General Service Medals
 Mention in Despatches

The Australian System of Honours and Awards

The Australian system of honours and awards was instituted on 14 February 1975 with the establishment of the Order of Australia, the Australian Bravery Decorations and the National Medal.

On 20 April 1982, Defence Force Service Awards were introduced and Defence personnel were removed from the eligibility criteria for the National Medal, which were also amended to enable part-time and volunteer service in other organisations to qualify for the National Medal. In 1986, the awards of Knight and Dame of the Order of Australia introduced under the Fraser Government in 1976 were abolished. Following a Cabinet Decision in 1985, the Australian honours system was expanded even further to include new operational and non-operational awards. It now comprises a total of nineteen elements to recognise gallantry in war, bravery in peacetime, outstanding merit and long service to Australia.

Figure 1.2: Components of the Australian system of honours and awards

Non-operational awards
Australian Bravery Decorations
Order of Australia
Conspicuous Service Decorations
Nursing Service Cross†
Public Service Medal
Australian Police Medal
Australian Fire Service Medal
Antarctic Medal
Police Overseas Service Medal
Defence Force Service Awards
National Medal
Champion Shots Medal
Operational awards
Victoria Cross
Gallantry Decorations)
Distinguished Service Decoration
Australian Active Service* and Service Medals
Vietnam Medal *
Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal *
Unit Citations

† this award is also an operational award

* occupy the same position in the Australian Order of Precedence of Honours and Awards

In addition to the above, there exists in the Australian Order of Precedence of Honours and Awards certain awards and honours conferred by the Queen in the exercise of the Royal Prerogative (e.g. Knight of the Garter and the Thistle, the Order of Merit and awards in the Royal Victorian Order), awards within the Order of St John, which are conferred by the Queen on the recommendation of the Governor-General as Prior of the Order of St John in Australia, and foreign honours and awards. Imperial honours and awards conferred on the recommendation of Australian governments are also shown in the Australian Order of Precedence. However, awards given to Australians by the British Government, like those given by other foreign governments, are now regarded as foreign awards (e.g. awards in the Order of the British Empire given to Australian military personnel serving in the Gulf War).

Observations about the Imperial and Australian Systems of Honours and Awards

Any comparison of these two distinct systems of honours and awards is difficult. In one sense they are not alike because they have evolved in different eras to meet the needs of societies different in time, place and values. In another sense, the two systems share much in common because the Australian system grew out of traditions and practices established under the Imperial system and there are elements common to both.

From the perspective of 1994, the Committee was asked to look back over time and fulfil its terms of reference by advising the Government on past service which is worthy of recognition. The submissions received by the Committee cover issues which go back to World War II. In many cases the Committee has been struck by anomalies, or has had drawn to its attention service which was overlooked and which by today's standards is worthy of recognition.

To help guide it through the diversity of issues raised, and to give consistency to its approach, the Committee developed a set of guiding principles. These principles have undergone refinement during the course of the Committee's work but their substance was established and agreed to early in the Committee's deliberations. The Committee believes that the principles proved their value as the many submissions and oral presentations made during its inquiry were tested against them.

Statement of Principles

The Committee recognises that the Australian system of honours and awards is underpinned by values which are held in high regard in our society and which characterise the way Australians view the world around them. These values include a sense of fairness, equity and compassion, and an egalitarian commitment to acknowledge the quality of service and substance of action without regard to status or class.

In considering the issues raised by the variety of submissions forwarded for its consideration, the Committee has sought to approach its task in a spirit that remains true to the above values. In addition, the Committee has been mindful that honours and awards must be geared towards recognising the extraordinary, not simply signposting ordinary events in our society. The Committee has also been conscious that in considering service in defence and defence-related areas, it is important to maintain the distinction between warlike and non-warlike service, as well as the distinction between service in operational theatres and that in non-operational areas.

The Committee has developed ten principles to guide its consideration of the many submissions placed before it and the diversity of issues raised therein. These principles are as follows:

1. **Recognition of service by medals (other than medals for long service or special occasions such as a coronation) should only occur when that service has been rendered beyond the normal requirements of peacetime. Normal duties such as training and garrison duties should not be recognised by the award of a medal, even though they may be demanding, hazardous and uncomfortable, and may be undertaken in countries other than Australia. As a general rule, medals should be**

reserved for the recognition of service in military campaigns, peacekeeping or other military activities clearly and markedly more demanding than normal peacetime service.

Normal service in the Defence Force does not in its own right warrant a medal. The conditions of service and salary structure of the Defence Force recognise hazardous duty, relocation and difficulties which arise during the normal course of employment. Medals should be reserved for those who have done something special. The Committee recognises that in certain countries, medals are given to mark various stages in the careers of service personnel. This has never been the practice in Australia and the Committee is not persuaded that the Australian approach should change.

2. **Normally only one medal within the Australian system of honours and awards should be given in recognition of a single period of service. In the case of a major or protracted conflict consisting of different campaigns in different theatres, such as the two world wars, it is appropriate to consider a range of campaign awards. The Committee recognises that overseas service by Australian defence personnel in certain military operations may attract foreign awards or recognition from the United Nations. This should not affect the decision to award an Australian medal. The same considerations apply in relation to medals issued by philanthropic organisations, such as the International Red Cross.**

The Imperial tradition of avoiding duplication of awards has been adopted by the Australian system of honours and awards. The Committee supports strongly its continued application.

3. **To maintain the inherent fairness and integrity of the Australian system of honours and awards care must be taken that, in recognising service by some, the comparable service of others is not overlooked or degraded.**

The Committee is conscious of the need for consistency in its recommendations to Government. The standards of measurement for service that apply must be transparent and fair in the eyes of the community.

4. **The Committee notes that the existing Regulations for defence and defence-related awards and decorations in the Australian system allow for access to these awards by civilians. The Committee believes this is appropriate. Access by civilians should be limited to those closely involved with military activities or in clear support of military efforts in the theatre of operations to which the award relates. Deserving civilians performing humanitarian functions in or near the operational theatre should be considered for a non-defence award.**

Under the Imperial system certain groups of persons such as Merchant Mariners who were closely involved in military activities, qualified for war medals. Where the Australian Defence Force (ADF) has to call on civilian technical and other expertise during the course of its activities in a theatre of operations and these civilians work in close collaboration with the ADF as part of ADF operations, it is appropriate that their eligibility for defence and defence

related awards and decorations be considered on the same basis as the eligibility of ADF personnel in the same situation.

- 5. Decisions to recognise service through the award of a medal must be made against the background of a range of practical considerations, including the practicability of confirming the accuracy of claims and identifying the eligible participants. Another consideration is the passage of time and the proportion of total persons eligible who might be able to claim personally a medal for service which they rendered.**

The integrity of any system of honours and awards requires service to be recognised by a medal to be validated and verified through official records. The Committee is aware that this is not possible in certain cases because of an absence of records or other compelling evidence. There is also a consideration that generally those who rendered the service should be the ones who enjoy personally the celebration of that service through a decoration or award.

- 6. In relation to Imperial awards, the Committee will contemplate amendment to the terms and conditions governing these awards only under the most exceptional circumstances where a clear anomaly or manifest injustice can be established. Otherwise the Committee will seek to find solutions within the established terms and conditions for these awards and will address situations where an anomaly or injustice in application may have occurred.**

Should anomalies or injustices in either the terms and conditions or application of Imperial awards be detected, the preferred method of rectification is to grant access to the Imperial award for which persons would now be considered to qualify. In cases where the Imperial system did not provide recognition for a particular service but where the Committee believes recognition is warranted, it should be made under the Australian system. The Committee has taken account of the views of Her Majesty The Queen that issues relating to Imperial honours and awards for World War Two are now closed. The Committee also notes Her Majesty's preference stated in 1992 that Australian governments no longer make recommendations under the Imperial system of honours and awards, now that Australia has its own comprehensive national system. However, the Committee has balanced this with its approach to issues from the perspective of 1994 and of what is considered fair and reasonable today.

- 7. The Committee adheres strongly to the official view that honours and awards given to Australians on the recommendation of Australian governments under the Imperial system are Australian awards.**

All awards made on the recommendation of an Australian government are Australian awards, whether they are awards made under the Imperial or Australian system. All such awards are an expression of gratitude from a grateful people and nation for services rendered, and have been granted in this light. It may be possible to criticise the Imperial system for not serving the needs of Australia to the same extent as our own system, but it is not appropriate to belittle awards made under that system as inferior or non-Australian.

- 8. Recognising that its work requires viewing past service through the eyes of 1994, the Committee believes that an appropriate benchmark in considering hitherto**

unrecognised service between 1945 and 1975 is the terms and conditions that are currently attached to an award of the Australian Active Service and Australian Service Medals. Service rendered during this period which generally meets those terms and conditions should receive retrospective and comparable recognition.

The Committee believes that the terms and conditions attached to the Australian Active Service Medal for service in warlike operations and the Australian Service Medal for service in non-warlike military operations, and the standards of measure which have been used in relation to these awards are a fair and contemporary expression of the level of service which is worthy of recognition through a medal. The Committee has used these established standards in viewing service in the period 1945–75 in cases where the Imperial system did not recognise such service.

- 9. While the Committee has regard to previous decisions and interpretations on awards made by the Australian Government and military authorities, it will not consider itself constrained by these in meeting its terms of reference. The Committee will take into account any new or additional information which is made available to it and will operate according to the normal standards of fairness.**

The Committee has taken a fresh look at all the issues referred to it by public submissions and has sought to deal with them fairly and equitably.

- 10. Matters relating to honours and awards should be considered on their merits in accordance with these principles, and these considerations should not be influenced by the possible impact, real or perceived, on veterans' entitlements.**

Even though the terms of reference for the Committee preclude it from considering issues relating to the *Veterans' Entitlements Act*, the Committee remains conscious of the nexus between medals and entitlements in some cases. The Committee considers, however, that entitlement issues are a separate matter for consideration by Australian Government and its agencies.

The Australian Service Medal 1945–75 and retrospective recognition of service

There are precedents for considering service pre-1975 for recognition in the Australian system of honours and awards. Recognition has been extended to persons under the National Medal, the Defence Force Service Awards and Order of Australia for service rendered before 1975. For the Defence Force Service Awards and the National Medal, which are long service awards, recognition of service prior to 14 February 1975 is subject to the individual serving on or after that date in an authorised organisation. The Police Overseas Service Medal was established in 1991 to recognise service with international peacekeeping organisations by members of Australian police forces and other persons. The Regulations governing this award allow the Governor-General, on the advice of the Federal Minister responsible for police matters, to declare any service with an international peacekeeping force to be prescribed service. This provision permits backdating, and the award is available to Australian police who served in Cyprus from 1965 onwards as part of the UN contingent. In 1993, the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal was established to recognise service by members of the Australian armed forces or persons who were integrated with the Australian armed forces in support of operations in Vietnam from 29 May 1964 to 27 January 1973.

The Committee has noted these precedents and recommends the establishment of an Australian Service Medal 1945–75 to recognise military service in a prescribed peacekeeping or non-warlike operation for the period 1945–75 where recognition has not extended previously through an award.

Under the Imperial system, General Service Medals recognised service in minor campaigns and operations which did not warrant the issue of a separate medal. These General Service Medals were instituted periodically to cover distinct periods of time (e.g. the Naval General Service Medal 1915–62, the General Service Medal 1918–64 and the General Service Medal 1962 onwards), with a clasp to denote the prescribed campaign or operation. This tradition has been continued in the Australian system, with the Australian Active Service Medal (AASM) and the Australian Service Medal (ASM) established to recognise service from 1975 in warlike operations and non warlike operations respectively.

The Australian Service Medal (ASM) 1945–75 will fill the gap between the ASM 1939–45 and the existing ASM dating from 1975 and should thus apply from the cessation of hostilities at the conclusion of World War II (3 September 1945) to the day before the first day of currency of the existing Australian Service Medal (13 February 1975).

The Committee believes that the terms and conditions relating to this new award should be similar to those relating to the existing ASM, namely:

- the Governor-General, on the advice of the Minister for Defence, may declare a non-warlike operation in which members of the Defence Force were engaged in the period from 3 September 1945 to 13 February 1975 to be a prescribed operation for the purposes of the award;
- the medal may be awarded for service in or in connection with a prescribed operation;

- the conditions for the award of the medal are the conditions determined by the Governor-General on the recommendations of the Minister for Defence;
- the award should be made in the form of the medal with a clasp to denote the prescribed operations;
- the medal may be awarded to persons who served in a prescribed operation as members of the Australian armed services, and other persons included in a class of persons determined by the Minister for Defence for the purposes of the award; and
- should the person fulfilling the conditions of the campaign award be deceased, the award may be claimed by the heirs and successors of the person in accordance with established practice.

Chapter 2: World War II Issues

The Committee received around 70 submissions dealing with issues which related to and arose out of World War II. A similar number of submissions was referred to the Committee by the Department of Defence.

World War II was a time when the nation found its own place in the world, when the war shifted from distant shores to our own region and the shores of our own country. It was the time when we established our enduring alliance with the United States of America. The six years of war saw the highest level of mobilisation the nation has ever experienced. Australia lost almost 40 000 lives in action and many persons suffered as prisoners of war¹. Some 993 000 Australians served in the armed services. Australian troops were involved in most of the major theatres of war across the globe, from Africa to the Pacific, from Europe through the Middle East to the Indian Ocean and South East Asia. The Australian mainland was subject to enemy attack and the threat of invasion seemed real. Civilian society was on a war footing, with large segments volunteering for war related duty or subject to the provisions of the 'National Security (Man Power) Regulations' enforced under the *National Security Act 1939-40*.

A series of war and service medals was created to cover World War II. The question of recognition of service in the full range of campaigns constituting the War was discussed in detail by all the governments of the British Commonwealth, including Australia, at the conclusion of hostilities. These Governments agreed to the proposed range of campaign stars, war medals, emblems and clasps, including the qualifying dates and other qualifying criteria for the awards, prior to the awards being approved by King George VI. The resulting Imperial awards applied to all countries of the British Commonwealth, although Australia, as did Canada and New Zealand, instituted a unique service medal to recognise those who had served with its own armed forces. The range of campaign and service medals that relate to World War II are shown at Figure 2.1.

In 1952, the Queen agreed that there could be no further review of awards for actions during and arising out of World War II. This decision was taken to ensure that arrangements previously put in place by the British Government and other governments of the British Commonwealth would not be altered. The feeling was that any variation or new award could only have given rise to new anomalies and throw out of balance the decisions made at that time by those involved in the campaigns of World War II and its aftermath. The Queen's position in this matter was reaffirmed in 1965. While the Committee has taken account of the Queen's view, it has not been constrained from looking at the range of issues relating to World War II that has been placed before it. The Committee has taken the view that it will approach issues from the perspective of 1994 and of what is considered fair and reasonable today. The Committee is of the view that where there is some clear anomaly or manifest injustice, and where certain administrative steps can be taken to give persons access to Imperial awards from which the Committee believes they have been unfairly excluded, then these steps should be taken to redress the situation.

¹The number of war dead is taken from the Roll of Honour at the Australian War Memorial.

Figure 2.1: Summary of Conditions Governing World War II Campaign and Service Medals**1939–45 Star**

Awarded for service in operations from 3 September 1939 to 2 September 1945. Navy – 6 months service afloat in areas of active operations, Army – 6 months service in an operational command, Air Force – air crew: operations against the enemy subject to completion of 2 months service in an operational unit, non-air crew: 6 months service in an operational command. Star was awarded for entry into operational service (i.e. one day's service in various specified campaigns of a shorter duration than 6 months e.g. Greece, Syria and Malaya).

Atlantic Star

Awarded to naval personnel for 6 months service afloat in the Atlantic between 3 September 1939 and 8 May 1945 provided that the 1939–45 Star had first been earned by 6 months service in an operational area. Awarded to Air Force air crew for operations against the enemy over the Atlantic subject to 2 months service in an operational unit and the prior award of the 1939–45 Star.

Air Crew Europe Star

Awarded for two months operational flying from United Kingdom bases over the United Kingdom and Europe between 3 September 1939 and 5 June 1944 subject to the prior award of the 1939–45 Star.

Africa Star

Awarded to Army for entry into operational service in North Africa (i.e. one day's service on the posted strength of a unit or formation west of the Suez Canal) and other specified areas between 10 June 1940 and 12 May 1943. Temporary visits, journeys and inspections qualified when totalled 30 days. Naval personnel qualified for service at sea in the Mediterranean during the same period. Awarded to Air Force personnel who landed in, or flew over, Northern Africa, during the same period.

Pacific Star

Awarded to Navy, Army and Air Force for entry into operational service (i.e. one day's service) in the Pacific theatre between 8 December 1941 and 2 September 1945. Service in China and Malaya between 8 December 1941 and 15 February 1942 also qualified. Award to Navy was subject to the 1939–45 Star having first been earned by six months service in operations. For air crew not qualified by service on land, one operational sortie over the appropriate land or sea area qualified.

Burma Star

Awarded for service in the Burma Campaign between 11 December 1941 and 2 September 1945. Army – entry into operational service (i.e. one day's service in Burma or in the provinces of Bengal and Assam between 1 May 1942 and 31 December 1943). From 1 January 1944 to 2 September 1945 awarded for service in provinces east of the Brahmaputra River. Awarded to Navy for service in the Bay of Bengal and to Air force and Navy air crew for one operational sortie.

Italy Star

Awarded for operational service in Sicily, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia and other specified areas between 11 June 1943 and 8 May 1945.

France and Germany Star

Awarded for entry into operational service in France, Belgium, Holland or Germany between 6 June 1944 and 8 May 1945. Service afloat in the North Sea in support of land operations, and operations by air crew against the enemy over Europe qualified.

Defence Medal

Awarded for 6 months service in various specified non-operational areas subjected to enemy attack or closely threatened. Examples include: Northern Territory north of Katherine from 3 September 1939 to 2 September 1945, Palestine/Sinai from 3 September 1939 to 8 May 1945, Malaya from 3 September 1939 to 7 December 1941 and Torres Strait Islands from 3 September 1939 to 2 September 1945.

War Medal

Awarded for 28 days full-time duty between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945. Service did not have to be continuous.

Australia Service Medal

Awarded for 18 months full-time duty in Australia or overseas between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945. Awarded to members of the Volunteer Defence Corps for three years part-time duty.

World War II: Service Overseas

1939-45 Star

Submissions were received about reducing the qualifying period for the 1939-45 Star. Many service personnel served overseas in operational areas of an operational command for periods less than the required six months, or for less than two months in an operational unit in the case of air crew. The Committee notes that special provisions were put in place for certain specified campaigns and operations so that the 1939-45 Star could be awarded for service over a lesser period of time. This award was difficult to win and consequently is held in high regard by all who wear it. The Committee referred to its Principles number 3 and number 6 in considering this matter.

The Committee appreciates the sentiments of those who nearly qualified for awards, but sees no valid reason to vary the criteria established at the time to reflect a reasonable cut-off period.

The Australia Service Medal

The Committee received a number of submissions which argued that Australians who saw service with British, Commonwealth or other Allied Armed Forces should nevertheless qualify for the Australia Service Medal 1939–45. These submissions argued that the Australia Service Medal should recognise service by Australians in World War II. The Australia Service Medal was designed as an award additional to the Campaign Stars, the Defence Medal and the War Medal 1939–45 to recognise service specifically by members of the Australian armed forces, Mercantile Marine and civilian personnel who served in an operational area. The Committee believes that to extend the qualification for the Australia Service Medal to include Australians who served in other armed forces is contrary to the original intent of the award, which is to identify those who served under Australian colours. The Committee does not support any change to the conditions governing this award.

There is a further group of submissions which recommended that the qualifying conditions for the Australia Service Medal be changed from 18 months service to some lesser period of time. The qualifying period for the New Zealand Service Medal was 30 days. The Committee appreciates the sentiments of those who nearly qualified for awards, but sees no valid reason to vary the criteria established at the time to reflect a reasonable cut-off period.

The third group of submissions in relation to the Australia Service Medal argued for the addition of clasps to the medal to distinguish certain service, like participation in the campaigns in Syria, Crete and Greece, which were not recognised by separate campaign awards. The Committee sees merit in this approach, but notes that most people involved in these campaigns would have received the Africa Star. In the case of Syria, the Committee prefers the course of action recommended below for those who did not qualify for the Africa Star. Other proposals, including one suggesting commemoration of members of the Victory Contingent which marched in London in 1946, were considered and ruled out by the Committee. The Committee also received submissions suggesting that a clasp to the Australia Service Medal be given to denote service off the Australian coastline below the 12° of latitude. With reference to its Principles number 2 and number 3, the Committee does not support this suggestion. The Committee appreciates the level of enemy activity off the Australian coastline, but believes that service in this area has already been adequately recognised. Other questions relating to this service are dealt with later in this chapter.

Africa and the Middle East

A number of submissions dealt with the Syrian Campaign from 8 June 1941 to 11 July 1941². This short and bitter campaign against primarily Vichy French forces involved predominantly Australian forces but also included British, Free French and Indian troops. Altogether there were 4700 casualties of which 1600 were Australian. The campaign was aimed at preventing the Germans consolidating a foothold in Syria, including air bases from which they would be able to attack Egypt, the Suez Canal, Palestine or Iraq³. It was a campaign linked strategically

²Australian troops continued to service in Syria after the operations.

³Evidence of concern about German air forces in Syria is shown by Menzies' cable to Churchill on 29 May 1941 when he pointed out that the British defeats in Greece and Crete had been caused partly by overwhelming German air strength; if the Germans established an air base in Syria they could threaten not only Iraq and Palestine, but the Suez Canal. He urged Churchill to occupy Syria. Horner, D M 1982, *High Command: Australian and Allied Strategy, 1939-45*, Canberra, Australian War Memorial p. 109.

to the main campaign in North Africa: it involved forces from this theatre and its successful conclusion removed a threat from the rear to the Suez Canal and allowed General Auchinleck to mount the major Crusader offensive in the Western Desert in late 1941.

Most of the Australian troops in the Syrian Campaign came from Palestine, others came from Greece and Crete. Most of these troops had previously served in North Africa. Some troops came from other areas, like the 2/3 Machine Gun Battalion which came to Syria from Australia via Ceylon. Those who participated in the Syrian Campaign qualified for the 1939–45 Star under special provisions relating to that award. In addition, the majority of the Australians saw service west of Suez either before or after their involvement in the Syrian campaign, and therefore also qualified for the Africa Star⁴. However, a small proportion of the Syrian veterans did not serve west of Suez and thus failed to qualify for the Africa Star despite their direct participation in the Allied campaign in this part of the world.

The Committee also notes that service in the campaigns in Abyssinia, Somaliland and Eritrea (which are all south east of Suez) and in Malta (which is not geographically part of Africa) all qualified for the Africa Star, as did Naval and Merchant Naval service anywhere at sea in the Mediterranean. The Committee also notes that members of Australian units who were stationed in Palestine and called forward to the Alexandria area in Egypt with a view to embarkation for Greece and spent 30 days or more in the qualifying area for the Africa Star in March and April 1941, are also eligible for the Africa Star. The 7th Australian Division staged in Alexandria before forming the main component of the Allied invading force in to Syria and its members qualified for the Africa Star on this basis⁵. The Committee believes that given the intensity of the Syrian campaign and its direct strategic relevance to the major campaign in North Africa, and noting the existing exceptions to the 'west of Suez' rule, it seems anomalous not to recognise the Syrian Campaign as qualifying service for the Africa Star. It seems that it was omitted because of the brevity of the actual campaign but the Committee believes the intensity and importance of the campaign more than compensates for its brevity.

In seeking ways to recognise this service, the Committee is mindful of its Principle number 6, whereby it will contemplate amendments to the terms and conditions governing Imperial awards only in the most exceptional circumstances where a clear anomaly or manifest injustice can be established. The Committee is also aware that in a Statement to the House of Representatives on 18 May 1945, the Acting Prime Minister, the Honourable Ben Chifley noted the Australian Government's support for a similar approach to be taken towards recognising service in Crete, Greece and Syria as in recognising service with the Eighth Army and First Army in North Africa which were awarded the Africa Star with a distinguishing emblem. The Committee believes that in the case of the campaign in Syria, a clear anomaly has occurred in relation to a number of Australian troops.

Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the Government agree that all those who participated in the Syrian Campaign should receive the Africa Star as well as the 1939–

⁴The Africa Star is granted for operational service of any length in North Africa from the date of entry of Italy into the war on 10 June 1940, up to the date of the ceasefire of operations against the enemy in North Africa on 12 May 1943 inclusive.

⁵Commonwealth of Australia, December 1948, *Summary of the Conditions of Award of the Campaign Stars, the Defence Medal and the War Medal: Wearing of Emblems denoting mentions in despatches, King's Commendations for brave conduct and King's Commendation for valuable service in the air.* (Issued by authority of the Hon John J Dedman, MP, Minister of State of Defence. p.11

45 Star, and for those who did not receive the Africa Star for prior or subsequent service, that the Government examine whether there exists executive authority in Australia to deem service in Syria to be qualifying service for the award of the Africa Star.

Indian Ocean

Qantas Empire Airways Perth–Colombo–Karachi Route

Submissions to the Committee about service in the Indian Ocean region included a number on behalf of former Qantas Empire Airways (QEA) air crew who operated the service Perth–Colombo–Karachi, 1943–46, initially in Catalina flying boats and later in Liberators and Lancasters. The Committee met with members of the Catalina Flying Service in Perth. The route across the Indian Ocean was kept open as a link to the United Kingdom, so that important personnel, mail and despatches could continue to flow between the two countries. The air crew involved were RAAF reservists who served with QEA to keep this vital long range transport and communications route open. The efforts of these crew were extraordinary, flying over the ocean in complete radio silence for very long distances (the Perth–Colombo leg averaged about 26 hours flying time non-stop). Navigation was by the monitoring of ground radio stations or by celestial means. The planes were vulnerable to enemy air attack⁶ from Japanese occupied Netherlands East-Indies or from carrier-borne aircraft, although there is no record of such an attack. A similar route was operated between Honolulu and Sydney.

In some ways, the service of this group was akin to the service rendered by the Merchant Marine, yet its service did not qualify for the same range of campaign and service awards. The

1939–45 Star and Africa Star were awarded under certain conditions to air crew of transport aircraft for service on specified overseas routes. The Committee was advised that following a report to the British Parliament in 1946, consideration was also to be given to other Campaign Stars being awarded to those civilian air crews who flew into or through theatres of war or over dangerous waters⁷, but there is no evidence that this was done. Members of civil air transport crew flying over an operational area could qualify for the War Medal 1939–45. Civilian members of the RAAF Reserve could also qualify for the Australia Service Medal if they served for 18 months as air crew in Australian registered civilian aircraft in operational areas or made at least three separate flights over, or three or more landings in, military operational land areas. In the case of one person who made a submission to the Committee, the Committee, in referring the matter on to the Discharged Personnel Records, Air Force Office, Department of Defence, was able to secure for this person medals for which he was entitled but which he had not previously claimed.

⁶The history of this route is contained in Pattison, B and Goodall, G. 1979, *Qantas Empire Airways Indian Ocean Service 1943-1946* Aviation Historical Society of Australia, Footscray

⁷Committee on the Grant of Honours Decorations and Medals 1946 *The War Medal 1939-45, The India Service Medal 1939-45, Changes in the Time Qualifications for the Campaign Stars and Defence Medal, Wearing of Emblems Denoting Mentions in Despatches, King's Commendations for Brave Conduct and King's Commendations for Valuable Service in the Air. Presented by the Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister of Defence, to the Parliament by Command of His Majesty June 1946.* His Majesty's Stationery Office, London. p.18

While the Committee does not believe that additional recognition through some medal or award is warranted, it believes that the service rendered by these crew is unique and of considerable interest from the viewpoint of civil aviation history in wartime. The Committee has written to the Managing Director of Qantas Airways Ltd to explore ways in which the service of these crews can be commemorated.

Other Service in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia

The Committee considered a submission that service in Malaya, Singapore and the Netherlands East Indies before the Japanese invasion should qualify for the Defence Medal. The Committee notes that six months' service overseas in designated territories subjected to air attacks or closely threatened qualified for the Defence Medal, but that Malaya, Singapore and the Netherlands East Indies are not included. The Committee believes that this is appropriate given that Japan did not enter the War until 7 December 1941. The Committee also notes that special provisions are in place to cover the period of the enemy invasion of Malaya and Java for the purposes of the 1939–45 Star and the Pacific Star. Submissions for a new and discrete campaign award for service in Malaya during this period are not supported by the Committee in the light of its Principles number 2 and number 6.

Another submission about service in the Indian Ocean noted that RAN personnel who served in Australian corvettes as convoy escorts and on other defence related duties in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea did not get special recognition, despite known enemy submarine activity in the area, whereas those engaged on similar duties in the Bay of Bengal received the Burma Star or a clap to the Pacific Star. The Committee notes that service by RAN personnel in the Indian Ocean could attract an award of the 1939–45 Star, the War Medal and the Australia Service Medal and does not recommend a new or discrete operational award for this service.

The Pacific Region

Submissions to the Committee about service in the Pacific region covered a range of issues. The common theme was to seek some relaxation of the conditions that relate to the Pacific Star.

Some of these submissions suggested an extension of the qualifying dates for the award (from 8 December 1941 to 3 September 1945). One submission noted that isolated hostile attacks in the Pacific region commenced before the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941, allegedly by German raiders. Attacks took place against Nauru in December 1940, leading to the despatch of two forces from the 2/1 Australian Medium Regiment to Ocean Island (Heron Force) and Nauru (Wren Force). Service with these forces did not qualify for the 1939–45 Star or the Pacific Star. Other submissions noted the role of 12/40 Battalion in Timor and of the 26th Australian Infantry Battalion in Rabaul and service personnel elsewhere guarding and repatriating tens of thousands of Japanese Prisoners of War after the surrender of Japan — duty which failed to qualify for the 1939–45 Star or the Pacific Star, and the case of the MV *Duntroon*, which failed to qualify for the Pacific Star.

The Committee believes that the qualifying dates for World War II campaign awards are well understood and correctly established. Although the Committee appreciates the sometimes difficult circumstances under which service was rendered in the Pacific region before Japan's entry into the war and following its surrender, the Committee does not recommend changes to

the qualifying dates. In relation to service in Rabaul and elsewhere guarding and repatriating POWs immediately after the war, the Committee does not believe that these activities are sufficient to attract a new or separate award. In reaching this position, the Committee is guided by Principles number 1 and number 8. In relation to the MV *Duntroon*, there is insufficient evidence that the ship entered the prescribed area for the Pacific Star during the prescribed time period for the award.

There is a further group of submissions which sought access to the Pacific Star for service off the east coast of Australia below 12°S for members of the RAAF, RAN and Merchant Marine. Some 37 ships were attacked or sunk in this area, including the hospital ship *Centaur* which was torpedoed and sunk approximately 40 kilometres off the southern end of Moreton Island on 14 May 1943. One submission made a special plea for members of the Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve Naval Patrol who patrolled the harbours and estuaries of Australia. It should be noted that all persons above were eligible for at least the War Medal and the Australia Service Medal. Again, while the Committee appreciates the sometimes hazardous circumstances that applied to the waters of the east coast of Australia below 12°S, the Committee does not recommend any variation to the defined qualifying limits for the Pacific Star and 1939–45 Star for the reasons stated in the previous paragraph.

The issue was also raised of special recognition for 'Z' Forces, Allied Intelligence Bureau and coastwatchers operating in Japanese occupied territories by way of some special clasp to an existing World War II award or some new medal.

The Committee acknowledges those engaged in special operations and their service throughout the war in very hazardous circumstances. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that this service has been adequately recognised through campaign medals and individual awards for gallantry and distinguished service. The Committee does not believe there is sufficient justification to depart from the long established practice of not awarding particular units, however distinguished, a special device on a campaign medal. With reference to its Principles number 2 and number 5, neither does the Committee believe that there are grounds for considering any new award.

Merchant Marine and the Empire Air Training Scheme

The Committee received submissions and took evidence on behalf of the Merchant Marine and the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS) seeking special recognition through a separate medal or award for service in each of these two groups during World War II.

A special Imperial award, the Mercantile Marine War Medal, was struck for the Merchant Navy service during World War I. No similar provision was made for service in World War II. As members of the Merchant Marine were eligible to qualify for the full range of campaign and service medals, the Committee believes that this constitutes sufficient recognition. In reaching this position, the Committee is mindful that there were no awards specifically for service in a particular Armed Service during World War II. The Committee also received submissions arguing that all service at sea in merchant vessels should qualify for the Defence Medal because ships everywhere were under threat of enemy attacks. The Committee notes that the existing criteria for the Defence Medal does not support this interpretation and, with reference to its Principle number 6, does not support any amendment to the criteria for the Defence Medal.

The Combined Aircrew Association argued that Australian members of the RAAF who participated in the EATS also deserve special recognition through the striking of an 'EATS Aircrew Commemorative Medal'. It pointed to the level of danger associated with training under this scheme, which was said to be of a greater order than training for service in the Army or the Navy. In addition, the Association wishes to mark the unique nature of the EATS which involved all of the countries of the British Commonwealth. Training of itself has never attracted a discrete award in either the Imperial system or the present Australian system of honours and awards, and the Committee does not recommend that an exception be made in the case of the EATS. Nor is the Committee persuaded that a special official commemorative medal should be struck. Such awards have been traditionally reserved for special national events like coronations or jubilees. For these reasons the Committee does not believe that separate recognition is justified for air crew who served with the EATS.

Foreign Awards

The Committee also received a number of submissions about foreign awards offered to Australian units and individuals. Under the guidelines which were in place until 1989 governing the acceptance and wearing of foreign awards, these were declined. Cases drawn to the attention of the Committee include the War Commemorative Cross 1940-45, instituted by the Dutch Government in March 1944 for all Dutch service personnel who served in any branch of the Dutch forces for at least six months during World War II, and the Philippines Liberation Medal. The Committee notes that new Guidelines on the Acceptance and Wearing of Foreign Honours or Awards by Australians were introduced in 1989 and are more liberal than the guidelines previously applied. Chapter 10 of this report contains a full discussion of matters relating to Foreign awards.

World War II: Service in Australia

Active Service in Darwin

The war came to Darwin on 19 February 1942 when the city was attacked by some 188 enemy aircraft. Most women and children had been evacuated by this time, leaving Darwin with a civilian population of about 2000, a military garrison of some 14 050 troops and two RAAF squadrons and base personnel consisting of about 2000 officers and other ranks. Two hundred and forty-three people were killed and some 350 wounded or injured in this first attack⁸, five merchant ships were sunk and 23 aircraft destroyed⁹. It is estimated that 146.4 tonnes of bombs were dropped in this first raid. A total of 63 air raids took place against Darwin 19 February 1942 to 12 November 1943 and a further four against other targets in the Northern Territory, leaving a total of 261 dead and 413 injured. This compares with 24 air raids against all other targets in Australia (e.g. Broome, Townsville and Horn Island), leaving two dead and 72 injured.

⁸Commission of Inquiry ...in the matter...of the circumstances connected with the attack made by enemy aircraft at Darwin on 19 February 1942', before His Honour, Mr Justice Lowe, Commissioner: First Report dated 27 March 1942

⁹Gillison, D. 1962, *The Royal Australian Air Force 1939-42*, Vol 3 Official History Australian War Memorial, Canberra

There are various views about the strategic purpose behind Japan's continuing attacks on Darwin. While some of Japan's military planners considered an invasion of Australia a possibility, it seems that Japan's intentions on the whole were confined to isolating Australia from assistance from Britain and the United States, and reducing its capacity to strike back at Japanese expansion¹⁰.

In January 1942, the 7th Military District, which included Australian Forces in the Northern Territory totalling some 14 050 personnel (including 250 members of the Volunteer Defence Corps), was included with Burma, Malaya, Sumatra, Borneo and the Philippines in the Order of Battle (ORBAT) of the short-lived American British Dutch Australia Command (ABDA). ABDA was dissolved in March 1942, when most of the area had been occupied by the Japanese.

The intensity of the war over a sustained period of time was felt more directly in Darwin and its surroundings than in any other part of Australia. The Committee received a large number of submissions on behalf of individuals and units relating to active service in Darwin which argued that such service should be recognised through an operational award. The Committee took evidence from Darwin veterans and historians in Sydney, Darwin and Perth.

The conditions of service in Darwin were harsh, the city was isolated from the rest of Australia by thousands of miles. The waters into Darwin were patrolled by enemy submarines and aircraft. A railway line (the Northern Australian Railway) was built from Birdum to Darwin, and together with a newly built and fairly rudimentary highway, provided the major supply route to the forces stationed in Darwin. Tropical diseases were always present. There was little relief by way of diversion for those stationed in the Darwin area, and they lived under harsh, and operational field conditions.

Six months service in the Northern Territory north of latitude 14° 30'S for the duration of the war qualified for the Defence Medal. The rationale given at the time for this award is outlined in a letter dated 19 June 1945 from the Acting Minister for the Army, the Honourable J M Fraser, to the Right Honourable W M Hughes CH KC MP (see Figure 2.3). In addition, service in the area after the first Japanese bombing attack qualified personnel for the Returned from Active Service Badge. It should be noted that while the Defence Medal applied to all members of the armed forces and certain civilian groups who served for three years in the United Kingdom from 2 September 1939 to 8 May 1945 and to non-operational areas elsewhere subject to air attack and closely threatened, there were provisions made for some areas covered by the Defence Medal to also have access to the 1939–45 Star. These include air crew who served two months in an operational unit, with special provisions for air crew of fighter aircraft engaged in the Battle of Britain between 10 July and 31 October 1941 and service in Malta between 10 June 1940 and 12 May 1943. The latter also qualified for the Africa Star. Air crew serving in Darwin did not qualify for the 1939-45 Star¹¹.

¹⁰Hasluck p.144

¹¹Letter dated 15 February 1994 to Mr L Suur from D Pullen, Air Force Records' Office

An argument for some similar sort of recognition is put forcefully by various submissions presented to the Committee. After pointing out that Darwin was subject to persistent enemy attack over a period of 21 months, the Heavy Anti-Aircraft Association (WA) in its submission noted:

Our members do not wish to diminish the value or importance of the Defence Medal awarded them. However, this medal was awarded to United Kingdom defence personnel (including civilians ...) who lived in close proximity to their own homes and not separated from their families for periods, in some cases exceeding two years. Living conditions in the Northern Territory were primitive, food very poor and tropical diseases rife.

Under the conditions governing an award of the 1939–45 Star, the Commonwealth of Australia is not regarded as being in an area of operational command. Although it acknowledges the differences in intensity, the Committee sees parallels between Darwin and the Battle of Britain and Darwin and Malta in that:

- there was an intense air war fought over Darwin where Australian aircraft were often outnumbered and were expected to repel an enemy thought at the time to be intent on invading the country;
- like Malta, Darwin was isolated, difficult to supply and under prolonged air attack.

The Committee believes that there is sufficient weight of evidence (sustained air attack, casualties, counter air operations, isolation, nature and conditions of service) to consider the Darwin area for the period of the bombing (19 February 1942 to 12 November 1943) to be an operational area for the purpose of the 1939–45 Star. The Committee appreciates that matters relating to World War II Medals were subject to fine judgements made at the time. However, it also notes that these judgements were made against the background of balancing the interest of different Commonwealth countries against that of the British Government. It also notes that the dimensions of the war in Darwin have become the subject of significant historical research in relatively recent times and that this has caused a reassessment of the circumstances relating to that theatre of operations. This has been a process of Australia reclaiming the history of our contribution to the war previously subsumed by broader Allied perspectives.

The Committee recommends that the area of the Northern Territory north of latitude 14 ° 30'S should be considered an operational area for the purposes of the 1939-45 Star, for the period 19 February 1942 to 12 November 1943 and that the Government examine whether there exists authority in Australia to issue the 1939–45 Star for service in this area in this designated period.

Other Military Service in Australia

The Committee received a number of submissions from people who rendered military service in Australia. Where this service was rendered outside of the area of the Northern Territory north of latitude 14° 30'S, this service would be eligible for recognition through an award of the War Medal 1939–45 and the Australia Service Medal, but would not qualify for an award

of the Defence Medal or campaign awards. Submissions seeking an extension of the provisions relating to the Defence Medal were made on behalf of members of the 1st Armoured Division of the AIF, who mainly saw service in Western Australia, members of the Survey Corps, who together with tens of thousands of other soldiers served in parts of northern Australia in anticipation of a Japanese invasion, personnel on anti-aircraft defence duty in Townsville and members of the 2/163 and 2/110 Australian General Transport Companies who operated supply convoys between Alice Springs and Darwin. In the case of the transport companies, the Committee heard evidence that some members of these companies may have accrued service in the designated area for the Defence Medal, but that this is not shown on company war diaries or records which allegedly were not kept properly.

The Committee appreciates that members of the Australian armed forces who were directed to serve in Australia rather than overseas, perhaps against their wishes, may feel that their service is not adequately recognised. Nevertheless, under Principle number 1, the Committee believes that the distinction must be maintained between active and other service and between warlike and non-warlike operations, and does not recommend the extension of campaign awards to those with Australian service only, with the exception of those in the Darwin area during the Japanese air raids as discussed above.

The case of the Defence Medal is more difficult, especially since that award is available to all Service personnel and a wide category of civilians who served in the United Kingdom during the war. The Committee acknowledges that enemy air attacks on the United Kingdom throughout the war were of a different measure, being more frequent, widespread and intense, and lasting for a longer period than they did in Australia. Equally, however, it is possible that the more generous provisions relating to the award of the Defence Medal for personnel serving in the United Kingdom reflect Britain's own view of her role in the war. Although the conditions of service in remote parts of Australia were often harsh, there was no sustained real or threatened contact with the enemy other than in the Darwin area. Townsville, for example, was attacked three times over a four day period with no deaths recorded, Broome was attacked four times over 18 months with the loss of one life. The Committee does not recommend any change to the conditions governing an award of the Defence Medal for service in Australia in view of the relativities between those who served in defending Darwin against the enemy and service, though difficult, in other parts of Australia. In reaching this position, the Committee is guided by its Principles number 1, number 3 and number 6.

The Committee had some difficulty in deciding how to address the question of persons who may have rendered qualifying service for the Defence Medal but who may not be able to demonstrate this from official records. In a submission on behalf of the 2/110 General Transport Company it has been suggested, among other things, that other evidence of service, such as contained in a statutory declaration or personal diaries, should be taken into account by the issuing authority in its consideration of an application for a service award.

The Committee proposes that the matter relating to the service of the 2/110 General Transport Company and other issues relating to the administration of awards discussed at Chapter 11 be examined by Defence in consultation the Administrative Review Council.

Civilian Service in Australia

World War II saw large parts of the civilian population mobilised to support the nation's war effort. Many people were subject to the provisions of the 'National Security (Man Power) Regulations' enforced under the *National Security Act 1939–40*, and a large number of Australians volunteered for war-related duty or special service at home. The Committee received many submissions on behalf of volunteer groups, including the Australian Women's Land Army (AWLA), the Northern Australia Railwaymen (NAR), the Civil Constructional Corps of the Allied Works Council (CCC), Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD), members of the Volunteer Coastal Patrol and the Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve (RANVR) Naval Auxiliary Patrol, and the Volunteer Defence Corps (VDC). It also took oral evidence from some of these groups.

Members of the RANVR were eligible for the War Medal 1939–45 and the Australia Service Medal. Members of the VDC were awarded the Australia Service Medal for three years part time service. Some VDC members who served on full time duty also qualified for the War Medal and, if they served around Darwin, the Defence Medal. The Committee believes this constitutes appropriate recognition and it can be compared to those who enlisted for full time service but did not see any duty outside Australia.

There were certain groups, however, who received no recognition at all. Organisations like the AWLA and NAR were similar in some respects to military organisations in their operations, discipline and structure. Those who served with them wore uniforms and often lived in camps in isolated parts of Australia where they undertook work important to the war effort. Although most of the people in these organisations were volunteers, manpower provisions meant that they effectively signed-up for the duration of the war, as in the case of the Armed Services.

The AWLA was established in July 1942 under the Directorate of Manpower to provide labour assistance to the rural industries in their production of food. In October 1944, there were some 3068 AWLA personnel engaged in such tasks. Most of the women who joined did so because they were too young to enlist in one of the Women's Service Auxiliaries like the AWAS, WRANS or WAAAF¹². Many of them were city girls who had little experience of country life and who had to undergo special training before being allocated to parts of rural Australia.¹³ The AWLA was not a Women's Service Auxiliary and was not afforded the benefits and services that subsequently applied to members of these Services. There is evidence, however, that legislation for the AWLA to be recognised as the fourth Women's Auxiliary Service was considered but not proceeded with by the Curtin Government during the final stages of the war.

In a submission supported by all of the State Branches of the Australian Women's Land Army United Association, the President of the NSW Branch argued for some appropriate award to be granted in recognition of service in the AWLA.

The story of the NAR is also intriguing. After the first attack on Darwin by Japanese aircraft on 19 February 1942, the Army took control of the NAR and accelerated the upgrading and consolidation of the railway line between Birdum and Darwin. The NAR's headquarters,

¹²Oral evidence, Sydney, 1 October 1993

¹³Oral evidence, Hobart, 6 October 1993

locomotive depot and workshops were relocated from Darwin to Katherine. The activities of the NAR included facilitating civilian and medical evacuations, maintaining supplies for the military forces stationed in Darwin and keeping open the lines of communication between Alice Springs and Darwin.

Civilian employees of the NAR were subject to standard Emergency Control Regulations. Their numbers were augmented with civilian volunteers from elsewhere in Australia and by certain army personnel. Separated from their families for periods often over a year at a time, the railwaymen lived in camps maintained and provisioned by the Army and they were charged with building and maintaining a line which developed from carrying one train per fortnight to forty trains each way daily¹⁴. Work often went on through the evenings and weekends and NAR personnel were exposed to real danger as they worked within the area affected by Japanese bombing. Again, members of the NAR have sought recognition through some kind of award.

The issue of the Civil Constructional Corps (CCC) was raised only indirectly with the Committee. The CCC was formed on 14 April 1942 to undertake a variety of construction projects for which the Allied Works Council was responsible: including docks, aerodromes, roads, gun emplacements, stores, barracks, hospitals and factories¹⁵. The work was often arduous and undertaken in severe climatic conditions in remote areas of Australia. Where this was the case the Committee sees parallels with the NAR and the AWLA. The Corps' peak strength of 53 859 was reached on 12 August 1943. About 8500 volunteered, 28 000 had already been working on Allied Works Council projects and 16 000 had been called up for service. The major occupational categories were labourers (12 000), carpenters (12 000) and truck drivers (3300).

CCC members worked in civilian clothes but were issued with a lapel badge as a sign of their membership. Although the Corps remained a civilian organisation, it had some of the restrictions but few of the benefits that normally apply to military organisations. Civilian rates of pay were adopted, but no army entitlements such as sick leave, dependants' allowances and repatriation allowances were payable. Members could continue their membership of a trade union and certain existing rights of employment, but could not refuse to work or go on strike. On certain industrial issues, however, they were able to make advances. They were subject to regulations governing their conduct, including orders regarding the good order of works and camps.

The Committee believes that recognition for these groups through some sort of medal is warranted. As no appropriate medal exists, the Committee recommends that a new and distinctive Civilian Service Medal 1939–45 be instituted in the Australian system of honours and awards, to sit just below the proposed Australian Service Medal 1945–75. This award should be made to members of designated civilian groups not previously recognised by an existing World War II award, including the AWLA, NAR and perhaps the CCC who served in Australia in arduous circumstances in an organisation subject to military-like organisation and conditions of service in support of the war effort from 3 September 1939 to 2 September 1945. There may be other groups that fall into a similar category, including those members of the VAD who did not become members of the

¹⁴Oral evidence, Darwin 13 October 1993

¹⁵Hasluck: *op.cit.* *A History of the Civil Constructional Corps*, Australian War Memorial 70, item 161. Vol II pp 233–236

Australian Army Medical Women's Service (AAMWAS). The qualifying period should be 180 days of service.

Some concern has been expressed during the Committee's consideration with Government departments and agencies that there may be difficulties in fencing-off eligible categories of service for this award. The Committee believes that the qualifying criteria expressed in the above paragraph are a sufficiently clear basis for the Government's Interdepartmental Committee on Honours and Awards to Defence Force Personnel to develop and advise Government on workable qualifying criteria.

Concern has also been expressed that records of service for some of these civilian groups may be incomplete and difficult to access. This is not so in the case of the AWLA, but the Committee was advised that such records as exist for the NAR are spread between Commonwealth and State Railway authorities and military records offices. The Committee appreciates that this may cause problems in terms of its Principles number 3 and number 5. It is important to ensure in relation to any medal in the Australian system of honours and awards that verification of service is practical and accurate. Should substantial problems emerge in meeting the required verification standards in relation to a particular group of persons for access to the proposed Civilian Service Medal 1939-45, then the Committee would support some alternative means of recognition for that group, such as a medallion. Applicants argued that a certificate would be quite inappropriate recognition after 50 years and the Committee agrees.

As this is a civilian award, it would be appropriate that it be administered by Government House with an appropriate Federal Government Minister designated as the recommending authority rather than by the Australian Defence Force.

Chapter 3: Occupation of Japan

British Commonwealth Occupation Force

The surrender of Japan on 2 September 1945, after the dropping of atom bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August, signalled the end of the Second World War. To oversee the surrender and rehabilitation of the Japanese Islands it was necessary to occupy Japan, and Australia agreed to participate in this occupation. In 1945 the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) was established under the command of Lieutenant General Sir John Northcott, with General MacArthur as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan. The authority from Headquarters First Australian Army to call for volunteers for BCOF was issued in September 1945, and approval was given in early October for the raising of the 34th Australian Infantry Brigade Group, the army component of BCOF¹⁶.

The first Australians were in Japan on 2 September 1945 when General (later Field Marshall) Sir Thomas Blamey, with his Staff Officers in attendance, was a signatory to the surrender document on the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. Progressively, advance parties of various units started arriving in Japan, first to organise the repatriation of Australians who had been prisoners of war of the Japanese, and then to set up the logistic organisation to support the main force.

The main component of the first Australian contingent arrived from Morotai in February 1946 from the tropics into the middle of a northern winter. The 34th Infantry Brigade Groups included the 65th, 66th and 67th Battalions, with supporting units of armoured cars, field artillery, engineers, signals, supply, transport, medical and other administrative services. Australia also provided the 130th Australian General Hospital, an area workshop and labour salvage units. There were 4,700 men in the 34th Infantry Brigade Group, and 5,300 in base units¹⁷. The RAAF contributed 81 (RAAF) Wing, consisting of No 76, No 77 and No 82 Squadrons and some ground units¹⁸. 2,200 RAAF personnel were involved¹⁹. The Navy contributed two warships. The other units of BCOF were made up by personnel from a British-Indian division of two brigades and the New Zealand 9th Infantry Brigade as well as a British Commonwealth Air Component. At its peak the BCOF contingent contained 40 000 servicemen and women, 11 500 of whom were Australian. A total of 16,355 served in the main period of BCOF, from 1945 to 1948²⁰.

The role of BCOF was primarily to disarm the remaining Japanese forces, to demilitarise depots and military establishments and to assist in the reconstruction of a country devastated by bombing. The BCOF component of the occupying forces was responsible for the Island

¹⁶Australian War Memorial 114 130/2/27, 130/1/23

¹⁷O'Neill, Robert (1985): *Australia in the Korean War 1950-1953*, -----, Canberra. Vol I, pp 3-6

¹⁸Australian War Memorial 114 130/1/23 p.3

¹⁹Hopkins p.95

²⁰Hopkins p.100

of Shikoku and the five western prefectures of Honshu, which included the city of Hiroshima. The United States was responsible for the remaining area of Japan.

The Committee received a large number of submissions and letters which addressed the service of Australian defence personnel with BCOF in Japan, 1946 to 1950. Members of BCOF did not receive an award in recognition of their BCOF service, although those who served during WWII would have been eligible to receive WWII campaign and service medals.²¹

Several submissions to the Committee suggested the creation of new awards for BCOF service, such as an "Occupation of Japan Medal", an "Occupation Forces Medal"²², an "Atomic and Hazardous Service Medal"²³, and the Australian General Service Medal with clasp "JAPAN"²⁴. Other submissions suggested the awarding of the Australian Active Service Medal and Australian Service Medal with clasp "JAPAN"²⁵. However, the majority of the submissions simply requested that some general form of Australian recognition be given to all those involved with BCOF.²⁶

Several submissions sought to make a case for BCOF service to attract the Returned From Active Service Badge²⁷, but this is not an official honour or award and is outside the terms of reference of the Committee. Some submissions sought to connect BCOF services with Veterans' Affairs entitlements but the latter were explicitly outside the Committee's terms of reference and the Committee did not consider any such claims.

The nature of service in BCOF and the associated hardships changed over time. In examining the nature of this service, the Committee sought to establish whether there were discernible periods of different levels of hardship. When the Australians began arriving in Kure in early 1946, the Japanese people were still in a state of shock after their defeat. Very little rebuilding had been done and the economy was at a standstill. The Australians found the conditions and amenities very poor. At Kaitaichi, for instance, where the 67th Battalion established itself, the troop lived in store sheds which were cold and comfortless. The devastated city of Hiroshima was quite close, and the only outlet for troops seeking relaxation²⁸. One of the largest tasks undertaken was the disposal of enemy equipment. There was an estimated 100,000 tons of explosive and 5,000 tons of war gas in Hiroshima Prefecture alone²⁹ and later hidden caves and tunnels were discovered containing explosives, ammunition and poisonous gases. A special Disposal of Enemy Equipment (DEE) Section was established. Its work was dangerous and technically difficult. In addition to this sort of

²¹The Committee has been made aware that an unofficial "Occupation of Japan Medal" has been issued by the BCOF Association of Queensland. This award is not endorsed by the Australian Government and has no official standing.

²²Mr R J Nightingale, Mr W J Jackson, Mr JN Hemerik

²³Mr L Lacey, Mr RJ Nightingale

²⁴Mr JC Griffiths, Victorian BCOF Sub-Branch of the RSL

²⁵Mr J C Griffiths, Mr RE Ziliotto, Mr J P Deighton, The Australian Veterans & Defence Services Council, Mr Bickle, Mr R J Nightingale

²⁶Mr W J Coffman, BCOF Assoc (NSW), Mr A Stien, Dr J Wood, Mr JB Oehm, Mr EA Mason, BCOF (Japan) Assoc of Aust, Mrs Lacey

²⁷Mr M Stanton, Mr NV Edmunds

²⁸Hopkins p.105

²⁹Australian War Memorial 114 130/2/39 p.10

work, members of BCOF were required to undertake a wide variety of tasks. A typical instruction from the war diary of the 65th Battalion in April 1946 included tasks like investigating periodically all civilian warehouses, food and clothes dumps and in any civilian installation from which illegal trafficking may originate. The Battalion was also expected to report on secret societies, discharged servicemen's organisation or other subversive groups which might be operating against the aims of the allied occupation³⁰.

Historians have remarked, however, that after 1948 the aims of the occupation had been so thoroughly achieved that the reduced force was able to devote more time to military training and exercise and that conditions under which they were operating could 'hardly be described as rigorous'³¹. In June 1947 families of servicemen began to arrive and a township was established in Hiroshima, including chapels, a school staffed by Australian teachers, a shop and a cinema³².

The majority of BCOF troops departed from Japan in 1947, commencing with those from India, then Britain and New Zealand by May 1948. The main responsibilities of BCOF in Japan were diminished in 1948 with the area of its responsibility being reduced to the confines of Kure-Iwakuni. In 1948, Australia also began to reduce its force. The military contribution to BCOF was reduced to a battalion, the 67th, redesignated Third Battalion The Australian Regiment (later The Royal Australian Regiment or RAR). Two RAAF fighter squadrons were withdrawn leaving No 77 Squadron in Japan. The RAN commitment was reduced from two ships to one and the shore establishment, HMAS *Commonwealth*. By mid-1949, only 2 630 Australian were serving with BCOF³³. By 1949, with the exception of a small number of British specialists, the force was exclusively Australian. There were also some Australian civilians present who were associated with the development of amenities for service personnel.

On 31 March 1950 the larger part of the Australian contingent was recalled to Australia. Before this return could take place, the Korean War broke out in June 1950 and these troops remained in Japan to provide support to forward Australian units in Korea. No 77 Squadron was the first Australian unit to be sent to the war. In late 1951, BCOF was reorganised and its responsibilities handed to Headquarters British Commonwealth Forces Korea (BCFK)³⁴. BCOF ceased to exist with the ratification of the Japanese Peace Treaty on 28 April 1952³⁵. The last of its responsibilities were handed to BCFK. The continued use of base facilities established in Japan in support of the Korean war was negotiated between the Australian and Japanese Governments.

The Australian Government of the time raised with British authorities the question of issuing an "Occupation of Japan Medal". At that time, the British Government advised that as they did not intend to issue a medal for the occupation of Germany, they would prefer no medal to be considered for the occupation of Japan. However, the Committee is aware that both France and the United States have issued medals for post war occupation duties.

³⁰Australian War Memorial 52 8/3/102

³¹O'Neill Vol I p.33

³²Hopkins pp. 102, 109-110

³³O'Neill Vol I pp.32-33

³⁴Australian War Memorial 114 130/2/15 p.1

³⁵O'Neill Vol I p. 253

The Committee recommends the awarding of the new Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp "JAPAN" to Australian members who served with Australian forces in the occupation of Japan from the period 3 September 1945 to 30 June 1950 with the qualifying period being 90 days.

Chapter 4: Korean War and aftermath

With the surrender of Japan on 2 September 1945 brought about the occupation of Korea, which had been annexed by Japan in 1910. Both Soviet and United States troops occupied the country on mutual agreement: the former was responsible for the northern half of the Korean peninsula and the United States occupied the southern half. This was an uneasy arrangement, due in large part to the fact that the Soviet Union saw Korea as an ideal country into which it could expand economic and political control, and to the build-up in strength of the Northern Korean People's Army (NPKA). On 25 June 1950, the NPKA launched an attack on South Korea. Progress was swift: by 28 June the NPKA had captured Seoul. The NPKA action was determined by the United Nations (UN) to be a breach of peace. The UN committed troops in defence of South Korea, with General MacArthur as Commander-in-Chief. The Korean War commenced on 1 July 1950 and lasted for over three years until 27 July 1953 when an armistice was signed.

Australia, together with fifteen other countries, undertook to provide combat forces to the UN command in Korea. The RAN commitment began on 28 June 1950³⁶. No 77 Squadron went into action on 2 July. The planned withdrawal of the Australian component of BCOF, the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR), was reversed. 3 RAR was brought up to war establishment by drawing on personnel from its sister battalions in Australia and through special recruiting for a 'K-force'. K-force men, many of them former warrant officers and non-commissioned officers who had fought in World War II, generally made up A and D Companies, while B and C Companies contained mainly ex-BCOF troops and members of the Interim Army which had replaced the 2nd AIF. The Battalion left Japan on 27 September 1950.

Australia's commitment eventually comprised all three services: two infantry battalions, two destroyers or frigates³⁷, one aircraft carrier and one fighter squadron. The Royal Australian Army Medical Corps and the RAAF Nursing Service also served in Korea and at the BCOF General Hospital at Kure³⁸. 1 RAR arrived in Korea on 6 April 1952 and joined the British 28th Infantry Brigade on 1 June 1952. It was relieved on a unit basis by 2 RAR in March 1953. At this point, all three Australian Battalions were in Korea and they paraded together for the first and only time ever on 21 March 1953³⁹.

Approximately 16 000 Australian defence force personnel served in the Korean War of whom 339 were killed, 1 216 wounded and 29 taken prisoner. Australian troops remained in Korea in a gradually reduced form until 19 April 1956. Australian troops remained in Korea in a gradually reduced numbers until 26 August 1957.

³⁶O'Neill Vol. II pp. 613, 616

³⁷The RAN was represented during the war by four frigates, HMA Ships Shoalhaven, Murchinson, Condamine and Culgoa; four destroyers HMA Ships Bataan, Warramunga, Tobruk and Anzac; and one light aircraft carrier, HMAS Sydney. Usually two ships were in Korean waters at any one time. The destroyer, HMAS Arunta and the aircraft carrier HMAS Vengeance served in Korean waters after armistice.

³⁸McIntyre, Darryl: 'Australian Army medical services in Korea', in O'Neill pp.570-585

³⁹O'Neill p.266; Grey, Jeffrey, "The Regiment's first war", in Horner D. (ed) (1990): *Duty First: the Royal Australian Regiment in Peace and War*, Sydney p.266

Writing in 1985, Australia's official historian of the war, Robert O'Neill, found that Australian soldiers had lost none of the 'versatility, toughness and initiative' which were the hall marks of their predecessors in the First AIF and the Second AIF. They proved that 'man for man and unit for unit' they could acquit themselves on the battlefield 'better than most' and they earned 'unstinted praise' from their allies.⁴⁰

The Committee received a large number of submissions and letters from people seeking uniquely Australian recognition for the contribution of Australian personnel who served during the Korean War. It also met with Korean veterans and their representative organisations.

The Committee examined two distinct periods during which Australian troops served in Korea. The first was the period of active operations (1950-53) and the second period extended from the armistice in 1953 to the final withdrawal of Australian forces in 1957. During this latter period the forces remained deployed in the field, vigilant and ready for operations.

Recognition of service in Korea 1950 - 1953

Personnel who served in Korea were eligible to receive two medals, the Korea Medal and/or the United Nations Service Medal with clasp "Korea". Those who received the Korea Medal for service between 1 July 1950 and 27 July 1953 automatically received the United Nations Service Medal (see Figure 4.1 for qualifying details of the two medals). Those who served in Korea from 28 July 1953 to 26 July 1954 received the UN Medal only, as did service personnel in adjacent areas like Japan and Okinawa operating under UN command or sent to support UN operations in Korea in the relevant period from 1950 to 1954.

The Committee is aware that the Canadian Government in 1991 instituted a Volunteer Service Medal for Korea for all members of the Canadian Armed Forces who volunteered and served in the same areas and between the same dates that qualified for an award of the United Nations Medal⁴¹. Those who served in Canadian Forces during the Korean War also qualified for the Canadian Korea Medal, which is based on the Imperial Korea Medal with two distinguishing features - it is struck from silver rather than cupro-nickel and includes the word "Canada" on the obverse of the insignia.

Some submissions pointed to the Canadian decision as a precedent for Australia, arguing that both countries have indigenous systems of honours and awards that grew out of the same British Imperial traditions⁴². The Committee, however, believes that the Australian system of honours and awards stands on its own and has established its own approach and traditions since its introduction in 1975. The Canadian Honours system, which was established in 1967, has similarly developed its own practices. We are dealing with two different national systems of honours and awards and the decisions made by one country should not and do not serve as a precedence for the other.

⁴⁰ O'Neill, R, 1985 *Australia in the Korean War 1950-53*, Vol II, Combat Operations, Canberra. p.289

⁴¹The Volunteer Service Medal for Korea was introduced by the Canadian Government together with two other awards: a Gulf and Kuwait Medal and a Special Service Medal.

⁴²The Korea and South East Asia Forces Association of Australia: NSW Branch, Western Australia Branch, The Naval Association of Australia Federal Council

Many submissions argued for a new Australian award, like the AASM, in addition to the Korea Medal, for service from 1 July 1950 to 27 July 1953. A number of submissions referred to the Korean War as the *forgotten war* and saw it as a conflict unrecognised by the Australian Government⁴³. The first point is a matter of perception, but the Committee acknowledges that the passage of forty years since the armistice and the historical perspectives of the day may have lessened public awareness of this hard and bitter conflict⁴⁴. The Committee, however, does not agree with the second point and refers to its principle number 6, which notes that whereas the Imperial system of honours and awards applied across many countries in the old Commonwealth of Nations, it was administered independently in each country. Awards within the Imperial system were bestowed by each of the governments in question. Those Australians who received Imperial campaign medals like the Korea Medal for active service in the armed forces of the nation received these awards from a grateful Australian government and people. Their service has already been recognised by the nation through an award that is held in high regard.

Guided by this view and by its principle number 2, that only one medal within the Australian system of honours and awards be given, the Committee recommends that no new or separate award be instituted for service during the Korean War.

Figure 4.1 Summary of Conditions Governing the Korea Medal and the United Nations Service Medal with clasp 'Korea'

Korea Medal 1950-53

Awarded to Army for service on one day or more on the posted strength of a unit or formation over Korea; to Navy for 28 days service in ships engaged in operations off the Korean coast or one day on duty ashore and to Air Force for one operational sortie over Korea or Korean waters. Official visits and inspections also qualified provided they amounted to 30 days. The qualifying period was from 1 July 1950 to 27 July 1953.

United Nations Service Medal with clasp "Korea"

Awarded to members of the land, sea and air forces of all nations sent to Korea or adjacent areas for service on behalf of the United Nations. Qualifying service was any period on the posted strength of a unit or formation in Korea between 27 June 1950 and 26 July 1954.

⁴³Mr G A H Lang, HMAS Warramunga Veterans' Association NSW Branch, Mr D E Bowen, Mr J N Hemerik, Mr T H Hamilton, Korean Veterans' Association Inc., Mr A Hanson, Mr J Tilden, Mr E J Bradfield

⁴⁴The Committee is pleased to note that among the steps being taken to highlight the involvement of Australian troops in the Korea is the instigation of moves to erect a memorial to commemorate this conflict on Anzac Parade, in the vicinity of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Recognition of service in Korea 1953 - 1956

After the ceasefire on 28 July 1953, Australia, as did Britain and New Zealand, agreed to maintain its presence in Korea to assist with enforcing the agreement. No 77 Squadron remained in Korea until October 1954. 3 RAR left Korea on 9 November 1954 after a four-year commitment. Ships of the RAN continued to serve until late 1955⁴⁵. 1 RAR was gradually reduced in strength during 1955 and left Korea on 24 March 1956. About 80 Australian signals personnel continued to serve with the Commonwealth Contingent until it was dissolved on 26 August 1957⁴⁶.

Service from 28 July 1953 did not qualify for the Korea Medal and the United Nations Service Medal cut-off date was approximately a year after the ceasefire: 26 July 1954. Service from this date until the withdrawal of Australian troops in 1956 did not attract the award of any medal. A number of submissions addressed this period and sought some form of recognition by the Australian Government.⁴⁷, which the Committee has considered in light of its Principle number 2.

In examining the service rendered in this period, the Committee noted the continued hazards posed by the physical and psychological experiences of service in Korea, the high level of tension on the demilitarised zone (DMZ), the continued patrolling of the KANZUS line and the DMZ with live ammunition, and tasks such as the lifting and re-laying of minefields and the maintenance and improvement of defensive works, minefield fences and communication trenches. Many of these activities involved the Australian troops living and working in field conditions. The Committee also noted the physical and psychological stresses attached to this service. Guided by its principles number 1 and 8, the Committee believes that service of this nature today would attract an award of the Australian Service Medal.

The Committee recommends the awarding of the new Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp "Korea 1953-56" for service in Korea from 28 July 1953 (signing of the armistice) until the withdrawal of Australian troops on 26 August 1957, with the relevant qualifying period of 30 days.

Other issues

Other submissions received by the Committee relating to service in Korea discussed the role played by HMAS Warramunga in December 1950 when it evacuated refugees and wounded from Inchon, the ineligible of the crew on the HMAS Sydney who served in Korea from October 1953 to May 1954 for the Korea Medal because of the end to the War, and the contribution of Qantas air crews involved in medical evacuation flights. After careful consideration, the Committee does not believe that any of these cases in themselves warrants separate or special consideration.

The case of the HMAS Sydney is similar to a number of other cases referred to the attention of the Committee, where certain service fails to meet the qualifying criteria for an award. In

⁴⁵O'Neill pp.591-593

⁴⁶O'Neill pp. 590-591

⁴⁷Mr M R Smith, Totally and Permanently Disabled Soldiers' Association of Australia, Mr C W Blundell, Mr K C J Berryman, Mr D Irving

the case of any service medal, there are people who miss out because they do not accumulate sufficient qualifying time in the area proclaimed for the purposes of an award. According to its Principle number 6, the Committee will recommend a variation to the existing criteria for an award only under the most exceptional circumstances where a clear anomaly or manifest injustice can be established. The Committee sees no such anomaly or injustice in this case. However, members of the crew of the HMAS Sydney may qualify for the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 Clasp "Korea 1953-57".

The Committee also received a submission on behalf of Qantas air crew who, under charter to the RAAF, flew Australian troops Iwakuni, Japan, for ferrying to the war zone and brought back sick and wounded service personnel to Australia. The Committee notes that this activity was outside the operational area zone and with reference to its Principle number 4, does not believe access to any defence award is appropriate. With reference to its Principle number 3, the Committee does not believe that the awarding of the VLSM to Qanta air crew affords any precedent in this matter.

Foreign Awards

The Committee received submissions critical of the cut-off date for the United Nations Service Medal (i.e. 28 July 1954). This is a matter for the United Nations as this award is not part of the Australian system. The Committee notes, however, that if its recommendation above is accepted, all service from the commencement of the war up until the withdrawal of Australian troops in 1957 will be recognised by one of two Australian award and that this may ameliorate concern about the cut-off date for the United Nations Service Medal.

The Committee also received a number of submissions about foreign awards offered to Australian units and individuals. Under the guidelines that were in place up until 1989 governing the acceptance and wearing of foreign awards, these were declined. Cases drawn to the attention of the Committee include that of a South Korean Presidential Unit Citation awarded to the United States 7th Fleet and attached ships of the Royal Australian Navy; and an individual who was offered an official award from the Korean Government. The Committee notes that new Guidelines on the Acceptance and Wearing of Foreign Awards introduced in 1989 are more liberal than the guidelines which previously applied.

The Committee has discussed the 1989 Guidelines with the appropriate Federal Government authorities and has been assured that all requests for the wearing and acceptance of foreign awards submitted for consideration in accordance with these Guidelines are considered. Chapter 10 of this report contains a full discussion of matters relating to foreign awards.

Chapter 5 - Service in Southeast Asia 1950 - 1975

Since 1950 Australian defence personnel have had a level of involvement in peacekeeping and active operations in Southeast Asia. This chapter will focus on issues raised with the Committee on service in places other than Vietnam. Australia's commitment of forces to Vietnam is dealt with separately in Chapter 6.

Malayan Emergency 1948 - 1960

In 1948, a State of Emergency was declared in Malaya in response to both an insurgency instigated by the Communist Party of Malaya and the accompanying racial tensions between ethnic Malays and the Chinese minority. Britain, as the colonial power until independence in 1957, requested assistance from Australia and other Commonwealth countries. This was initially given in May 1950 in the form of the RAAF's No. 38 Squadron, which was based in Kuala Lumpur. In July, No. 1 Squadron was also committed to Malaya, operating out of Tengah on Singapore Island.

In 1955 Australia joined New Zealand and Britain in forming the Far East Strategic Reserve (also known as the British Commonwealth Strategic Reserve), based in Malaya. On 1 April 1955, Australia announced that it would contribute to the forces engaged in the emergency an infantry battalion group, naval ships (which were deployed in Malayan waters from July 1955), a fighter wing of two squadrons, a bomber squadron (No. 38 Squadron) and an airfield construction squadron.

Of Australia's ground forces, the 2nd Battalion RAR (2 RAR and 105 Battery saw service from 1956 to 1957, 3 RAR and 100 (A) Battery from 1957 to 1959 and 1 RAR and 101 Battery from 1959 to 1961. A Field Troop of Royal Australian Engineers also served in Malaya. For the duration of the Malayan Emergency, which ended officially on 31 July 1960, the Australian forces formed part of the 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade.

RAN service in the Far East Strategic Reserve, commenced on 2 July 1955. The RAN component in this force was two destroyers or two frigates, an aircraft carrier on an annual visit and additional ships in an emergency. HMA Ships attached to the Strategic Reserve came under the operational control of the Commander in Chief Far East Station. Some thirteen Australian naval vessels saw service for various periods during the time of the Malayan Emergency.

51 Australians were killed in Malaya during the Emergency - 15 as a direct result of operations - 27 were wounded.

Members of the Australian armed forces who served in this conflict were eligible for the Imperial General Service Medal, and a large number of Australian Army and Airforce personnel received the General Service Medal 1918-1964 with Clasp "Malaya" (GSM "Malaya") for their service during the Emergency. No RAN ships or crew qualified for the Naval General Service Medal with Clasp "Malaya" (NGSM "Malaya"). The criteria for these awards is shown at Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1 Summary of conditions governing the award of the General Service Medal 1918-1964 and Naval General Service Medal 1915-1962 for service in the Malayan Emergency

<p>General Service Medal 1918-1964 with clasp "Malaya"</p> <p>Awarded to all members of the British, Commonwealth and Colonial Military Forces, members of specially approved civilian organisations, civilian police forces and approved civilian forces for service in the Federation of Malaya from 16 June 1948 to 31 July 1960 inclusive and the Colony of Singapore from 16 June 1948 to 31 January 1959. Qualifying time for army personnel is service of one day or more on the posted strength of a unit or formation. For official visits and inspections on duty, the time qualification is 30 days. Air crew members on the posted strength of a unit in Singapore who carried out one operational sortie over the Federation of Malaya between 1 February 1959 and 31 July 1960 also qualify</p> <p>Naval General Service Medal 1915-1962 with clasp "Malaya"</p> <p>Awarded for 28 days service from 16 June 1948 to 31 July 1960 inclusive on ships or craft patrolling off the Malayan coast in support of operations against bandits, or one journey in a Harbour Defence Motor Launch or other small craft up a river or creek in the Federation of Malaya in close support of operations against bandits. Service on shore as an integral part of the Security forces (one day) or attached for training or jungle warfare familiarisation purposes (28 days) also qualified, as did visits by staff officers on inspection (30 days) or one operational sortie by Naval air crews over Malaya in operations against bandits.</p>
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As has been the case in other areas, the Committee received submissions and letters from people serving in this period seeking some uniquely Australian recognition for service in Malaya during the Emergency⁴⁸. The Committee's position on this question has been explained previously. The Committee refers to its principle number 6, and notes that those Australians who received Imperial medals like the General Service Medals for involvement in operations during the Malayan Emergency received these awards from a grateful Australian government and people. Their service has already been recognised by the nation through an award that is held in high regard. The Committee, guided by this view and by its principle number 2, that only one medal within the Australian system of honours and awards be given, recommends that no new or separate award be instituted for service during the Malayan Emergency.

Among other submissions received was one submission was from a RAAF pilot who was attached to No. 2 Squadron in Butterworth for about three and a half weeks while he waited for a replacement aircraft to become available to ferry him back to Australia. During this period, he participated in several flying sorties in Malaysia, but was denied the GSM clasp "Malaya" as he was not on the posted strength of a unit⁴⁹. Another was from an Officer of the Citizens Military Force who was on a short visit to Singapore and crossed into Malaya

⁴⁸2BN Malaya Merdeka Veterans (WA), J N Hemerick

⁴⁹Wg Cdr E D Plenty (RL)

while attached to 1 RAR where he participated in patrols, training and other duties⁵⁰. This attachment did not qualify for the GSM clasp "Malaya" as it fell short of the qualifying period. This case is similar to a number of others referred to the attention of the Committee, where certain service fails to meet the criteria established for an award. In these cases, the Committee does not believe there to be an anomaly or injustice of sufficient moment to warrant any variation to the terms of the GSM clasp "Malaya".

In the second case, it was suggested to the Committee that it should consider the precedent afforded by the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal in giving special recognition for those attached to or serving with a unit of the Australian armed forces or allied forces as an observer for one day. The Committee believes that the scope and intensity of the conflict in Vietnam and the large number of people affected by the introduction of the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal make a unique case. The Committee does not believe that an award comparable to the VLSM should be introduced for the Malayan Emergency or any other of the conflicts it has examined.

The Committee was also made aware of Australian ex-Servicemen who were recruited to serve as Police Lieutenants in Malaya and who participated in actions against communist terrorists⁵¹. The Committee notes that members of the civilian Police Forces and other approved civilian forces could qualify for the GSM clasp "Malaya". Subject to their meeting the other qualifying criteria, there appears to be no obstacle to these personnel receiving the GSM. The Committee recommends that the Interdepartmental Committee on Honours and Awards to Defence Force Personnel is an appropriate body under whom claims by persons who rendered such service can be verified against the qualifying criteria for the GSM.

Labuan Island

One issue raised by submissions relates to the service of Australian RAAF personnel (about 100 in all) who served in difficult and isolated conditions on Labuan Island, just off the coast of North Borneo but some 1,300 kilometres from the Malayan peninsula, between March 1951 and June 1957⁵². They were engaged on defence signals intelligence duties in direct support of the Malayan Emergency⁵³. However, as a result of an Air Ministry interpretation (Air Ministry Orders (AMO) A.96/1959) they did not receive the GSM "Malaya". This interpretation says that "Personnel must have been employed on duties in support of the operations in Malaya; service on the posted strength of a qualifying unit or formation, while in transit for duty outside the qualifying area, will not be a qualification". Labuan Island is clearly outside the qualifying area.

The Committee received evidence that those Australian personnel on Labuan Island were either on the posted strength of No 90 (C) Wing Singapore or No 1 (B) Squadron Malaya and were detached for the purpose of their service. Most of them passed in or out through these home units, which were responsible for administration, pay and other support services. The Committee was also advised of the apparent issue of the ribbon to the GSM to some personnel in error⁵⁴.

⁵⁰Sqn Ldr J F Burgess ED (RL)

⁵¹Mr M Allpress

⁵²Mr W J White, Mr R W Green, Sqn Ldr L J McLean (RL)

⁵³Letter from Senator the Hon J Faulkner to Sqn Ldr L J McLean 21.08.93

⁵⁴Correspondence on behalf of Air Member for Personnel attached to submission from Sqn Ldr L J McLean

The personnel serving on Labuan Island qualified for the General Service Medal in all respects except that they were well outside the stipulated geographical area (i.e. within 12 miles of Malaya or Singapore). Their work was clearly in support of operations in Malaya, the Headquarters of their unit was in Singapore, and they were living under spartan field conditions.

In investigating this matter, the Committee has been made aware of the terms of the original "Terms of Award of the Naval General Service Medal and The General Service Medal (Army and Royal Air Force) for Service in Malaya since 16 June 1948", presented by the British Prime Minister and the First Lord of the Admiralty to Parliament by Command of His Majesty in March 1950. This document does not mention that "service on the posted strength of a qualifying unit or formation, while in transit for duty outside the qualifying area, will not be a qualification". Furthermore, Air Ministry Orders 204/1950 and Air Board Orders confirmed the original document in its wording. The Committee does not know why this original wording was varied, but notes that service on Labuan was rendered in the period 1951 to 1957, before the narrowing qualification in Air Ministry Orders (AMO) A.96/1959 first appeared.

The Committee believes that on balance the denial of the GSM "Malaya" to RAAF personnel serving on Labuan is unfair in view of them serving on the strength of units posted to the qualifying area for the award in direct support of operations. On a reasonable interpretation of the original terms for the award, they should not have been ruled out. The Committee is guided in its considerations by its Principle number 3.

The Committee therefore recommends that service with the RAAF on Labuan Island in support of counter terrorist operations in Malaya between 8 March 1951 and 7 June 1957 should qualify for the GSM "Malaya", subject to meeting the qualifying period of service prescribed for the award.

RAN Service with Far East Asian Strategic Reserve

The Committee received numerous submissions about RAN service in the Far East Strategic Reserve, which commenced on 2 July 1955⁵⁵. The RAN component in this force was two destroyers or two frigates, an aircraft carrier on an annual visit and additional ships in an emergency. HMA Ships attached to the Strategic Reserve came under the operational control of the Commander-in-Chief Far East Station. Some 13 Australian naval vessels saw service for various periods during the time of the Malayan Emergency.

The NGSM "Malaya" was awarded for 28 days afloat between 16 June 1948 and 31 July 1960 in ships and craft patrolling off the coast of Malaya in support of operations against terrorists. The Department of Defence has identified a document showing approval by the Minister for Defence and the Naval Board that members of the RAN who earned the NGSM "Malaya" should also qualify for the Returned from Active Service Badge. The Department of Defence

⁵⁵Mr T C Wake, Mr S W Hutchinson, Mr N J Sutton, Mr D C Clifford, Mr J Pitchford, Mr C Horne, Pascoe Vale Returned and Service League Sub Branch, Mr B G H Zemek, Mr C A Smith, Mr R J Hannan, Mr R King, The Naval Association of Australia Tasmanian Section Devonport/Ulverstone Sub-Section, Mr R B de Lisle, Mr R S Ames, The Naval Association of Australia Federal Council, The Returned and Service League of Australia Ltd National Headquarters, Mr E W Graham

has also provided to the Committee a copy of a memorandum dated 3 July 1956 to the Commander in Chief, Far East Station, who was requested to inform the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board on any occasion when personnel of RAN ships serving in the Reserve rendered qualifying service for this award. It seems that this was never done, and in the absence of such notification it was assumed by our Naval Board that no RAN ship had qualified. At the same time, RAN personnel attached to Royal Navy ships during this period did qualify for the award (an estimated seven persons in all) and a large number of RN ships qualified for the NGSM "Malaya".

There can be two possible explanations for the failure of RAN ships to qualify:

- a breakdown in communications between the Commander-in-Chief Far East Station and the Commonwealth Naval Board, or
- RAN ships did not render qualifying service.

Although many submissions suppose the first, the Committee has no evidence of a breakdown in communication. Neither can it be assured that there was no breakdown in communication or some other administrative failure. In relation to the second, the Committee has been presented with evidence from a signal from an RAN CO that HMA Ships Tobruk and Anzac carried out bombardment of communist terrorist east of Johore in September 1956. HMA Ships *Queenborough* and *Quickmatch* apparently carried out similar operations at Tanjong Siang in Johore State in January 1957. In addition there is anecdotal evidence that RAN, Royal Navy (RN) and Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) ships served side by side and rendered the same type of service.

The Committee has written to the British High Commission about this matter. In response to the Committee's inquiries, the British High Commission, in a letter dated 9 November 1993, conveyed the following advice from the Ministry of Defence in London:

"Firstly the RAN, the RCN [Royal Canadian Navy] and the RNZN worked so closely with the RN at the time in question that their ships figured in the lists of qualified vessels right up to the confrontation with Indonesia in 1964-66. The fact that no RAN ships are listed as being qualified for the NGSM clasp "MALAYA" is most likely to indicate that none met the stringent criteria laid down in Command Paper 7097 dated March 1950.

The second key point is the qualification was limited to 'twenty eight days service afloat (between 16 June 1948 and 31 July 1960, inclusive) in ships or craft patrolling off the Malayan coast in support of operations against bandits'. This was subsequently modified on the AFO which announced the award to include 'one journey in a Harbour Defence Motor Launch or other small craft up a river or creek in the Federation of Malaya, in close support of operations against bandits'. These are restrictive criteria and a number of RN ships in the Far East Fleet failed to qualify, even though some of them opened fire on bandits ashore.

The Ministry of Defence is keen to see this issue resolved. It would be helpful if you could provide precise details of the thirteen HMA ships in question and when they served in Malayan waters. The Ministry of Defence would then hope to give a definitive response on the award of the Naval General Service Medal clasp 'Malaya' "

The Committee is pleased with this response, which represents important progress on resolving a matter which has caused confusion and anxiety among affected RAN personnel for over thirty years. Additional information from Defence conveying the names of RAN ships and their ports of call with arrival and departure dates has already been passed to the British High Commission through the Committee's Secretariat.

The Committee recommends that the Government continue to pursue with the British Government the eligibility of RAN vessels serving in the Far East Strategic Reserve for the NGSM 'Malaya' with a view to identifying these HMA Ships, if any, which qualified for the award.

Malaysia 1960 onwards

Although the Malayan Emergency was declared at an end on 31 July 1960, various Australian components of the Far Eastern Strategic Reserve (e.g. an Infantry battalion group, a RAAF squadron and naval vessels) remained in place under the terms of the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement, negotiated in 1957 on Malaysia's independence.

The confrontation between Malaysia and Indonesia over Borneo started in 1962 and included the Far East Strategic Reserve operating on behalf of Malaysian interest in Sarawak, Sabah and Brunei against frequent but small cross-border incursions by the Indonesians. Indonesia also attacked the Malay Peninsular in August 1964 with a small number of regular troops and parachutists. Another State of Emergency was declared in Malaysia. 3 RAR, which had replaced 2 RAR in August 1963, was called into action and together with New Zealand and Malaysian troops, captured or destroyed most of the Indonesian troops. In February 1965, 3 RAR and an SAS squadron were sent to Borneo at the request of the Malaysian Government. 3 RAR was replaced in April 1966 by the 4 RAR. The RAAF's No 3 and No 77 Squadrons were deployed at Butterworth base in Malaysia at this time and were in a state of combat readiness. Iroquois helicopters from No 5 Squadron flew in support of anti-terrorist activities on the Malaysia-Thailand border.

The confrontation with Indonesia eased with Sukarno's fall in 1965, and a peace treaty between Malaysia and Indonesia was ratified in Jakarta on 11 August 1965. Twenty three Australians were killed during the Confrontation - seven on operations.

A new General Service Medal 1962 was instituted on 6 October 1964. This new award took the place of the Naval General Service Medal 1915-1962 and the General Service Medal 1918-1964, which was awarded to the Army and the Air Force. A "Borneo" Clasp was put in place for the General Service Medal 1962 for service in the period 24 December 1962 - 11 August 1966, and a "Malay Peninsular" Clasp was put in place for the period 17 August 1964 - 12 June 1965, with additional special provisions for naval and airforce personnel for the period 13 June 1965 - 11 August 1966.

Figure 2.3 Qualifying criteria for award of the General Service Medal 1962 for Service in Malaysia during Confrontation with Indonesia

<p>General Service Medal 1962 Clasp "Borneo"</p> <p>Qualifying conditions between 24 December 1962 and 11 August 1966 inclusive:</p> <p><i>Navy</i> - service afloat for an aggregate of 30 days in ships or craft operating on waters of Sabah, Sarawak or Brunei or off the coast in support of shore operations. One sortie or more as a member of an aircraft crew in support of operations ashore. Service of 30 days or more when posted to units operation in the above seas.</p> <p><i>Army</i> - 30 days or more service not necessarily continuous in the above areas</p> <p><i>Air Force</i> - 30 days or more not necessarily continuous in the areas mentioned above. One sorties or more over the areas mentioned when in direct support of operations.</p> <p>General Service Medal 1962 with clasp "Malay Peninsular"</p> <p>Qualifying conditions:</p> <p><i>Sea</i> - service of 30 days or more afloat, while in any Royal Navy, Royal Australian Navy, Royal New Zealand Navy or Army vessel on duty in the waters surrounding the Malay Peninsular and Singapore between 17 August 1964 and 12 June 1965 inclusive. Service in any Royal Navy, Royal Australian Navy and Royal New Zealand Navy vessel on sea patrol duties may also reckon as qualifying service and may be aggregated with qualifying service to complete the required period of 30 days.</p> <p><i>Land</i> - service of 30 days or more not necessarily continuous, on land in the Malay Peninsular and Singapore between 17 August 1964 and 12 June 1965 inclusive while on the posted or attached strength of any unit or formation serving in these areas or whilst seconded to Malaysian forces in the qualifying area.</p> <p><i>(Air</i> - completion of 30 or more sorties by aircraft crews engaged on operational patrols over the waters surrounding the Malay Peninsular and Singapore between 13 June 1965 and 11 August 1966 inclusive may reckon as qualifying service; each patrol may count as one day's qualifying service on land and sea as in above to complete the required period of 30 days.</p>
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Service in Malaysia between the Emergency and Confrontation

The Committee received a number of submissions about the role of 2 RAR in the Thai-Malaya border area during its tour of duty in Malaysia between October 1961 and August 1963⁵⁶. The Battalion was placed under the operational direction of the 1st Malayan Brigade (the first time Australian troops had been placed under a Malaysian command), and was

⁵⁶Mr H J Chisholm, Mr R S Buick MM, Maj-Gen A B Stretton AO, Mr J W Harris, Mr R J Pringle

engaged in anti-terrorist operations in July-October 1962 and May-June 1963. The Committee was advised by the Army historian that the Rules of Engagement during this period were for Australian troops to return fire if fired upon⁵⁷. There is anecdotal evidence that a platoon of 'A' company had contact with communist terrorists in August 1962, and that shots were exchanged. There was no contact with terrorists during the Battalion's second deployment to the border regions in 1963⁵⁸. No award was received by 2 RAR for this service. Some submissions to the Committee suggest a variation to the terms and conditions governing the General Service Medals to extend recognition to this period; others have suggested a new award.

In examining service in this period with the assistance of the Official Historian, Southeast Asian Conflicts, the Committee was made aware of operational deployments of other Australian units in the Thailand-Malaysia border area⁵⁹. In addition to 2 RAR, these included companies of 1 RAR after the Emergency, which from January to June 1961 were involved in 28 Commonwealth Brigade's Operation 'Bamboo', and the main body of 3 RAR which was involved in the border area from February to November 1964 on Operation 'Magnus'. The battalion came under the operational control of 2 Federation Infantry Brigade. 1 RAR had no major contacts, although a total of 14 communist terrorists surrendered in the border area between January and June 1961. 3 RAR had numerous encounters with smugglers in October 1964. A platoon of 'A' Company staged an ambush which led to one smuggler being killed. The Committee has not been able to identify records of any Australian Army units engaged in border operations later than December 1964.

The Committee has been advised that border operations were serious undertakings for which units received a full compliment of ammunition. Operations demanding long periods of intense activity and were conducted in extreme heat and humidity. Between aerial resupplies soldiers were expected to carry heavy loads including ammunition, rations and water⁶⁰. These operations were supported by No 2 Squadron (Dakota transport aircraft) and No 5 Squadron (Iriquois helicopters). No 2 Squadron ceased border operations in June 1965 while the last No 5 Squadron took place in March 1966.

Guided by its Principles number 1 and number 8, the Committee believes that service in the Thailand-Malaysia border area of this nature would today attract an award of the Australian Service Medal. It has been suggested to the Committee that the same is true of service rendered by all Australians who were part of 28 Commonwealth Brigade, but such evidence as has been adduced to the Committee suggests that with the exception of operations in the border area, service with 28 Commonwealth Brigade was consonant with the normal requirements of peacetime. Under its Principle number 1, the Committee cannot accept that service with 28 Commonwealth Brigade other than for operations in Thailand-Malaysia border area is worthy of an award. Guided by its Principle number 2, the Committee believes that the appropriate dates for recognition for service in the border area would be the period between the end date for the GSM 'Malaya' and the commencement date for the GSM 'Malay Peninsula', with special provisions or the RAAF as explained below.

⁵⁷Letter dated 16 November 1993 from Brigadier A H Hodges, Director GSPP, Headquarters Australian Defence Force to Mr L Suur, Secretary to the Committee

⁵⁸Maj Gen A B Stretton (----) *Soldier in a Storm* -----

⁵⁹ The area delineated as the Thailand-Malaysia border area for repatriation purposes is as defined in the *Veteran's Entitlement's Act 1966*, Sch 2, Item 5.

⁶⁰ From a brief dated 2 February 1994 entitled *Australian Operations Thai/Malaya Border Area 1961-1964* and prepared by Mr Ian McNeill of the Official History Unit of the Australian War Memorial.

The Committee recommends the awarding of the Australian Service Medal 1945-1975 with clasp "Thailand-Malaysia border" to those Australian troops serving in anti-terrorists operations between 1 August 1962 and 16 August 1964 inclusive in the Malaysian-Thailand border area, with a qualifying period of 30 days. The Committee also recommends that those RAAF personnel who took part in operations in support of round forces in Thailand-Malaysia border area in the same period should qualify for the Australian Service Medal 1945-1975 with clasp "Thailand-Malaysia border", with the relevant qualifying service being one operational sortie. In addition, any member of air crew who, in the period 17 August 1964 to 30 March 1966, flew an operational sortie in the Thailand-Malaysia border area but did not qualify for an award of the GSM 'Malay Peninsula' should also qualify for the Australian Service Medal 1945-1975 with clasp "Thailand-Malaysia border".

It has been suggested to the Committee that whereas those members of 2 RAR involved in anti-terrorist operations in the Thailand-Malaysia border region in 1963 are eligible for the Returned from Active Service Badge (RAS Badge), those involved in operations in 1962 are not. While the Committee's terms of reference do not extend to making recommendations for the RAS Badge, it nevertheless believes that this is an anomaly which should be investigated with a view to treating equally all involved in border operations in the active period 1960-64.

Confrontation with Indonesia

Submissions to the Committee about service during the Confrontation with Indonesia were primarily on behalf of persons who failed to meet the qualifying criteria for the General Service Medal 1962 clasps "Borneo" or "Malaya". This includes crew serving on the HMA Ships *Vampire*, *Sydney*, *Melbourne* and *Voyager* who did not meet the 28 day requirement for an award of the "Borneo" clasp, RAASC personnel initially incorrectly allotted for special duty in Sabah, and other members of the Defence force who served in Malaya immediately after Confrontation.

The Committee also received a submission on behalf of crew serving on the HMAS *Duchess* suggesting that the ship was not allocated for service and therefore did not qualify for the General Service Medal. Advice from the Department of Defence is to the contrary, and it has provided the Committee with a schedule of qualifying service on the HMAS *Duchess* towards both "Borneo" and "Malay Peninsula" clasps of the General Medal⁶¹. The Committee

⁶¹According to the Department of Defence, HMAS *Duchess* rendered qualifying service for an award of the General Service Medal clasp "Borneo", clasp "Malay Peninsula" and the Returned from Active Service Badge as follows:

GSM "Borneo"	Days
24.08.65 - 26.08.65	3
10.12.65 - 14.12.65	5
07.01.66 - 04.02.66	29
GSM "Malay Peninsula"	Days
06.02.65 - 28.02.65	23
01.03.65 - 04.03.65	4
31.08.65 - 06.09.65	7
06.11.65 - 09.11.65	4
11.11.65 - 18.11.65	8
20.11.65 - 28.11.65	9
16.12.65 - 19.12.65	4

encourages persons who served on the HMAS *Duchess* during this period to pursue their claims with the Navy Records Office in light of this information.

A number of submissions underlined the complexity inherent in trying to separate the different qualifying dates and criteria for the "Borneo" and the "Malay Peninsula" clasps to the General Service Medal. Some of these submissions pointed to the logistical and support role played by various units stationed in Singapore and the Malay Peninsula in relation to operations in Borneo, which was not recognised through a medal because of the shorter period over which the qualifying conditions for the GSM clasp 'Malay Peninsula' applied. It was suggested to the Committee that in addressing this confusion, it might consider awarding an Australian Service Medal with appropriate clasp to cover the whole of this period. This would follow the precedent offered by the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal in recognising service of one days duration.

As the Committee has noted elsewhere in the report, there are always those who just fail to qualify for an award. Decisions about qualifying dates and conditions are made by authorities at the time who are best placed to make such decisions, and except in the most exceptional circumstances where a clear anomaly or injustice can be established, the Committee does not consider it appropriate to contemplate amendment to the terms and conditions of decorations awarded to Australians under the Imperial system. The Committee has no evidence that any such exceptional circumstance exists in this instance. In addition, the Committee notes its Principle number 2, that only one medal within the Australian system of honours and awards be given for a single period of service. To recommend an award of the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 to those who missed out on the qualifying criteria of the General Service Medal would be contrary to this Principle. The Committee's views on the precedent offered by the VLSM have been discussed earlier in this chapter. The Committee does not recommend any new or separate award for service during the Confrontation with Indonesia.

Service in Malaysia after Confrontation

A number of submissions argued for recognition of service by Australians at RAAF Butterworth, Malaysia. Those who served at Butterworth include airforce personnel and an Army component of successive rifle companies, who provided a quick reaction force for base security. Some of these submissions argued that a low level Communist Terrorist threat against the base continued until the surrender of Chin Penh in 1989, and that security patrols and deployments around the base throughout the 1970's were active with live ammunition. Other submissions argued that as RAAF Butterworth played a support role to Australian Forces in Vietnam, service in Butterworth should be recognised through the award of the VLSM.

The Committee notes that the VLSM applies only to service in the declared area of Vietnam and believes that this is appropriate. It does not support an extension of the VLSM to those

Cont. from previous

RAS Badge	
31.08.65 - 07.09.65	8
06.11.65 - 29.11.65	24
16.12.65 - 20.12.65	5
04.01.66 - 05.02.66	33

serving in other areas. Neither does the Committee consider that service at Butterworth was clearly and markedly more demanding than normal peacetime service, and therefore in terms of its Principle number 1, it does not recommend that this service be recognised through a medal.

Thailand

The Committee received a number of submissions about service in Thailand during the 1960's⁶² and took evidence in Hobart and Canberra. The bulk of these relate to service at the Royal Thai Airforce Base at Ubon from May 1962 until August 1968. A submission by the RAAF Ubon "Reunion-Recognition" Group made it clear that Ubon personnel have been excluded from and are seeking full repatriation benefits under the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1966. Moves to achieve this date back to 1963. The Committee emphasises that such matters are explicitly outside its the terms of reference, and are the responsibility of the Department of Veteran's Affairs. The Committee is interested only in the question of whether service at Ubon might be worthy of some kind of award.

An RAAF contingent was based at Ubon as part of Australia's obligations to Thailand under the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO). The Australian Government made its commitment to Ubon on the same day it decided to enter the Vietnam War. Ubon is situated in north-east Thailand, some 50 kilometres from the Laotian and 80 kilometres from the Cambodian borders respectively. The Australian contingent consisted of a small Headquarters, a Base Squadron and No 79(F) Squadron (eight Sabre Mk32 aircraft) - a total personnel strength of around 20 officers and 100 other ranks. Logistic support and air base personnel were rotated straight to Australia after a six month tour, whereas 79 Squadron personnel were rotated through RAAF Butterworth (Malaysia) on two month postings. Multiple tours occurred.

The roles and tasks of the contingent were limited to the defence of the Ubon air base, Thailand's borders and support of United States Air Force (USAF) operations from Ubon. There is no suggestion that the RAAF contingent ever entered the designated area of operations for the Vietnam War, nor did it become involved directly in actual fighting or combat activity. However Ubon was the major operational base for USAF incursions and strike missions into Vietnam and Laos, and this made the base a real target for insurgency retaliation. Ubon air base had an active command and control air defence system and there were rules of engagement covering conflict in the air and on land. These rules of engagement applied to everyone serving at Ubon, including the RAAF contingent. The Committee received evidence about the significant level of North Vietnamese sponsored terrorist activity in northern Thailand. The Committee also received evidence from people who were able to draw comparisons between service at Ubon, Butterworth, and air bases at Vung Tau, Saigon and Phan Rang in South Vietnam. These comparisons proved helpful in guiding the Committee through this issue.

The Committee considered the evidence very carefully and, guided by its principles number 1, 8 and 9, was persuaded that the direct involvement of Ubon air base with the tactical air war in Vietnam, and the level of real enemy threat against the base, were such that would today

⁶²Mr C Psalia, Mr G Joce, Hon J Moore MP, Mr Neville Newell MP, Returned and Services League of Australia Brunswick Heads Sub-Branch, Mr D G Peet, Mr K Revill, Mr J R Jeffreys, Mr D Sutton, RAAF Ubon "Reunion-Recognition" Group, Wg Cdr A C McPhie, Mr P W Shiner, The Returned and Service League of Australia National Headquarters

attract an award of the Australian Service Medal. The Committee has noted a suggestion from the National Headquarters of the Returned and Services League of Australia and others⁶³, that RAAF personnel serving in Ubon should be granted the Vietnam Medal and the Returned from Active Service Badge because of the nature of support they provided to Australia's engagement in Vietnam. The Committee has also noted that the area of operations to which the Vietnam Medal relates has been defined and established for over a period of twenty-five years. In light of this, the Committee does not agree to extending the Vietnam Medal to those who served in Thailand.

The Committee recommends that service by Australian personnel at the Royal Thai Airforce at Ubon is through an award of the Australian Service Medal 1945-1975 with clasp "Ubon". The relevant qualifying period should be 30 days.

The Committee also received a submission on behalf of 2 Field Troop Royal Australian Engineers (RAE), who served in Ban Kok Talat 110 kilometres north of Ubon for five months in 1964 and for six months in 1965-66. On both occasions the troop's employment was associated with construction of an airfield at Leong Nok Tha (Operation 'Crown') as part of Australia's commitment under SEATO. During both deployments there was a continuing low level of insurgent activity in the general Operation 'Crown' area, probably comparable to that pertaining 110 kilometres to the south around the Ubon air base. For example, in the period from January to April 1966, in six separate insurgent incidents in the 'Crown' area, eighteen Thai dead and five wounded were reported including police and government officials. There is no suggestion that 2 Field Troop was engaged in any action and insurgents, but the deployments clearly took place in a situation of low security. The unit also advises that a few other Australian personnel (signals and medical) may have been involved with Operation 'Crown'.

Guided by its Principles number 1, 3 and 8, the Committee recommends that members of 2 Field Troop RAE and other Australian personnel who participated in Operation 'Crown' and served at Ban Kok Talat between January 1964 and May 1966 should also be awarded the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp 'Ubon', with the relevant qualifying period of 30 days.

Laos

North Vietnam used Laos as a transport route to supply Viet Cong and North Vietnam's Army forces in South Vietnam. United Nations Forces were deployed for a short period in 1961-1962, until a tripartite government was formed and an agreement signed recognising Laotian neutrality and removing it from the protection of SEATO.

A submission was made to the Committee by one of two RAAF personnel attached to the Australian Legation in Vientiane for a three month period in 1960-61 seeking recognition for this service. In response to enquiries from the Committee, the Department of Defence confirmed that the hours of duty for these personnel were irregular and difficult, but neither the submission nor Defence authorities have been able to give any compelling evidence that would warrant consideration of an award. The Committee notes some initial confusion about whether this service would attract the General Service Medal and repatriation benefits. It appears that preliminary affirmative advice on this matter from the Department of Air was

⁶³Mr P W Shiner

rescinded. While the Committee is sympathetic to the confusion and anxiety this may have caused, it cannot, against the Principles it has established to guide its deliberations, recommend any award in this instance.

Singapore

The Committee received submissions relating to service rendered in Singapore after the Confrontation with Indonesia and during the Vietnam War. These submissions draw attention to the support role played by Australians service personnel in Singapore to operations in the region. As in the case of service in RAAF base Butterworth, the Committee notes its Principle number 1, that normal garrison duty in peacetime, even though it might be rendered overseas, should generally not attract an award. The Committee has not been presented with evidence that would indicate that service in Singapore was demanding or hazardous, or clearly and markedly more demanding than normal peace time service. It therefore cannot recommend that this service be recognised through a medal.

Chapter 6: Vietnam

The Vietnam War represents Australia's most significant military commitment since World War II. Australia's military commitment to the Republic of Vietnam (or South Vietnam) began in July 1962 with the arrival of the 30 advisers constituting the Australian Army Training Team, Vietnam (AATTV). As the conflict escalated, so too did pressure for an increased Australian commitment. By June 1964, the AATTV had been expanded to 80 advisers. In April 1965, the Australian Government announced the commitment of an infantry battalion group. 1 RAR, together with some logistical and support units, was dispatched to South Vietnam in June 1965 and placed under the operational control of the US 173rd Airborne Brigade as its third battalion.

In March 1966 the Government announced that 1 RAR would be relieved by a Task Force of two battalions, plus supporting units, to operate in the coastal province of Phuoc Tuy. In 1968, the Task Force was expanded to include a third infantry battalion, bringing the strength of Australian forces in Vietnam to 8300 personnel. The RAAF presence included No 2 Squadron, based at Phan Rang, and No 35 Squadron based at Vung Tau. Helicopters from No 9 Squadron were also based at Vung Tau and operated with the Task Force. The RAN involvement included a guided missile destroyer, a clearance diving team and sea transport convoys between Australia and Vietnam. The announcement of the withdrawal of Australian troops was made in December 1972 and the withdrawal was completed early in 1973.

It has been estimated⁶⁴ that some 50 000 Australians served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1972. Of these 501 were killed or listed as missing presumed dead, and 3131 were wounded.

Three Australian campaign awards relate to the period of the Vietnam War: the General Service Medal 1962 with clasp 'South Vietnam', the Vietnam Medal (established in 1968) and the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal (VLSM, established in 1993). In addition, the Australian Service Medal with clasp 'Vietnam 1975' was granted in 1990 to certain RAAF personnel involved in a UNICEF operation in 1975. Figure 6.1 has details for each of these awards. In addition, approval was granted for Australian servicemen who saw six months service in Vietnam to accept and wear the Vietnamese Campaign Medal, an award instituted by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam.

Figure 6.1 Summary of conditions governing the award of the General Service Medal 1962 with clasp 'South Vietnam', the Vietnam Medal and the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal and the Australian Service Medal with clasp 'Vietnam 1975'.

General Service Medal 1962 with clasp 'South Vietnam'

Army: 30 days or more service, not necessarily continuous, in South Vietnam between 24 December 1962 and 28 May 1964 inclusive, while on the posted or attached strength of any unit or formation of Her Majesty's Forces in these territories.

⁶⁴Grey, Jeffrey *A Military History of Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990, p. 238

Summary of conditions governing the award of the General Service Medal 1962 with clasp 'South Vietnam', the Vietnam Medal and the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal and the Australian Service Medal with clasp 'Vietnam 1975' cont.

Air Force: 30 days or more service, not necessarily continuous, in South Vietnam between 24 December 1962 and 28 May 1964 inclusive, while on the posted or attached strength of any unit or formation of Her Majesty's Forces in these territories, or one sortie or more into South Vietnam by air crew personnel in direct support of operations.

Civilians: Members of the following accredited Philanthropic Organisations serving with the Australian Army: Australian Red Cross, Salvation Army, Young Men's Christian Association, and Campaigners for Christ.

Vietnam Medal

Qualifying service for the Vietnam Medal for the relevant period 29 May 1964 to 27 January 1973 includes:

- twenty-eight days in ships or craft on inland waters or off the coast of Vietnam;
- one day or more on the posted strength of a unit or formation on land;
- one operational sortie over Vietnam or Vietnamese waters by air crew on the posted strength of a unit; or
- official visits either continuous or aggregate of 30 days.

For members of accredited philanthropic organisations attached to Australian Forces in an official capacity for full-time duty in uniform, one day or more service

Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal (VLSM)

The VLSM is awarded for one day or more of service in the declared area of operations of Vietnam during the period 29 May 1964 to 27 January 1973 to persons who were :

- a member of the crew of a ship or aircraft operating in support of the Australian armed forces;
- attached to a unit or organisation operating in support of the Australian armed forces; or
- attached to, or serving with, a unit of the Australian armed forces or allied forces as an observer.

Australian Service Medal with clasp 'Vietnam 1975'

The ASM with clasp 'Vietnam 1975' was awarded to RAAF personnel for service between 19 March 1975 and 29 April 1975 with a 7 day qualifying period. Members eligible were those who took part in assistance to UNICEF and were on strength of Tpt Support Flight, Butterworth or HQ Richmond Detachment 5.

The Vietnam Medal is issued in recognition of certain qualifying service between 29 May 1964 and 27 January 1973. The Imperial General Service Medal with clasp 'South Vietnam' was awarded to persons who served from 24 December 1962 to 28 May 1964.

The VLSM was designed to extend recognition to persons who were members of the Australian Defence Force and rendered service in support of the military operations of these forces in Vietnam between 29 May 1964 to 27 January 1973, but who did not qualify for the Vietnam Medal. The VLSM has also been extended to civilian groups or individuals who were based in Vietnam or were there on assignment in cases where they were providing direct support to military operations.

Submissions made to the Committee covered a diversity of issues, particularly in terms of seeking access to the VLSM. The Committee also took extensive oral evidence from various individuals, ex-service and other organisations about a broad range of issues which are covered below.

Naval Ship Visits and other service 1962–63

The Committee received a number of submissions seeking some form of recognition for HMAS *Vampire* and HMAS *Quickmatch*, which visited Saigon from 25 January to 29 January 1962, and HMAS *Queenborough* and HMAS *Quiberon*, which visited Nha Tran and Saigon from 29 January to 4 February 1963. Both visits took place before the commencement date of the VLSM.

These ship visits took place before Australia's significant involvement in the Vietnam War: the first AATTV group arrived on 31 July 1962, the first army units not until June 1965. Submissions to the Committee made the point that Vietnam was nevertheless on a war footing. In steaming up the Saigon River for a period of four hours before entering Saigon, the ships were accompanied by Vietnamese gunboats in case of close range attack from low lying paddy fields and 24-hour security was provided while the ships were alongside. However, in all the submissions received and the oral evidence taken by the Committee, there was nothing to suggest that the conduct of these visits was essentially different from routine diplomatic port visits, albeit with caution exercised because of the insurgency in the countryside.

The Committee notes that the qualifying conditions for the GSM clasp 'South Vietnam' do not extend to this type of service. The Committee is aware that had these visits taken place after the starting date of the VLSM, they would have qualified for that Medal. Nevertheless, noting the short duration and the nature of the visits, and noting that the VLSM is essentially concerned with the support of the Australian armed forces in Vietnam (see Figure 6.1) and that the commencement date of 29 May 1964 was selected as the earliest on which significant

Australian forces were in the theatre, the Committee rejects the view that the terms and conditions of the VLSM should be expanded to allow the aforementioned four ships to qualify. The Committee has taken a similar position in considering a submission relating to Australian personnel who were attached to US Advisory Teams for seven days' special service in the period October 1962 - April 1963.

The Committee was also told that whereas crews of HMAS *Queenborough* and HMAS *Quiberon* have qualified for the RAS Badge as a result of their visit the crews of HMAS *Vampire* and HMAS *Quickmatch* have not. In investigating this matter with the Department of Defence, the Committee has been made aware of a decision of the Minister for Defence announced on 22 May 1986 that members of the Australian armed forces who served on vessels which visited Vietnam were deemed to have been allotted for duty in the operational area of Vietnam between 31 July 1962 (the date the AATTV commenced operations in Vietnam) and 11 January 1973 (the date on which Australian troops were withdrawn) for the time during which such vessels were present in that area. On 7 November 1986 it was announced that all members of the Australian armed forces deemed to have been allotted for duty in the operational area of Vietnam between these dates would be entitled to the RAS Badge. HMAS *Quiberon* and HMAS *Queenborough* were included on the list of qualifying vessels.

The Committee notes that the RAS Badge is not part of the Australian system of honours and awards and that matters relating to it are therefore not within the Committee's terms of reference. Nevertheless, the Committee can understand that those serving on HMAS *Vampire* and HMAS *Quickmatch* during their visits to Saigon in 1962 should point to the fact that crew serving on HMAS *Quiberon* and HMAS *Queenborough* subsequently qualified for the RAS Badge for rendering similar service in 1963. From the evidence it has taken, the Committee believes that the service rendered by all four ships seems comparable for the purposes of the award of the RAS Badge.

Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV)

The AATTV consisted mostly of officers and warrant officers, and the original team of 30 who went into Vietnam in July 1962 represented the first Australian commitment to the Vietnam War. The size of the AATTV had expanded to 100 by 1965 and to over 200 in December 1972, when the withdrawal of Australian forces from Vietnam was announced. Working individually and in small groups, members of the team operated with the South Vietnamese Army, the Territorial Forces and the Special Forces. Some participated in programs sponsored by the United States Central Intelligence Agency. Much of the work was in close contact with the people of South Vietnam in the provinces and districts of that country. The name 'Training Team' is somewhat misleading since, from 1964, the role of the team expanded from training to advising commanders of South Vietnamese combat units, while some members acted as commanders of special forces units operating far into the hinterland⁶⁵. In addition to their achievements in the field (the ranks of the AATTV included four Victoria Cross recipients), the Training Team made a valuable contribution to the development of Australian techniques for counter revolutionary warfare⁶⁶, theory and practice. Thirty-three members of the AATTV died on service in South Vietnam, and 122 are

⁶⁵McNeill, I., 1984, *The Team. Australian Army Advisers in Vietnam 1962-1972*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra

⁶⁶*ibid.* p.v

recorded as having been wounded in action⁶⁷. The Committee was advised that some 1000 personnel served with the AATTV.

The Committee received submissions and took oral evidence proposing special recognition for the contribution of the AATTV to the Australian effort in Vietnam. Some submissions proposed a distinguishing device to be worn on the ribbon bar and the medal ribbon of either the Vietnam Medal or the General Service Medal to distinguish those who served with the AATTV. Other submissions suggested changing the qualifying dates for either the Vietnam Medal or the General Service Medal so that AATTV members can all have the same award.

The Committee acknowledges the special role of the AATTV in Vietnam and its outstanding service throughout the war. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that this service has been adequately recognised through the campaign medals, the many individual awards for gallantry and distinguished service, a South Vietnamese Unit Citation and a US Meritorious Army Commendation. The Committee does not believe there is sufficient justification to depart from the long established practice of not awarding particular units, however distinguished, a special device on a campaign medal and, therefore, does not support a distinguishing device for the AATTV on the campaign medal.

Medical Evacuation Flights

The Committee received a submission and took oral evidence on behalf of a group of nurses⁶⁸ from 4 RAAF Hospital Butterworth who, from 1966 onwards, was posted with the USAF 902 Aero Medical Evacuation Unit at Clarke Airbase in the Philippines. This Unit was responsible for medical evacuation flights out of Vietnam and the RAAF nurses attached to the unit were involved in these flights, flying in to destinations in Vietnam and on to other countries in the region, including Thailand, South Korea and Japan. The USAF apparently recorded these missions as combat or direct support combat missions.

Australian authorities have held that this service qualifies for an award of the Vietnam Logistic Support Medal (VLSM), but the nurses have always believed that they should be entitled to have access to the Vietnam Medal. The conditions for the Vietnam Medal in the original Letters Patent state that qualifying service includes 'one operational sortie over Vietnam or Vietnamese waters by air crew on the posted strength of a unit allocated for direct support of operations in Vietnam' (Paragraph 7(iii)). On this basis, the nurses qualify for the Vietnam Medal, as did air crew flying cargo in and out of Vietnam. However, there seems to have been an additional interpretation by Air Force Office which qualifies the above to say that 'the qualifying sorties must be as an authorised member of the crew of an aircraft in direct support of operations and medical evacuation sorties cannot be considered to have been in direct support of operations'⁶⁹. The Committee does not believe that there are adequate grounds for this interpretation.

The Committee believes that the evacuation of casualties from a war zone should be considered an operational activity for the purposes of the Vietnam Medal and hence recommends that a medical evacuation sortie over Vietnam or Vietnamese waters by air crew and nurses on the posted strength of a unit allocated for direct support of

⁶⁷*ibid.* p.515

⁶⁸RAAF Association Nursing Sisters Branch

⁶⁹Letter dated 5 July 1993 from AVM F D Cox to Group Captain J G Gazley AM (RL)

operations in Vietnam be regarded as qualifying service under the terms of paragraph 7 of the Letters Patent governing the Vietnam Medal.

Civilian Service in Vietnam

The Committee received a large number of submissions relating to civilian access to the VLSM, in particular for civilian surgical and medical teams operating in South Vietnam, but also for civilian crew serving on RAN ships, philanthropic workers, civilian entertainers and war correspondents working in Vietnam during the period of the Vietnam War. The Committee also met with a large number of individuals, ex-service and other organisations about this issue.

Australia was one of a number of nations which provided civilian surgical and medical aid teams to South Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Team personnel included doctors, nurses and occasionally other medical and hospital workers. They were all volunteers. The nurses usually served for around 12 months, and surgeons and other team members for lesser periods. The teams worked in or established hospitals which were designed to provide services for Vietnamese civilians. The Committee received some evidence that surgery had occasionally been provided by these teams for battle casualties but in most cases treatment was not related directly to the armed conflict. However, the teams worked long hours under difficult conditions in a country at war, ministering to a civilian population affected by the war. In addition, they were part of the official Australian presence in the Republic of Vietnam.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has advised that 'the teams were seen as part of Australia's special aid program to Vietnam and ... in addition to their obvious role in providing medical aid to the civilian population, they were seen as part of a strategy to counter Communism by winning "hearts and minds".'⁷⁰ The Committee noted evidence during its hearings that this 'hearts and minds' role may have conceivably exposed members of teams as targets for retaliatory attack, although there was no evidence that such an attack ever occurred.

The first civilian surgical and medical team was sent to Long Xuyen in October 1964⁷¹. The total numbers deployed by October 1971 were 240 doctors and 205 nurses and support staff⁷². Recruitment was carried out informally through the medical profession, hospital authorities and the Repatriation Commission. The teams were provided under a SEATO aid program administered by the then Department of External Affairs. The teams came under the general jurisdiction of the Australian Embassy in Saigon, they were given salary, travel expenses and accommodation by the Australian Government and were subject to general Public Service terms and conditions of employment. Team members signed an acceptance of terms and conditions of service which was returned to the Department of External Affairs before taking up their appointment⁷³.

⁷⁰*ibid.*

⁷¹Announcement by the Minister for External Affairs, Hon Paul Hasluck, 'Surgical Team for Viet Nam', *Current Notes*, Vol 35 1964 p.39

⁷²Letter dated 24 November 1993 to Mr L Suur from Ms W Way, Historical Documents Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

⁷³*ibid.*

CIVILIAN SURGICAL AND MEDICAL TEAMS

Following is a list of teams, arranged by place of Vietnam employment.

Vung Tau

Prince Henry/Prince of Wales	Nov 1966
Royal Prince Alfred	May 1967
Repatriation Hospital	Nov 1967
Second Repatriation Team	Nov 1968

Long Xuyen

Royal Melbourne Hospital	Oct 1964
St Vincent's (Melbourne)	Oct 1965
Prince Henry's (Melbourne)	Oct 1966
NSW State Team I	Oct 1967
NSW State Team II	Oct 1968
Royal Perth Team (WA First Team)	Feb 1969
WA Second Team	Aug 1969

Bien Hoa

Alfred Hospital (Melbourne)	Jan 1966
Royal Adelaide	Apr 1967
Royal Brisbane	Sep 1967
Princess Alexander	Sep 1968
Alfred Hospital (Melbourne)	Feb 1970
Royal Adelaide	Aug 1970
Queensland Hospitals	Feb 1971
St Vincent's (Sydney)	Aug 1971

Baria

Component of Repatriation Team	Oct 1968
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The issues raised in connection with the civilian surgical and medical teams caused some complex problems for the Committee. Although the teams were not sent to Vietnam as part of Australia's military commitment, their presence was part of our nation's total commitment. To the extent that the military spearheaded a national commitment, the teams could be seen to have acted in support of the military commitment. The teams were there because they were organised and despatched by the Australian Government. The nature and provisions of the contract into which they entered with the Department of External Affairs put them into a different category from private contractors or other individuals who were working in Vietnam for reasons of career or commercial gain.

The Committee is strongly of the view that the surgical and medical teams deserved some form of recognition for their effort, as do others who rendered comparable service. The majority of the people making written and oral submissions to the Committee had a clear preference for access to the VLSM, rather than for some new award created for this purpose. The Committee, therefore, examined this possibility.

The VLISM was established in 1993 following strong representations from various service and ex-service groups. The Committee believes that the intention of Government in establishing the VLISM was primarily to recognise Service personnel, but that it was also left open to admit certain civilians. The Committee notes that decisions have already been taken by the Department of Defence to admit to the medal civilian persons, including members of the staff of the Australian Embassy in Saigon and diplomatic couriers (both groups of whom were employees of the Department of External Affairs), Qantas aircraft crews flying into Saigon with troop flights and entertainers sponsored by the Army to entertain Australian Servicemen in Vietnam. On the other hand, members of civilian medical and aid teams (who had entered a formal employment arrangement through a contract with the Department of External Affairs) and civilian entertainers who went to entertain troops through private agents or other channels have not qualified for the VLISM. This outcome was described more than once during the Committee's public consultations as unfair.

A number of issues emerge in the Committee's application of its Principles to this issue. The first and most important is that the Committee is being asked to consider groups of civilians who, although they rendered service in a war zone, rendered that service under civilian conditions. Under its Principle number 4, the Committee expresses the view that persons closely involved with military activities in the theatre of operations to which the award relates, or those in clear support of military efforts should qualify for a defence award. The Committee considers that of the civilian groups now seeking access to the VLISM, only those who were in Vietnam in some capacity recognised by the Australian Government and subject to some degree of Government jurisdiction can come close to meeting this requirement. In the light of the precedent established in relation to civilian groups already given access to the VLISM, the Committee believes that in the case of the Vietnam War, members of civilian surgical and medical teams and others meeting the jurisdiction requirement should also be recognised by an award of the VLISM.

The Committee has been advised that official records of the surgical and medical teams sent to South Vietnam, their composition and individual membership, appear to be sufficiently detailed to permit identification and verification of service, although this will be a lengthy process⁷⁴.

This leaves the problem of civilians in the operational area but not under Government jurisdiction. Where such persons were working in Vietnam for reasons of career or commercial gain, they should not be eligible for an award. However, the Committee recognises that there may have been other civilians engaged in humanitarian work in Vietnam associated with non-Government organisations (NGOs) and not under Government jurisdiction. In considering whether civilian humanitarian aid workers attached to NGOs should receive an award, the Committee notes its Principle number 3 which requires that care must be taken in recognising service by some, that comparable service by others is not overlooked or degraded. The Committee also notes its Principle number 5 referring to practical consideration of confirming the accuracy of claims, and the passage of time.

Taking account of all these facts the Committee concludes that recognition should be limited to those under some form of Government jurisdiction and therefore recommends that civilian surgical and medical teams and other civilian groups who

⁷⁴Letter dated 24 November 1993 to Mr L Suur from Ms W Way, Historical Documents Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

served in Vietnam under Government jurisdiction and in support of the Australian national effort be eligible for the VLSM under the prescribed conditions.

The Committee believes that the issue of civilian volunteers serving overseas in hazardous circumstances, whether in operational areas or in regions where there is no Australian defence presence, is necessarily complex and needs to be resolved for the future. In particular, the Committee notes that in recent times, in countries like Cambodia and Somalia, there has been a broad Australian humanitarian and peacekeeping effort involving both military and civilian components. Whereas armed forces members have been recognised through a Service award, while no comparable award has been available to civilians.

Because of the wider implications of this issue to other categories of civilian service overseas, the Committee recommends that the Committee charged with investigating stage two (the non-Defence elements) of this comprehensive review of the Australian system of honours and awards, explore further whether service by civilian volunteers rendering humanitarian service overseas in hazardous areas should receive formal recognition by a medal.

Foreign Awards

A number of submissions raised issues relating to the Vietnamese Campaign Medal, which was instituted by the Republic of Vietnam in 1964. This can be worn in Australia as a foreign award. As explained by the then Minister for Defence, the Honourable Alan Fairhall, to the House of Representatives on 19 May 1967, 'Qualifying service by [Australian] service personnel for the campaign medal issued by the Vietnamese Government is six months continuous service with the Australian Forces in direct support of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces. Service terminated before six months because of death, or evacuation due to wounds or injury, also qualifies a serviceman for the award'.⁷⁵

The Committee notes, however, that in practice six months service could also be aggregated for an award of this medal.⁷⁶

A number of submissions pointed out that the conditions under which members of US forces serving in Vietnam could accept this Medal are different (and more generous) than those relating to Australians, especially in relation to naval personnel.

The Committee notes that Article 3 of a Directive issued by the Vietnamese Department of National Defence dated 1 September 1965 and as amended on 22 March 1966 on the Vietnamese Campaign Medal reads as follows:

“Foreign military personnel serving in South Vietnam for six months during wartime and those serving outside the geographic limits of South Vietnam and contributing direct combat support to the RVNAF for six months in their struggle against an armed enemy will also be eligible for the award of the Campaign Medal.

“Foreign authorities will determine the eligibility of their personnel for this award...”

⁷⁵House of Representatives Hansard 19 May 1967, p. 2477

⁷⁶Memorandum for The Secretaries of the Departments of Army, Air and Navy entitled 'Vietnamese Campaign Medal' and dated 16 September 1966

Submissions to the Committee argued that under this provision, the Australian Government could determine that vessels providing a logistic and support role to Australian military forces in Vietnam could also qualify for the Vietnamese Campaign Medal. The Committee disagrees, noting the requirement for 'direct combat support' and believes the Australian interpretation to be a fair interpretation of the intentions of the Vietnamese Government. It believes that an interpretation by the US Department of the Navy that 'personnel who served on US ships in the Vietnam area for at least one day in six different months qualify for the award'⁷⁷ is a very generous and flexible interpretation of the conditions attached to this award by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam. The Committee further notes that matters relating to the acceptance and wearing of foreign awards by Australians are the prerogative of the Australian Government and the practice of other countries does not afford any precedent in these matters. The Committee endorses the existing interpretation in relation to the award of the Vietnamese Campaign Medal to Australian servicemen and recommends that this continues.

The Committee also received submissions on behalf of members of the RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam who served with the US Army 135th Assault Helicopter company, which received a unit award of the United States Air Medal for Valour. Another submission argued that the Australian Government should make an application to US authorities for the extension of the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry Unit Commendation (with Palm), awarded to the 173rd Airborne Brigade US Army, to the 1 RAR Group attached to the Brigade for part of the time to which this award relates.

The Committee has dealt in detail with matters relating to foreign awards in Chapter 10. The special circumstances that relate to awards made by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam are also dealt with in that chapter. The Committee supports the resolution of all matters relating to foreign awards in accordance with the provisions of the Guidelines on the Wearing and Acceptance of Foreign Awards as issued in the Commonwealth of Australia Government Gazette No S48 of 8 February 1989. The Committee refers readers to Chapter 10.

It should be noted that no special provisions were made in the Imperial Regulations on the accepting and wearing of foreign awards to cover Australian troops in Vietnam. There were many occasions when US and South Vietnamese civil and military authorities sought to decorate Australian service personnel and from the evidence it has received, the Committee believes that a degree of confusion may have existed in the field about the considerations governing official acceptance. Many foreign decorations were awarded in the field, some Australians received awards with no supporting documentation, some received the documentation but no insignia, and others who were offered awards declined. The Committee recommends in Chapter 10 that special steps be taken in relation to awards issued in Vietnam to assist consideration of these awards in accordance with the provisions of the 1989 Guidelines.

⁷⁷Letter dated 20 November 1987 to Mr A J Lees from Mr S J Kirk, Head, Awards and Special Projects Branch, Department of the Navy

Closure of Australian Embassy and Evacuation of Embassy Staff (1975)

The Committee received a submission on behalf of members of Transport Support Flight Butterworth and Headquarters Richmond Detachment 5 who were involved as a detachment in a UNICEF operation in Vietnam from 29 March to 29 April 1975. From 12 April to 29 April units of this detachment were involved in the closure and evacuation of the Australian Embassy and its staff from Saigon in the face of the advance of North Vietnamese forces. The units of the detachment involved in this mission were tasked to destroy official documentation held in the Embassy, protect Australian assets and personnel and evacuate Embassy staff. For this service, members of the detachment received the Australian Service Medal with clasp 'Vietnam 1975'. In a written and oral submission to the Committee, it was alleged that the service was more akin to active service, with active rules of engagement and live ammunition issued in an environment of panic and instability, where Vietcong forces had already infiltrated Saigon. The Committee notes that the decision on recognising this operation was made in 1990, and against the other service it has considered in the period 1945-75, endorses the existing position.

Other Issues

A range of other issues relating to the Vietnam War were raised with the Committee. Some of these — including conditions under which the Infantry Combat Badge is issued, recommendations for an Artillery Combat Badge, recommendations for retrospective awards of the new Australian Unit Citations to be made in relation to gallant or meritorious service in Vietnam (including the case of the 102 Field Battery) and the linking of the award of the VLSM with veterans' entitlements — are outside the terms of reference of this Committee.

As in other areas, the Committee has received submissions from people who failed to meet the qualifying criteria for an award, including the case of certain RAAF air crew involved in an operation code-named 'Trimdon', which involved the escorting of the HMAS *Sydney* on her first troop carrying voyage to Vietnam in 1965. Because of the flying patterns involved, two air crews qualified for the VLSM by entering the prescribed area of operations, and two air crews did not. The Committee also received submissions arguing for an extension of the VLSM to support of Allied Forces before and after the current qualifying dates. As the Committee has noted on previous occasions and in accordance with its Principle number 6, it will recommend a variation to the existing criteria for an award only in the case of a clear anomaly or manifest injustice. The Committee notes that to address this particular anomaly would require a variation to the terms of the Letters Patent governing the VLSM. The Committee considers that there is no injustice involved in this case, and that the decision taken by Defence authorities is in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations governing the award. The Committee does not recommend any further action in this matter.

Other suggestions made to the Committee included that all Service personnel enlisted during the Vietnam War receive an award, that a dual entitlement be instigated for the Vietnam Medal and the VLSM (currently a person who holds one award cannot hold the other), that a differentiating device be included on the ribbon of the Vietnam Medal and the VLSM to distinguish front-line combat duty from other duty and that clasps be introduced onto the Vietnam Medal to show multiple tours of duty. The Committee considered each of these suggestions but, with reference to its Principles, does not accept them. The Committee believes that, with the exception of certain civilian humanitarian teams and various recipients

of foreign awards, service by Australians during the Vietnam War has been covered satisfactorily and fairly under the Australian system of honours and awards.

Chapter 7: Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Island States

Papua New Guinea

Australian responsibility for the administration of the territory of British New Guinea goes back to 1906. After World War I, Australia also assumed responsibility for German New Guinea. Some 14 500 Australian lives were lost in the defence of Papua and New Guinea during World War II.

In 1947, the former German New Guinea became the Trust Territory of New Guinea, administered by Australia but subject to the surveillance of the UN Trusteeship Council. The Territory of Papua and New Guinea was formed in 1949 under Australian administration. In 1972 the territory was renamed Papua New Guinea and on 1 December 1973 it was granted self-government. Papua New Guinea became independent on 16 September 1975. For ease of reference, all references to these territories in this report have been standardised to "Papua New Guinea".

The Committee received a number of submissions regarding service in Papua New Guinea ranging from World War II to the present day. The submissions fell into three main categories: service with the Pacific Islands Regiment (PIR) 1950-75, service in Papua New Guinea (PNG) post - 1975, and Australia's participation with the Papua New Guinea Defence Force's (PNGDF) Kumul Force in Vanuatu. Issues relating to service in Papua New Guinea during and immediately after World War II are dealt with in Chapter 2.

Service with the Pacific Islands Regiment (PIR) 1951-75

The PIR was created during World War II from the Papuan Infantry Battalion, which was established in Port Moresby in 1940. The Battalion's officers and non-commissioned officers were Australian, with Papuan personnel making up the other ranks. The unit was disbanded in 1946.

In 1951, PIR was reformed and a battalion raised in Port Moresby with company outstations at Manus Island, Wewak and Vanimo. In time other Army units such as an engineer battalion and an additional infantry battalion were also raised as were naval and air force units. These units initially had only Australian officers and NCO's and PNG other ranks; although in time some PNG officers and NCO's were appointed. The units were part of their parent Australian service until independence in 1975. Army units were commanded through a Head Quarters in Port Moresby, commanded by an Australian brigadier. In addition some Australian Army engineer units served in PNG from 1961 to 1965 engaged in nation building construction tasks, and a District Engineer's Office (DEO) has served continuously in PNG from 1963 to the present day. Other Australian units such as Aviation and Survey have served in PNG from time to time.

A task of IPIR and other units with PNG nationals was to train prospective members of the national armed forces of an independent Papua New Guinea and this became an increasing priority as progress towards independence gathered momentum in the late 60's and early 70's. This was not an easy task, involving language and cultural barriers, and the introduction of training requirements and service demands that were not part of the traditions of the people at

that time. Service with the PIR included long patrols through the harsh, and in some areas, hazardous terrain of Papua New Guinea. The patrols varied in length from two weeks to over a month.⁷⁸ Postings with the PIR were for a minimum of two years, with recreational leave normally not taken until the end of tour. From 1958 Australian personnel wore the PIR's juniper green uniform in place of their own.

The Australian personnel involved with PIR and the other PNG units before the independence of Papua New Guinea made a singular contribution to building that nation's armed forces and its self-defence capacity. The submissions in this category point to the difficulties posed by service during this time, and in particular to the unique demands inherent to the nation-building responsibilities which were attached to Australian service in the PIR. In considering the broader issue of service in Papua New Guinea from 1951 to 1975, the Committee is guided by its Principles 1 and 8. The Committee believes that this service was different to normal garrison duty, where the primary role of personnel is training of Australians and maintaining and protecting Australian assets. The training, nurturing and development roles assigned to Australian personnel serving in PNG in the context of assisting a nation towards independence were quite unlike the requirements of normal peacetime service: they were clearly and markedly more demanding.

The Committee recommends that service in the territory of Papua New Guinea from the formation of the Pacific Islands Regiment in 1951 until the independence of Papua New Guinea on 16 December 1975 be recognised through the award of a new Australian Service Medal (ASM) 1945-75 with clasp "PNG", with the relevant qualifying period of 180 days. This applies to Australian nationals of all Services including RAN personnel posted to HMAS Tarangau and attached vessels. The Committee appreciates the end for the Australian Service Medal (ASM) 1945-75 is 13 February 1975 and that there may be persons who accumulated qualifying service between this date and independence.

The Committee refers to its Principle number 3 that care must be taken that in recognising service by some, that comparable service of others is not overlooked. The Committee would prefer a solution which embraces all persons within the same award, but would not wish to preclude consideration of the suitability of the current ASM in addressing this problem.

In 1976 and 1977 the Papua New Guinea Government awarded the PNG Independence Medal (PNGIM) to those PNGDF members, including Australians, who had served between 1 December 1973 and 16 September 1975 (approximately 200). Under our system of honours and awards the PNGIM is worn as a foreign award. Civilian recipients were included on the basis of outstanding service. The eligibility criteria for the Medal excluded those members who served in PNG before 1973 and after 1975 and this issue was frequently raised in the submissions received by the Committee. Some submissions requested that the Australian Government act on behalf of the ADF personnel who served in Papua New Guinea and ask the Papua New Guinea Government to reissue the PNGIM⁷⁹.

The Committee does not believe it to be appropriate for the Australian Government to make representations to another government about the terms and conditions it has attached to its national awards. The committee sees the decisions made about the qualifying dates for the

⁷⁸Colonel GDW Irvine (RL)

⁷⁹Mr D D Graham, Mr J C S Hallinan, Mr W J Henderson, Mr B Boys, Major R Thornley, Major E B Morris JP BEc, Mr D R Gillies

PNGIM as appropriate and can only note that those Australian service personnel who qualified for this award wear it with pride. It is a mark of the esteem in which the award is held that those who failed to qualify should covet the medal.

Service in Papua New Guinea post 1975

Following the independence of Papua New Guinea in 1975 the role of ADF personnel in PNG has changed markedly from full command of what were in effect parts of the Australian Services to a supporting role. Some Australians continue to serve with the PNGDF, mainly in specialist technical or staff positions but the numbers have progressively reduced to the present level of 98, almost entirely in the Air component. In addition numbers of other Australians have served in PNG in various advisory and training positions external to the PNGDF and controlled by the Head of Australian Defence Staff in Port Moresby. The District Engineer's Office continues in Mondri and a second is being formed in Vanimo.

In considering the submissions regarding service in PNG after 1975, the Committee was guided by its Principle number 1. Duty in PNG since 1975 continued to involve uncomfortable and often arduous service in a tropical foreign country, and for many, service directly with the personnel of the PNGDF. The advisory and training roles have often required the exercise of tact and diplomacy as well as military skills. Nevertheless there has been a qualitative change from the pre-75 situation of command, development of a national defence capability and responsibility for the defence of PNG, to one of assisting the development of what was in 1975 an embryo PNGDF.

On balance, the Committee does not believe service post- 75 meets the criterion of "clearly and markedly more demanding than normal peacetime service" and therefore does not recommend an award. Nevertheless, the Committee would welcome the Department of Defence's consideration of all the circumstances and would not object should a decision be made to proceed with an award.

Vanuatu (Australian participation in PNGDF's Kumul Force)

On achieving independence for the nation in 1980, the Vanuatu Government experienced problems in drawing together a diverse culture and people. There was significant friction over the form of government introduced and over the choice of national language. An uprising occurred on the island of Espiritu Santo. The Government of Vanuatu requested assistance from its neighbouring countries and the Papua New Guinea Government responded by sending the PNGDF's Kumul Force.

Submissions to the Committee pointed out that the PNGDF Kumul Force included approximately 40 Australian personnel who were then serving in Papua New Guinea. The Australian Government did not send a separate contingent, although 20 Australian defence personnel were deployed to Vanuatu at the same time to serve independently of the PNGDF Kumul Force in response to requests from the Government of Vanuatu.

In July 1988, the President of Vanuatu presented the Vanuatu General Service Medal with clasp "Santo" to personnel who had either served with the Papua New Guinea Defence Force Kumul Force or who had supported the Kumul Force in Vanuatu for a period of 72 hours. On presenting the Medal, the President stated that, subject to Australian Government's

concurrence, the medal could also be awarded to Australian defence force personnel who met the qualifying criteria for the award.

At the time Australia followed British guidelines relating to the accepting and wearing of foreign awards. Upon receiving the request from the Vanuatu Government, it was decided to delay a decision until new Australian guidelines were gazetted. Australia's Guidelines for the Accepting and Wearing of Foreign Awards was gazetted on 8 February 1989. The Committee has been unable to establish why this matter has not been progressed since 1989 and believes that the Australian Government should accept the offer made by the President of Vanuatu.

In 1982 the Vanuatu Independence Medal was awarded to four members of the Australian defence force by the Vanuatu Government and they were subsequently given 'restricted' permission to accept and wear the medal. These personnel were awarded the medal for the performance of specific tasks such as operational flying and aircraft maintenance. The Committee has received a submission asking that other Australian defence force personnel who also served at this time and performed similar duties also receive the award. As in the case of the Papua New Guinea Independence Medal this is a matter for another nation. The Committee notes that matters relating to this award are the prerogative of the Vanuatu Government.

Fiji

The Committee has received a submission about Operation 'Morris Dance', which involved the deployment of the Operational Deployment force (ODF) towards Fiji following the coup against the Bavandra Government in 1987. The Force was despatched to evacuate Australian nationals from Fiji if necessary, but this was not required. The Committee does not believe there to be any case for an award to those involved in this deployment.

Chapter 8: Peacekeeping and other service

This chapter examines issues relating to Australia's role with the United Nations in providing personnel to assist with peacekeeping operations. The Committee received a large number of submissions seeking recognition for service with the United Nations as part of various Peacekeeping Forces before 1975. Other service performed by Australians will also be examined in this chapter, as are issues relating to nuclear testing and minesweeping and bomb clearance.

United Nations' Military Observer Group In India and Pakista (UNMOGIP) and United Nations' India – Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM)

A number of submissions sought recognition for service in India and Pakistan. Australia provided defence personnel to assist with two United Nations' units in India and Pakistan: UNMOGIP and UNIPOM.

UNMOGIP was established in 1949 with the purpose of monitoring the ceasefire in Kashmir at the end of the first India-Pakistan war. Australia's involvement with UNMOGIP began in 1950 with the deployment of Army observers to India and Pakistan and ended in 1985. During this 35 year period, approximately 150 Australian defence force personnel served with UNMOGIP.

UNIPOM was in place from 1965 to 1966. Its role was to monitor the ceasefire outside Kashmir. Four Australians participated in this exercise as military observers.

As recognition of their service, Australian personnel assigned to UNMOGIP received a United Nation's Service Medal, which under the Australian system of honours and awards is worn as a foreign award. Service with UNMOGIP since 14 February 1975 has been officially recognised with the Australian Service Medal clasp "Kashmir". The United Nations recognised service with UNIPOM with a United Nations Service Medal.

In considering this issue, the Committee has been guided by its Principles number 1, 2, 3 and 8. The Committee believes that participation in international peacekeeping operations usually attracts some form of award. In Australia since 1975, members of the ADF participating in such operations have usually been eligible for the Australian Service Medal, even where such service has attracted some other award, such as the United Nations Medal (e.g. Kashmir and Cambodia). The Committee endorses this general approach. Guided by its Principle number 3, the Committee is conscious that to maintain the inherent fairness and integrity of the Australian system of honours and awards, care must be taken that in recognising service by some, the comparable service of others is not overlooked or degraded. The Committee therefore recommends that a similar approach be taken in relation to participation in UN peacekeeping forces before 1975.

The Committee recommends that service from 13 August 1948 to 13 February 1975 with the United Nations including the Military Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) and the United Nations India/Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM) be recognised through the award of the new Australian Service Medal with clasp "Kashmir" with the relevant qualifying period

being 90 days as established for the 'Kashmir' clasp for the current ASM for service since 14 February 1975.

Other service 1945-75

The Committee notes that Australian service personnel have participated in other UN and multinational operations.

The Committee recommends that the appropriate Defence authorities examine this service with a view to establishing, in light of the Committee's recommendation on service in UNMOGIP and UNIPOM, whether equivalent service has also been rendered in these other operations. Where it has been, it should also be recognised through an award.

UNTEA - West New Guinea

The second UN peacekeeping issue brought to the attention of the Committee involved the service of the Detachment 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron in West New Guinea with the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA).

UNTEA was established in 1962 to supervise the transition of Netherlands West New Guinea from Dutch to Indonesian control. Its period of operation was 1 October 1962 to 1 May 1963. The Australian Detachment, which served from 18 November to 25 December 1962, comprised 11 men: four army pilots, seven RAAF airmen and two Sioux helicopters, and their responsibility was to assist UNTEA in dealing with a cholera outbreak on the south-west coast of West New Guinea. The Australian contribution was to the civil component of UNTEA, not its military component.

In considering this issue the Committee was guided by the same considerations that apply to service in UNMOGIP and UNIPOM. The Committee recommends that service by Australian military personnel with the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) force in West New Guinea should be recognised through the award of the new Australian Service Medal with clasp "West New Guinea", with the relevant qualifying period of 30 days.

Rhodesia

The Committee received several submissions concerning the contribution of Australian defence personnel to the Commonwealth Monitoring Force (CMF) in Rhodesia. One hundred and fifty two Australian Army personnel formed part of the CMF despatched to Rhodesia to monitor the implementation of the Lancaster House Agreement, which led to the independence of Zimbabwe. They were in place from December 1979 until March 1980. For this service they received the Rhodesia Medal, an Imperial award which sits in the Australian system of honours and awards together with other campaign medals. (The Imperial system was current in Australia at the time this Medal was awarded).

Submissions to the Committee about service in Rhodesia sought additional recognition for Australian CMF personnel through the issue of the Australian Service Medal (ASM) with an appropriate clasp such as "Rhodesia". The submissions argued that as Australian service personnel on United Nations (UN) or Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) commitments or peacekeeping missions have received both a UN or MFO award and the

ASM (as in the case of Iran/Iraq and Namibia), then so too should they receive the ASM in addition to the Rhodesia Medal. The Committee does not agree. It refers to its Principles number 2 and 6. The Rhodesia Medal is an Australian award as distinct from a foreign award. Even though the first elements of the new Australian system of honours and awards were introduced in 1975, elements of the Imperial system operated contiguously with the Australian system until 1992. Normally only one medal within the Australian system of honours and awards should be given in recognition of a single period of service. Those Australians who received the Rhodesia Medal for service with the CMF received the award from the Australian government and people. Their service has already been recognised by the nation and there is no case for an additional award.

Nanking and Shanghai

The Committee received several submissions regarding the role of HMAS *Warramunga* and her crew in Nanking, and HMAS *Shoalhaven* and her crew in Shanghai in 1949.

HMAS *Warramunga* was commissioned on 23 November 1942. Between 1945 and 1950, the ship was employed mainly on home duties but spent two periods of service with the Occupation Forces in Japan. HMAS *Warramunga* was despatched to Nanking between 29 January and 16 February 1949, at a time when the Communists were sealing their victory over the Nationalist Army and Nanking was exposed. Submissions to the Committee noted that HMAS *Warramunga* was despatched to evacuate Australian nationals who were threatened by the advance of the Chinese Communist Army. The Committee's investigation of the ship's records from this period indicate that, although the visit took place in tense circumstances, it passed without serious incident and there is no evidence of an evacuation actually taking place.

HMAS *Shoalhaven* was in Shanghai through the month of April 1949, when HMS *Amethyst*, HMS *Black Swan*, HMS *London* and HMS *Consort* were involved in actions along the Yangtze River, where they were engaged by communist batteries, HMAS *Shoalhaven* was not involved in the action, though it provided support to the RN vessels as they berthed in Shanghai harbour before and after their action⁸⁰. For this action, the RN vessels qualified for the Naval General Service Medal 1915-62 with Clasp 'Yangtze'. HMAS *Shoalhaven* did not qualify for this award.

The Committee, guided by its Principle number 1 does not believe that either HMAS *Warramunga* or HMAS *Shoalhaven* were involved in action of sufficient moment or involved such hazards that made it clearly more demanding than normal peacetime service. The Committee does not recommend any awards.

Nuclear Testing

Australia's involvement with nuclear testing began in October 1950 when the Menzies government gave permission for British test facilities to be constructed in Australia. The tests were conducted initially at Monte Bello, off the West Australian coast. The first British device was fired on 3 October 1952 and in 1956 a series of nuclear and later thermonuclear weapons were exploded at the Permanent Proving Ground at Maralinga in South Australia. Between 1957 and 1964 tests were also conducted at Emu Field, South Australia and off

⁸⁰ HMAS *Shoalhaven* at Sesebo, Japan, 6 May 1949, Report of Proceedings for the month of April 1949 to the Secretary, Naval Board, Melbourne, SCI.

Christmas Island. Defence co-operation in the testing of guided missiles and long-range weapons also took place at Woomera, beginning in 1950, and approximately 13 000 trials were conducted over the years of the joint project.

The Committee received a number of submissions seeking recognition of those Australians who participated in the nuclear testing. The submissions argued that service at any of the nuclear test sites meant that the physical health of "atomic veterans" was placed in jeopardy and as a result many had died from various forms of cancer. It was argued that the mortality rate of "atomic veterans" was far above the national average. The submissions made reference to the harsh living conditions of the personnel and the fact that they were deployed to areas subject to extreme fluctuations in temperatures. According to oral evidence given to the Committee, personnel were asked to volunteer for service in these areas. The Committee refers to the findings of the Royal Commission Report on British Atomic Weapons Testing in Australia and notes that the circumstances relating to these tests are dealt with in detail in that report⁸¹. The Committee is aware of the controversy that surrounds the question of atomic testing, and appreciates the anxiety that the ongoing debate about the effect on their health caused by the atomic tests has caused these veterans and their families. However, the Committee is not in a position to resolve these difficult issues as they are outside the terms of reference.

The Committee's consideration of this matter is limited strictly to whether this service, on its merits and in accordance with the Committee's principles, is worthy of an award. The Committee has not been influenced by the possible impact, real or perceived, on veterans' entitlements. The Committee's Principle number 1 says that normal duty, although demanding, hazardous and uncomfortable, should not be recognised by the award of a medal. When people volunteered for this service they were aware of the uncomfortable and hazardous conditions at the test sites. Subsequently the personnel involved in this service became concerned about the possible health risks flowing from their involvement with the tests as the community's awareness about the testing grew. There have been a number of expert studies in this area but the Committee is not in a position to comment on these.

The Committee received evidence on behalf of the Australian Nuclear Veterans Association⁸² to show that the level of danger associated with these tests was markedly more than that associated with normal peacetime service. Whether this is true or not, even from the perspective of 1994, the Committee does not believe that an award is appropriate for such service in testing weapons. In accordance with its Principle number 1 the Committee does not recommend an award.

Minesweeping and bomb clearance

As part of Australia's defence strategy against possible enemy invasion during World War II, mines were laid in various positions in the waters separating Australia and New Guinea and elsewhere. After the war, Australia faced the enormous and dangerous task of sweeping the waters to clear the mines and disposing of the very large quantity of unexploded ordinance on land in foreign operational areas. Bomb disposal and minesweeping operations were conducted both on land and water by members of the Army and Navy. The major casualty of

⁸¹ 1985: *The Report of the Royal Commission into British Nuclear Tests*, AGPS, Canberra.

⁸²Mr F Kirkland OAM, Sydney 1 October 1993

these operations was HMAS *Warrnambool*, which sank in 1947, after hitting a mine killing four crewmen and injuring 28 others.

The Committee received a number of submissions relating to the qualifying criteria for the Naval General Service Medal clasp "Minesweeping" and "Bomb and Mine Clearance". The submissions asked that the qualifying criteria of the medal be examined as the qualifying conditions of 180 days of actual mine sweeping or bomb clearance duties were onerous and very difficult to meet. (See Figure 8.1 for qualifying criteria for Naval General Service Medal 1915-62).

The Committee sought advice from the Naval Medals Section of the Department of Defence regarding the qualifying period for the Naval General Service Medal with clasp "Minesweeping" and has been advised that qualifying time counted for the clasp includes the total time from the departure from port to arrival back in port of vessels engaged in actual minesweeping operations. The Committee believes that this is a fair and appropriate way to count qualifying time.

The Committee was originally given to understand that very few people qualified for this award. However, following a request to the Department of Defence for precise information relating to the awarding of the medal, the Committee was advised that the Naval General Service Medal with clasp "Minesweeping" was awarded to some 1 250 Australian personnel and that the clasp "Bomb And Mine Clearance" has been awarded to some 60 Australian personnel. In light of this information and guided by its Principles number 2 and 3, the Committee does not recommend that a new award be instituted to recognise the service of Australian Service personnel who performed minesweeping and bomb clearance duties as it appears that those concerned have already received due recognition under qualifying criteria which have been interpreted fairly.

The Committee also received submissions on behalf of the 10th Australian Bomb Disposal Platoon, which operated in Japan from April 1946 as part of the Australian component of BCOF. The Committee notes that as a result of its recommendation in Chapter 3 of this report, this service may now be eligible for the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp "Japan". The Committee also received submissions on behalf of the crew of vessels operating on minesweeping duties in Papua New Guinea waters in the early 1970s. The Committee notes that as a result of its recommendations in Chapter 7, this service may now be eligible for an award of the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp "PNG".

Figure 8.1 Qualifying criteria for Naval General Service Medal 1915-62

Naval General Service Medal 1915-62

Instituted in 1915 and awarded to Australians with the following clasps for the service indicated:

"MINESWEEPING 1945-51" - six months minesweeping service afloat in Australian waters including New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, from 3 September 1945 to 16 August 1948

"BOMB & MINE CLEARANCE 1945-53" - six months service ashore on the disposal of bombs and mines in New Guinea, the Queensland coast and the Solomon Islands from 3 September 1945 to 31 October 1946, 31 May 1950 and 28 April 1953 respectively.

Berlin Airlift

The Committee received submissions referring in passing only to the role of the RAAF in the Berlin blockade and airlift which occurred between 26 June 1948 and 4 May 1949. In August 1948 the Australian Government made an offer to the British Government to supply 10 RAAF Dakota transport crews to assist with the ferrying of supplies to Berlin. This offer was accepted by the British Government on 21 August 1948 and on 25 August 1948 the first RAAF personnel departed from Sydney. The first Australian flight into Berlin was made on 15 September 1948 and the last was made on 26 August 1949. During this time Australian personnel flew 2 062 round trips from Lubeck to Berlin, carrying 7 624 tonnes of supplies and 7 702 passengers. The British Government did not recognise by an award the service of RAF personnel involved in this exercise through an award.

The Committee appreciates the political tensions that surrounded the Berlin airlift. However, in measuring this service against its Principle number 1, the Committee is not aware of any compelling evidence that would lead it to characterise the service other than as demanding service in peacetime circumstances. It therefore does not recommend an award.

Chapter 9: National Service

The Committee received many submissions from men and their families who felt they had their lives disrupted in order to perform their duty for Australia through national service from 1951-59 and from 1965-72. The Committee also met with former national servicemen and their representatives in Newcastle and with the National Servicemen's Association of Australia in Brisbane.

The issue of conscription in Australia has often attracted controversy, especially during the divisive referendum debates during World War I. Conscription was first introduced in Australia during World War II, under the Defence (Citizen Military Forces) Act (No. 2 of 1943). This Act was exclusively for the employment of conscripted Australians in the South-West Pacific Zone. It was not until 1951 that Australia adopted universal conscription. The National Service Act (No. 2 of 1951) provided for the compulsory call-up for service training of males of 18 years. The total active training obligation was fixed at 176 days, of which 98 days were to be served on a full-time basis and the remainder on a part-time basis. In 1953 this was reduced to 154 days for the navy and air force, and to 140 days for the army. A trainee was further required to remain on the Reserve for a period of five years from the date of his initial call-up. This scheme continued until 1959 when it was abolished. During its eight years of operation approximately 227 000 males were called up for service.

On 10 November 1964 Prime Minister Menzies announced that the national service scheme abolished in 1959 would be reintroduced. All Australian males aged 20 years were required to register for national service. Registrations were held in January and July of each year followed by a separate ballot to select the birth date of those required to enlist. The system was random and controversial - marbles were placed in a barrel and after it was spun the required number of marbles, each representing a different birth date, was drawn singly by hand. A different eminent Australian conducted each ballot, which was televised. The Committee appreciates the view of those who regarded the process as an arbitrary one.

Men balloted for national service were required to serve two years of full-time duty with the army, navy or air force. In October 1972 this was reduced to 18 months. Alternatively, those who joined the CMF before their age group was balloted were exempt from call-up but were required to serve six years in the CMF. If they were eligible for call-up but had exercised the CMF option and had left before the full term, they were called up automatically for two years' service in the regular army.

In March 1966, Prime Minister Holt announced that national servicemen were to participate with the Army in the Vietnam War.

Between January 1965 and December 1972 over 804 000 men registered for national service, of whom 35 000 exercised the CMF option. Approximately 63 740 men were conscripted through the ballot system and of these 17 424 went to Vietnam where they served with distinction.

On 5 December 1972, the newly elected Whitlam Government abolished conscription.

The majority of submissions referred to the negative impact of national service on career opportunities, social life and personal freedom. A number of people who gave evidence described incidents where national servicemen were not given back their old jobs at the completion of their period of service. This discrimination in employment was in contradiction to s.54B of the *National Service Act 1951-1973*. They also referred to the strains imposed on social and personal relations. There is little doubt that Australian society was divided over the issue of conscription during the Vietnam War. The division was public and sometimes acrimonious. Some of the men who were conscripted and who served their nation were the victims, if not targets of this acrimony. It was a difficult time for them personally as it was a difficult time for the nation.

The majority of the submissions suggested the creation of a new award to recognise the service of Australian national servicemen, such as an "Australian National Service Medal". Some submissions made reference to a National Service Medal said to have been instituted by the United States and British Governments. The Committee has been advised by the British Government that no award for national service exists in the British system of honours and awards. However, an unofficial commemorative medal known as the "National Service Medal" has been struck by the Royal British Legion⁸³. The Government of the United States of America advises that "...the United States of America does provide recognition [for national service] by the award of the National Defense Service Medal. This medal is authorized by Presidential Executive Order, and is awarded when the United States is or has been engaged in a nationally recognized major military conflict. The medal is awarded to personnel who have had honorable active service in any of the services of the US armed forces during any portion of the eligibility period".⁸⁴

In reaching its recommendation regarding the recognition of National Service in Australia, the Committee notes the hardship suffered by some Australian men in contributing to the defence of Australia. However, in considering whether this service should attract an award, the Committee is guided by its Principles. The Committee notes that those national servicemen who served in Vietnam were eligible for the same range of campaign, bravery and distinguished service awards as members of the regular services. Those national servicemen who received no awards are mostly men who served their full-time or part-time duties in Australia. The Committee's Principle number 1 says that normal duties, even though they may be demanding, hazardous and uncomfortable should not be recognised by the award of a medal. National service at the time was a normal requirement in Australia. It does not fit into the category of service clearly and markedly more demanding than normal peacetime service.

While appreciating the difficulties associated with conscription, especially during the Vietnam War, the Committee does not consider that the duty rendered by national servicemen in the armed services in Australia was anything other than ordinary duty. Regular personnel performing the same duties did not qualify for any special award. The Committee is aware

⁸³ Letter dated 1 November 1993 to Mr L Sour, from Squadron Leader G F Hughes, Head of Secretariat, British Defence Liaison Staff, British High Commission, Canberra.

⁸⁴ Active service in this context refers to service other than inactive reserve. The National Defense Service Medal has been awarded for the following periods:

<u>Eligibility Period</u>	<u>Conflict</u>
27 Jun 50 - 27 Jul 54	Korea
01 Jan 61 - 14 Aug 74	Vietnam
01 Mar 90 - Undetermined*	Desert Storm

* This eligibility period has ended, but ending date is unknown.

that a number of national servicemen chose to extend their service with the armed forces beyond the required time. Where this occurred, they would be eligible for the normal range of long service and other awards.

The Committee commends the duty performed by national servicemen, but does not believe that service as a national serviceman from 1951-59 or from 1965-72 was sufficiently extraordinary to warrant a separate award. While there may still need to be a reconciliation between those who held opposing views in the past and although many national servicemen may feel that their contribution has still not been properly recognised, the Committee does not believe that these problems can be solved through an award, or that a special medal is appropriate. However, the Committee believes that there are lessons to be learnt from the experience of National Servicemen in relation to more timely recognition outside the Australian honours system of such service in the future.

Chapter 10: Foreign Awards

Various issues relating to foreign awards made or offered during conflicts involving Australian personnel have been dealt with separately in the relevant chapters of this report. The purpose of this chapter is to pull together the common themes in submissions received by the Committee on foreign awards.

Until 1989, the Imperial Regulations relating to the wearing and acceptance of foreign awards were followed. There were separate regulations relating to ordinary citizens and to servants of the Crown, including Defence force personnel. The provisions relating to the latter made it difficult to obtain permission to accept and wear a foreign award. They provided that no person could do so without the Queen's permission, and stipulated two categories of permission: restricted and unrestricted. Restricted permission meant that insignia could be worn only on particular occasions associated with the country concerned. Unrestricted permission meant that insignia could be worn without restriction as if it were an Imperial award. The Regulations specified that full and unrestricted permission could be contemplated in the case of Orders conferred:

- for distinguished services in saving or attempting to save life;
- on any officer in the Royal Navy, Army or Royal Air Force, or any United Kingdom official, in recognition of services (*i*) while lent to a Commonwealth Government or (*ii*) while lent to a foreign Government provided that he is not in receipt of any emoluments from British public funds during the period of the loan.

They also provided that permission would not be given to officers of British naval, military or air squadrons or units visiting foreign countries and member countries of the Commonwealth of Nations, nor would applications for permission to wear medals gained in warlike operations be entertained if the grant of such permission would be at variance with considerations of general policy or public interest.

New Australian guidelines were issued in the Commonwealth of Australia Government Gazette No. S48 of 8 February 1989 (see Appendix C). Paragraph 4 of these guidelines provide that permission to accept and wear a foreign award will be considered for:

- conspicuous bravery in saving or attempting to save life;
- extraordinary service to humanity at large;
- outstanding service to the country wishing to confer the honour or award and/or in furthering relations between Australia and that country; or
- service in warlike or hazardous situations.

Under paragraph 2 of the guidelines, requests to confer a foreign honour or award on an Australian citizen will be considered where made by heads of state or the governments of countries with which Australia maintains diplomatic relations, or by official agencies of the United Nations or similar organisations. Requests will be considered only when forwarded

through recognised diplomatic or other official channels with full details of the reasons for the proposed award.

Under the 1989 Guidelines, decisions about foreign awards are made by the Governor-General on the advice of the Government, but permission will not normally be considered where the honour or award is in recognition of the performance of normal official duties of a person in government service.

Those who administer the new set of Guidelines believe that they are more generous than the Imperial ones, and from information received in evidence the Committee would endorse this view.

This is not to say that all foreign awards are approved under the 1989 Guidelines. For example, ADF personnel in the Gulf War were not permitted to accept officially the Saudi Arabian 'Liberation of Kuwait Medal'. They were eligible variously for the Australian Service Medal and the Australian Active Service Medal with clasp 'Kuwait' and three Meritorious Unit Citations which taken together were considered to recognise adequately and properly Australian service in the war. The Committee encourages decision makers, when considering foreign awards, to continue to bear in mind the total picture, including access to Australian awards, to avoid a proliferation of medals and to ensure that relativities are maintained.

The Committee received a number of submissions about foreign awards. Some related to awards declined under the Imperial Regulations, others to awards which had been accepted unofficially but no formal approval sought in anticipation of a probable rejection. Some of these submissions offered solutions including retrospective recognition or the granting of Australian award equivalents to the foreign awards in question. There were also submissions about foreign awards offered since the introduction of the 1989 Guidelines. The Committee has been assured that all requests submitted in accordance with the 1989 Guidelines will receive full consideration, even though these requests may relate to awards originally offered many years ago or to awards for which permission has been previously denied under the Imperial Regulations.

The Committee therefore encourages individuals who were offered or hold unofficial foreign awards and who believe that under the 1989 Guidelines they may be entitled to receive them officially to apply using the process specified.

The Committee appreciates that there may be difficulties with such an approach, especially in the requirement under paragraph 2 of the 1989 Guidelines for a foreign government to initiate the request. In many cases, records may no longer exist, and individuals may feel hesitant or unsure about approaching the foreign government or its representative in Australia. This problem appears insurmountable for the many Australian military personnel holding foreign awards from the South Vietnamese Government, which no longer exists.

The Committee recommends that in addition to encouraging individuals to apply or reapply through the foreign government concerned, the relevant government departments and the Honours Secretariat at Government House consider practical ways in which foreign awards which were offered or accepted unofficially in the past may be re-examined for acceptance officially in the light of our 1989 Guidelines, with primary emphasis on those awards offered during the Vietnam War. This should include

consideration of whether the Prime Minister or the Minister for Administrative Services as the Minister responsible for the Australian honours system can be given a discretion to waive the requirements of paragraph 2 of the 1989 Guidelines on the Wearing and Acceptance of Foreign Awards in certain circumstances, e.g. where a formerly allied government has ceased to exist.

Chapter 11: Current System of Honours and Awards

A large number of submissions to the Committee dealt with issues relating to the current system of honours and awards, including concerns about individual elements and the system as a whole. The Committee took evidence on these issues in every capital city in Australia. Many submissions recommended that the current system be used to extend recognition for service in the period 1945–75. The Committee has adopted this approach in recommending the establishment of the Australian Service Medal 1945–75 as part of the current system of honours and awards.

This chapter will address separately the major issues raised in relation to various elements in the current system of honours and awards, and will then deal with proposals for new awards and with other issues raised in submissions.

Order of Australia

Four main issues were raised in relation to the Order of Australia:

- quotas for the Military Division of the Order of Australia and their relationship to the number of awards made in the General Division;
- the appropriateness of the existing quotas for the Military Division as a result of the introduction of the Conspicuous Service Awards;
- the relationship between level of award and rank of recipient; and
- decision-making processes relating to appointments made to the Military Division.

(a) Relationship of Military Quotas to General Division Quotas

The Committee notes that under Section 20(3) of the Constitution for the Order of Australia:

“In any calendar year, the number of appointments...to the Military Division shall not exceed one-tenth of one per cent of the average number of persons who were members of the Defence Force on each day of the immediately preceding year.”

This allows for appointments to the levels of Companion (AC), Officer (AO) and Member (AM) at the ration of 1:1 000, plus an unlimited number of awards of the Medal (OAM) of the Order (Medals are not regarded as 'appointments').

The Constitution also specifies that military appointments at the AC level shall not exceed 5 per cent of the total number of persons who are appointed each year, and AOs no more than 20 per cent.

ADF Headquarters advises that annual appointments in the Military Division for the last four years averages 47 in number. From a Defence Force strength of about 100 000 regulars and reserves, this gives an appointment ratio of roughly 1:2 000 — about half that allowed by the Constitution for the Order of Australia. When military OAMs (about 46 per year) are included, a ratio of nearly 1:1 000 is obtained. Defence is keeping within the spirit of the quota definition even when medals are included.

The Committee notes that in the General Division of the Order, quotas of 25, 100 and 225 per year apply respectively to appointments at the AC, AO and AM levels. As in the Military Division of the Order, awards of the OAM are not subject to a quota. In the General Division during 1992, 302 appointments and 474 awards of the medal were made while in 1993 there was a total of 287 appointments and 511 medals. The Department of Administrative Services has advised the Committee that, assuming an average minimum age of civilian recipients to be 35 years, this gives a ratio of appointments and awards in the General Division of about 1:10 000 of the general population. Figure 11.1 shows the number of awards given in the General and Military Division of the Order since 1988.

Figure 11.1: Number of Awards Given in the Order of Australia 1988-1993

	Companion (AC)		Officer (AO)		Member (AM)		Medal (OAM)		TOTAL AWARDS	
	General Division	Military Division	General Division	Military Division	General Division	Military Division	General Division	Military Division	General Division	Military Division
1988	24	2	93	10	224	35	351	52	692	99
1989	20	3	80	10	221	35	458	53	779	101
1990	13	0	74	10	212	37	446	52	746	99
1991	17	0	63	10	210	34	471	51	761	95
1992	15	2	71	11	224	37	478	50	788	75
1993	13	1	66	6	208	32	520	32	807	71

In discussing this issue with the Committee, Defence authorities acknowledged the difference in the relative number of awards available under the Military Division and the General Division of the Order of Australia. In doing so, they pointed to the disciplined environment to which service personnel are exposed on a daily basis, in contrast to the daily working environment of those who do not form part of the military structure. They also pointed to the traditional use of honours and awards to recognise service in the Armed Forces.

The Committee believes that issues relating to the Order of Australia are complex and that its terms of reference do not extend readily to examining matters relating to relativities between the General Division and Military Division of the Order of Australia. It recommends that these issues be examined by the committee appointed to conduct stage two of this comprehensive review of the Australian system of honours and awards.

(b) Relationship of Quotas for the Military Division of the Order to the Conspicuous Service Awards

Two new discrete awards have been available since 1991 for outstanding service in peacetime: the Conspicuous Service Cross and the Conspicuous Service Medal. The regulations for these Conspicuous Service awards do not impose any quota on the number of awards that may be given. The Committee notes advice from the Chief of the Defence Force that a guidance figure for awards has been established to maintain the prestigious nature of the award at 125 per cent of the available numbers of the Orders of Australia.

The Committee has dealt with issues relating to the Conspicuous Service Awards themselves later in this chapter. It notes that these awards have only been in place for a short time and it is difficult to determine at this early stage how they relate to awards in the Military Division of the Order of Australia. To the extent this question is pertinent to the relativities that exist between the General and Military Divisions of the Order of Australia, it should be considered by the stage two committee.

(c) Ranked-based Awards

On the issue of rank-based awards in the Military Division in the Order of Australia, the Committee notes that as in the General Division, the criteria for awards are laid down in the Constitution for the Order. The criteria are:

Figure 11.2 Criteria for Awards in the Order of Australia

General Division	Military Division
Companion (AC) - for eminent achievement and merit of the highest degree in service to Australia or to humanity at large	Companion (AC) - for eminent service in duties of great responsibility
Officer (AO) - for distinguished service to Australia or to humanity at large	Officer (AO) - for distinguished service in responsible positions
Member (AM) - for service in a particular locality or field of activity or to a particular group	Member (AM) - for exceptional service or performance of duty
Medal (OAM) - for service worthy of particular recognition	Medal (OAM) - for meritorious service or performance of duty

During its consultations, the Committee heard criticisms that awards in both the Military and General Divisions reflect the rank of the recipient, rather than the merit of his/her contribution. In discussing this matter in relation to the Military Division with the Chief of the Defence Force, the Committee received the following advice.

“It is a reasonable perception that awards are either based on or reflect the rank of the recipient. Given the military environment, which is strongly hierarchical and rank-based, and the conditions for awards in the Military Division, there is naturally a high correlation between the level of award and rank.

“The requirement for eminent service in duties of great responsibility (AC) would apply only to the most senior officers of the Defence Force.

Distinguished service in responsible positions (AO) would seem most appropriate to one star positions and above, although I do not rule out more junior officers in exceptional circumstances.

“In relation to the AM and OAM, I believe there is scope for these awards to be available across rank levels on a wider basis than has been past practice. Opportunities for this will be sought in forthcoming honours lists. You might note that this approach has already been taken with the Conspicuous Service awards.”

The Committee welcomes this advice and encourages Defence chiefs to ensure that awards in the Order of Australia continue to be based only on merit against the criteria laid down in the Constitution of the Order.

In this regard the Committee notes the advice from the Chief of the Defence Force that any previous instructions issued within the ADF linking rank to the level of award have been withdrawn.

The Committee also believes that greater flexibility should be introduced into the granting of awards in the Military Division of the Order so that recently retired members of the ADF can be recognised for their contribution to the Defence Force. The current prescription that only serving members of the Defence Force may be recognised by the Order of Australia could work unfairly in denying recognition to people who are worthy of an award.

(d) Decision-making Processes

The final set of issues raised with the Committee in relation to the Order of Australia was a perceived lack of transparency in the decision making process relating to the nominations made for appointments to the Military Division of the Order. There was a feeling that nominations, once made, disappeared into the system and there was no feedback on their progress or their merits.

The Committee believes that there would be advantage in making public the process by which nominations in the Military Division are formulated, handled and approved, and recommends that the Defence Force pursue this in consultation with the Secretary of the Order of Australia, who is also the Official Secretary to the Governor-General.

Other Issues Relating to the Order of Australia

The Committee received representations on behalf of accredited philanthropic groups pointing out that whereas they had access to all other Defence awards in the Australian system of honours and awards, their members could not be considered for appointment to the Military Division of the Order of Australia. The Committee believes this to be an anomaly that should be addressed and is especially guided to this view by application of its Principles number 3 and number 4. The service of members of accredited philanthropic organisations is highly valued and to all intents and purposes, they discharge their duties as if they are members of the ADF.

The Committee recommends that the words 'and other persons determined by the Minister of State for Defence' be inserted at Section 20 (1) after the words 'Members of the Defence Force' to permit nominations to be made to the Military Division of the Order of members of accredited philanthropic organisations.

The Committee also had its attention drawn to the fact that no honorary awards had ever been made in the Military Division of the Order of Australia. Such awards are made to foreign nationals in the General Division in recognition of service to Australia or humanity at large, and are well received by the Australian community and overseas. The Committee believes that there may be bilateral and regional benefits to the nation if outstanding service to the ADF and to Australia's defence relations rendered by foreign nationals is recognised under the Military Division of the Order. The Committee discussed this issue with Defence Chiefs and is pleased to note that the first honorary appointment to the Military Division of the Order of Australia was made in late February 1994.

Conspicuous Service Awards

Two issues were raised in relation to the Conspicuous Service Awards, which were first awarded in 1991. The first was based on a perception that the Conspicuous Service Cross (CSC) and the Conspicuous Service Medal (CSM) were awarded on a rank basis. The Committee has been advised by the Honours Secretariat at Government House that as at August 1993, a total of 90 CSCs (68 to officers and 22 to other ranks) and 122 CSMs (39 to officers and 83 to other ranks) had been awarded to members of the ADF. Given the small number of awards involved it is difficult to draw conclusions one way or the other, except to note that all ranks have access to both awards as is appropriate. The second issue related to the perceived lack of significant distinction in the criteria for the Cross and the Medal. Again the Committee notes that it is difficult to examine this concern in a meaningful way since the awards have only been in place a short time.

Figure 11.3 Summary of Qualifying Criteria for Conspicuous Service Awards

<p>Conspicuous Service Cross (CSC)</p> <p>for outstanding devotion to duty, or outstanding achievement in the application of skills, judgement or dedication, in non-warlike situations</p> <p>Conspicuous Service Medal (CSM)</p> <p>for meritorious achievement or devotion to duty, in non-warlike situations</p>
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The Committee recommends that issues relating to the Conspicuous Service Cross and the Conspicuous Service Medal should be examined by the Chief of the Defence Force in 1996, at which time these awards will have been in place for a period of five years.

Australian Active Service Medal and Australian Service Medal

The Committee had expressed to it clear and widespread support for these two awards. This was evidenced in the significant number of submissions which argued that the Committee should use an approach similar to that of the Australian Active Service Medal (AASM) and the Australian Service Medal (ASM) in examining those areas of service in the period 1945–75 which had not been recognised by an award. The Committee took this approach.

The AASM and the ASM were established on 13 September 1988 to recognise service by members of the ADF and other personnel in prescribed areas. The AASM serves as a general service medal for minor campaigns. The Prime Minister stated in November 1988 that the Government would still consider instituting separate medals for service in major conflicts in accordance with established tradition.

Figure 11.4: Summary of qualifying criteria for the AASM and the ASM

<p>Australian Active Service Medal — to recognise service in a prescribed warlike operation; and</p> <p>Australian Service Medal — to recognise service in a prescribed peacekeeping or non-warlike operation.</p>
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The award of both medals is made with a clasp to denote the prescribed operation (e.g. the Australian Active Service Medal and the Australian Service Medal were issued with a 'Kuwait' clasp for those who served with Australian forces deployed to the Gulf for prescribed periods in 1990 and 1991). A single person may be awarded both Medals, but any subsequent award of either medal to the same person is made in the form of a further clasp to the Medal.

The Regulations for each of these medals provide that the Governor-General, on the recommendation of the Minister for Defence, may declare any warlike or non-warlike operation in which members of the Defence Force are engaged, or have been engaged on or after 14 February 1975, a prescribed operation for the purposes of the Regulations. This has allowed for awards of the Australian Service Medal to be back dated to 14 February 1975 for service in Kashmir and the Middle East. Figure 11.5 shows the clasp dates for the two awards as determined at 31 July 1993. The Committee was advised by Government House that as at August 1993, 2065 Australian Active Service Medals or clasps and 5015 Australian Service Medals or clasps have been issued.

Figure 11.5: Clasp Dates for the Australian Active Service Medal and the Australian Service Medal as Determined at 31 July 1993.

CLASP NAME	DATE APPROVED	NO OF DAYS	FROM/TO
AUSTRALIAN SERVICE MEDAL			
UGANDA	21 MARCH 1989	90	18/03/82-24/03/84
IRAN-IRAQ	30 JUNE 1989	90	12/08/88-
NAMIBIA	3 JULY 1989	90	11/03/89-
SINAI	3 JULY 1989	170	09/02/82-28/04/86
PESHAWAR	6 APRIL 1990	90	16/07/89-
KASHMIR	21 MAY 1990	90	14/02/75-
MIDDLE EAST	21 MAY 1990	90	14/02/75-
VIETNAM 1975	13 AUGUST 1990	7	29/03/75-29/04/75
KUWAIT	18 APRIL 1991	60	02/08/90-16/1/91
			01/03/91-
IRAQ	10 SEPTEMBER 1991	30	01/05/91-
WEST SAHARA	21 OCTOBER 1991	30	05/09/91-
GULF	14 OCTOBER 1991	30	17/11/86-31/10/88
CAMBODIA	6 JANUARY 1992	30	09/10/91-
BALKANS	25 AUGUST 1992	30	14/01/92-
SOMALIA	7 APRIL 1993	30	17/10/92-
AUSTRALIAN ACTIVE SERVICE MEDAL			
KUWAIT	18 APRIL 1991	1	17/01/91-28/02/91
SOMALIA	7 APRIL 1993	30	10/01/93-

The Minister of Defence can also recommend to the Governor-General a prescribed period and the length of service necessary during this prescribed period for a person to qualify for these awards. A decision in 1991 to make one day of service on the posted strength of a ship or unit in a warlike situation the qualifying period for the Australian Active Service Medal with the 'Kuwait' clasp caused some comment in submissions to the Committee as being over-generous and out of step with previous practice. This view is incorrect since similar conditions applied in the past e.g. the Pacific Star, the Imperial General Service Medal and the Vietnam Medal. The Committee also received a number of submissions which argued in the other direction — namely that the approach in determining qualifying times for the AASM and ASM was too stringent.

In the Committee's own examination of service in the period 1945–75, it has found that different qualifying times are appropriate for recognising different times and types of service. Judgements about length of qualifying service are made in the light of information available at the time by those who are best placed to judge. As the Committee has noted previously, there will always be people who just miss out on awards because they fail to meet the qualifying criteria, whether on the basis of designated time, area of operation or because of some other factor. This may be unfortunate, but the Committee is strongly of the view that for the integrity of the award to be maintained, there should be no relaxation of the approval criteria in response to such circumstances. The exception to this view would be in cases of some clear anomaly or manifest injustice (as noted in Principle number 6). However, the

Committee believes that the decisions made to date about qualifying criteria for the AASM and ASM are appropriate.

The Committee also received submissions which argued that Australian civilians working in an area of designated operations or in areas of instability overseas should be eligible for an award of the ASM and the AASM. The Committee has also examined issues in relation to the recognition of civilian service in Chapter 6 on the Vietnam War, and refers to the discussion in that chapter. According to its Principle number 4, the Committee believes that the civilians who have access to defence awards like the ASM and the AASM should be limited to those closely involved with military activities in the theatre of operations to which the award relates or those in clear support of military efforts. Where there is a further group of civilians performing humanitarian functions in or near the operational theatre, a separate award may be appropriate.

Other issues raised in relation to the ASM included a proposal for the award to be extended to cover the duties of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Operators in Australia. The Committee recognises that such duty is often difficult and hazardous, although sporadic in nature. Accordingly the Committee considers that distinguished service by EOD operators should be recognised by the appropriate individual bravery or conspicuous service award rather than the ASM which is essentially an award for operational service.

Defence Force Service Awards and the National Medal

There are three awards currently recognising 15 years' diligent service in the armed forces: the Defence Force Service Medal (DFSM), the Reserve Force Decoration (RFD) and the Reserve Force Medal (RFM). Established on 20 April 1982, these three awards replaced the National Medal.

Members of philanthropic organisations serving with the ADF are also eligible for these awards. A clasp to an award can be made for each additional five years' qualifying service.

Figure 11.6: Summary of Qualifying Criteria for Defence Force Service Awards

<p>The Defence Force Service Medal is for persons who have rendered an aggregate of 15 years' efficient service as a member of the Defence Force, including 12 years as a member of the Permanent Forces, with a clasp for every additional 5 years as a member of the Permanent Forces</p> <p>The Reserve Forces Decoration is for persons who have rendered an aggregate of 15 years' efficient service as an officer of the Defence Force, including 12 years as an officer of the Reserve Forces, with a clasp for every additional 5 years as an Officer of the Reserve Forces. This award carries the postnominal entitlements RFD.</p> <p>The Reserve Forces Medal is for persons who have rendered an aggregate of 15 years' efficient service as a member of the Defence Force, including 12 years as a member of the Reserve Forces, with a clasp for every additional 5 years as a member of the Reserve Forces.</p>
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Until 1975, long service and efficiency in the Australian armed forces had been recognised by a diverse range of discrete awards for Regular and Reserve service e.g. the Efficiency

Decoration for Reserve Officers, the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal for all enlisted personnel, the Meritorious Service Award for Warrant Officers and Sergeants of the Army and RAAF. However, these awards did not cover all service personnel. When the National Medal was introduced on 14 February 1975, it was designed to recognise 15 years diligent service by members of the armed forces (Regular or Reserve) and by members of an Australian police force, fire service or ambulance service. It was, in effect, the long service award for all members of Australian uniformed services. Originally, it was given only for 15 years' unbroken service. However, service in successive periods in one or more of the designated services for 15 years in aggregate qualified for the award.

To facilitate the introduction of the National Medal, a system was introduced whereby persons could take account of service rendered before 14 February 1975 towards an award of the National Medal if:

- that person was on 14 February 1975 a member of a designated service; and
- the service counted towards the National Medal had not been previously counted towards an Imperial award or clasp to such an award.

These provisions were especially put in place to pick up Regular defence force personnel in ranks which did not have access to any long service awards under the Imperial system. In effect, a large number of ordinary defence personnel qualified automatically for the National Medal by virtue of being able to count back 15 years unbroken service from 14 February 1975 to 15 February 1960. These arrangements, however, did not allow for further counting back to qualify for a clasp or clasps and the latter has become something of a benchmark date. The provisions for counting back service had less impact on members of police, fire and ambulance services as they had their own awards under the Imperial system. It should be noted that the provisions relating to the National Medal did not give any joy to those members of the armed forces who had retired before 14 February 1975 and who were not covered by any Imperial long-service award.

There was a number of people who thought it appropriate to have the tradition of separate long service awards for the armed forces to be introduced into the Australian system of honours and awards, and who argued successfully that the type of service rendered in this field was sufficiently different to warrant recognition separate from service in the civilian uniformed services. Following some protracted discussions, the DFSM, the RFD and the RFM were established on 20 April 1982. Collectively known as the Defence Force Service Awards, they were established under a single Royal Warrant. Service personnel who qualified for the National Medal before 20 April 1982 could and still can claim the National Medal. The establishment of the RFD, which followed strong representations from Reserve Officers, introduced into the new Australian system the only award based on rank and the only long service award carrying post-nominal entitlements. The National Medal was left as a civilian uniformed services long service award.

To facilitate the application of the new Defence Force Service Awards, special provisions were again put in place to allow for the counting back of service to qualify for one of the new awards. Anyone who on or after 14 February 1975 completed qualifying service as a member of the armed forces could count that service towards one of the medals. This meant, in effect, that the Defence Force Service Awards recognised the same period of service as the National Medal and that people were accorded dual recognition for the same period of service which is contrary to normal honours and awards convention and the Committee's Principle number 2.

The Committee received a large number of submissions about long service awards which covered a diverse range of issues and views. The key issues included:

- that aggregation of service be permitted for armed forces personnel to qualify for the National Medal, which related to Defence Force Service from 15 February 1960 to 19 April 1982, so that they can qualify retrospectively for an award;
- that the regulations for the National Medal be amended to allow for members of accredited philanthropic organisations who served with the Australian armed forces to qualify retrospectively for the award;
- that one of the two awards available to the Reserves be abolished (usually the RFD) and only one award be available to all reserve ranks;
- that the current provisions for calculating eligibility for the Defence Force Service Awards are inequitable and service in the ADF should be recognised after 15 years, irrespective of how the service is made up;
- that operational or active service be counted as double time towards the determination of service eligibility for the Reserve Force Decoration and the Reserve Force Medal;
- that a new award be created for 25 years or more service (or 30 years or more service) in any rank in any combination of service;
- that Defence Force Service Awards be issued for 10 rather than 15 years service or for 12 years in the case of the RFM or some lesser period in the case of the DFSM in recognition of the special demands of full-time service;
- that service with the Regular Army Emergency Reserve be counted towards the Defence Force Service Medal; and
- the anomalies created by the Imperial long-service awards applying to Defence Force personnel.

The Committee took evidence from a broad range of groups about long-service in the ADF, including that from representatives of reservist and philanthropic organisations. It also took evidence relating to recognition of long-service by Cadet officers and instructors. This will be dealt with separately later in the chapter.

The Committee's consideration of the diversity of issues raised was aided by reference to its Principles number 2, number 3, and number 8, and by the Committee's belief that

egalitarianism and fairness are two intrinsic features of the Australian system of honours and awards on which there should be no compromise.

The Committee is aware of the anomalies that related to the Imperial long-service awards in place before 1975, but guided by its Principles number 5 and number 6, does not recommend any amendment to the regulations governing these awards. In light of the complex provisions governing the transition arrangements which accompanied the introduction of the National Medal and the Defence Force Service Awards, the Committee does not recommend that these awards be used to redress these anomalies.

The Committee is conscious of the complicated questions arising from counting of service towards the Defence Force Service Awards and the National Medal. After careful consideration, the Committee does not support any changes to the criteria for the National Medal in relation to members of the armed forces. It is the view of the Committee that recognition of diligent long service by members of the Australian armed forces since 1960 has already been the subject of generous provisions. The Committee does not support the aggregation of service time since 15 February 1960 for certain personnel to qualify retrospectively for the National Medal, nor does it support access to the National Medal being extended to members of philanthropic organisations. The service rendered by the latter since 1960 has already been recognised by the Defence Force Service Awards. To extend further recognition through a retrospective award of the National Medal would turn on its head the logic of the transitional arrangements that were made at the time and run counter to the Committee's Principle number 2 on avoiding duplication of awards. The decision to exclude initially philanthropic organisations from the National Medal was taken at the time and should be left undisturbed.

The Committee is not attracted to suggestions for accelerated counting of qualifying time under certain conditions e.g. active service. The Committee believes that 15 years as a standard time for a long service award is well entrenched in the Australian system and it does not support any variation of this time for the Defence Force Service Awards. Nor does the Committee support the introduction of a new and discrete award for service for a period of time greater than 15 years. The Committee believes that such service is adequately catered for under the existing system of clasps for additional 5 year periods of service.

The Committee agrees with the many submissions which pointed to the Reserve Force Decoration (RFD) as being out of step with the existing system of honours and awards in two ways: first in recognising service based on rank, and second in granting postnominals in recognition of long-service.

The Committee believes that there is no place for an award based on rank in the Australian system of honours and awards.

The Committee also believes that postnominals should be reserved for awards that recognise outstanding service rendered by an individual or some outstanding act of bravery or valour. They should not be available for diligent service based on a time qualification.

The Committee has been made aware of cases where persons, who on the existing criteria for the Defence Force Service Awards, have rendered service which has not been recognised because of the provisions that relate to the counting of service for these awards. This is

contrary to the Committee's Principle number 3. It is the Committee's belief that problems relating to the counting of qualifying time will occur whenever there are complex arrangements relating to a range of awards for similar service.

The Committee was attracted early in its deliberations to the idea of a single long service award to recognise better the present and future organisation of the ADF as a Total Force comprising Regular, Ready Reserve and General Reserve components and free movement between these components. The Committee discussed this matter in some detail with the Chiefs of Staff Committee of the ADF and is pleased to have received the following advice on behalf of the Chief of the Defence Force:

“I wish to advise that in relation to the recognition of Reserve service the Chiefs of Staff Committee considered the issue on 2 March 1994 and decided that the most appropriate solution to this longstanding problem is to have a common award to recognise long service for both Permanent and Reserve members of the ADF. Obviously we have yet to determine the bench marks for qualification for the award. We envisage features such that in the transitional period an individual who qualifies for an RFD/RFM would be allowed to accept that award. Further service of any who had received an RFD/RFM would be counted towards clasps to these awards. Such individuals would not be permitted to count this additional time toward the award of a DFSM, and thus would not achieve two awards for long service. Essentially, there would initially be two streams of awards recognising long service with the RFD/RFM stream ultimately disappearing”.⁸⁵

The Committee welcomes this advice and supports this position. It recommends an early implementation of a single long service award for all members of the ADF.

Unit Citations

The Australian Unit Citations were established on 15 January 1991 to recognise gallantry in action or outstanding service in warlike operations by units of the Australian Defence Force and units of the defence forces of other countries. Designed to recognise collectively the performance of all members of a Unit, these awards mirror a practice that occurs in the United States system of honours and awards. There are two awards, the Unit Citation for Gallantry and the Meritorious Unit Citation.

Figure 11.7: Summary of qualifying conditions for Unit Citations

<p>Unit Citation for Gallantry — for extraordinary gallantry in action</p> <p>Meritorious Unit Citation — for sustained outstanding service in warlike operations</p>

Each citation consists of a certificate of citation to the unit signed by the Governor-General and insignia including a Federation Star for each person who was a member of the unit to which the citation is awarded at the time of the action or during the period to which the

⁸⁵Letter dated 3 March 1994 to General P C Gration from Lieutenant-General J S Baker, Vice Chief of the Defence Force, on behalf of Admiral A L Beaumont, Chief of the Defence Force.

citation relates. Persons who subsequently join such a unit are entitled to wear the insignia without the Federation Star during the time they are a member of the unit. Insignia of a citation may be awarded posthumously. The award of a citation to a unit does not affect the making of awards to individual members of the unit in recognition of individual acts of gallantry or service.

Two Meritorious Unit Citations have been issued — to HMAS *Sydney* and HMAS *Brisbane* in 1991 for their involvement in the Gulf War.

In addition to a number of submissions which suggested a retrospective award of the unit citations (the Committee was not to inquire into honours and awards of gallantry or meritorious or distinguished service for individuals or units for which appropriate award procedures existed or now exist), there was also a recommendation that only those who are members of the unit at the time the award is made should be entitled to wear the award. The Committee does not agree and believes that the tradition of all members of a unit wearing the insignia of an award which celebrates the contribution of the unit as a whole at some significant point in its history is an appropriate tradition to continue. The Committee notes that the insignia for unit citations includes a Federation Star to be worn only by persons who were members of the unit at the time to which the citation relates.

Jubilee and Commemorative Medals

These medals are issued from time to time on special occasions like the coronation of a monarch or the celebration of some special jubilee. The Committee received submissions which recommended that the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal be issued to all those who were members of the ADF at the time of this award (1977). The Committee is advised that the total number of these medals issued to Australia was restricted and that decisions were made at the time about how they should be allocated. The medal was issued as a one-off celebration of a special event and the Committee believes that decisions made about its distribution should stand.

The Committee also received a recommendation on the striking of a special commemorative medal for all those who served in the 2nd AIF. Guided by its Principles number 2 and number 6, the Committee believes that service in World War II has been adequately recognised and that there is no compelling reason to consider striking a new and discrete award of this kind.

Order of Precedence Issues

A number of issues relating to the Australian Order of Precedence for Honours and Awards were raised with the Committee, including the placement of bravery and gallantry awards and the positioning of the Public Service Medal. The Committee has no comment to make on Order of Precedence issues other than to record its general satisfaction with the current schedule as announced by Government House on 15 January 1993 (see Chapter 1). The Committee believes that issues relating to the Order of Precedence, including relativities between individual components on the Order of Precedence, are more appropriately examined by the Committee undertaking stage two of the review.

The Committee also notes a mistaken belief expressed by some of those who gave evidence that their Imperial efficiency and long service awards are no longer current because they do

not feature individually in the current Order of Precedence table. The Committee notes that provision is made for all such awards under the generic heading 'Long Service Medals'.

However, the Committee believes that in future schedules of the Order of Precedence, a footnoted entry could assist to clarify that the heading 'Long Service Medals' also applies to Imperial efficiency and long service awards.

Suggestions for New Awards

Recognition of Cadet Force Service

The Committee received a number of submissions suggesting recognition for diligent long service by officers and instructors of cadets.

In 1950, an Imperial Cadet Forces Medal was established. Australia, together with a number of other Commonwealth countries made the award available to its nationals, and adult members of the Cadet Scheme were eligible for the award after 12 years of service, backdated to 1926.

Service cadets were abolished by the Government in 1975. No provision was made at the time of the introduction of the new Australian system of honours and awards for a medal to replace the Imperial Cadet Forces Medal as it was not envisaged that the Cadet Scheme would continue. However, in 1976 the Cadet Scheme was reconstituted in a different form. One major change was that adult officers of cadets and instructors of cadets were no longer appointed to the Reserve component of the Australian armed forces. This meant that many officers and instructors of cadets were ineligible for the National Medal which then applied to the Regular and Reserve components of the armed forces in place of the various Imperial efficiency and long service awards. In April 1982, when the Defence Force Service Awards were instituted, no provision was made to recognise service within the Australian Services Cadet Scheme.

Written and oral submissions made to the Committee pointed out that the loyalty and dedication of officers and instructors of cadets over an extended period was not being recognised. Most submissions suggested that a new and discrete Cadet Forces Medal or Cadet Service Medal be instituted to rectify this situation. Some suggested that the Imperial Cadet Forces Medal be reintroduced into the Australian system, others that all officers and instructors of cadets be included in one of the existing Defence Force Service Awards.

The Committee considered against its Principles number 1 and number 3 in particular whether there was a case for recognising the service of officers and instructors of cadets. In doing so, the Committee was conscious of other worthy forms of youth leadership involving the commitment of long hours, including service rendered in the scouting and police citizen's movements. In the end, the Committee was persuaded that the Cadet Scheme was different from these other youth movements in two ways:

- structural features: the Army, Navy and Air Force Cadet Corps are commanded by their respective Services; they are governed by regulations and policy laid down by each Service; they are uniformed and wear Service badges of rank

- training purposes: the Cadet Scheme conducts military-style training and drill, including the use of weapons, and has as one of its purposes the stimulation of an interest in the Services.

The Committee is not persuaded that the most appropriate way in which to recognise service in the cadets is through the establishment of a new and discrete award. While the service of officers and instructors of cadets is valuable and worthy of recognition, it is not so extraordinary as to justify a discrete new award for such a small element of the community. Rather, the Committee believes that it is appropriate that they be given access to some existing award for long and diligent service.

The Committee notes that Officers and Instructors of Cadets are not members of either the Regular or Reserve components of the ADF. While working in close contact with the Services, they do not render that service as if they had been a member of the Defence Force, and access to the Defence Force Service Awards is therefore not appropriate.

On balance, the Committee believes that officers and instructors of cadets should be included with civilian uniformed groups eligible for the National Medal, on the same basis as these groups. Aggregation of part-time service should be permitted, as should back counting of service which has not been recognised through some other long service award. Regular and Reserve members of the ADF should be excluded from the class of cadet officers and instructors eligible for the National Medal.

Awards for Hazardous or Special Service

In addition to submissions which argued for special recognition of those who rendered service during atomic testing (see Chapter 8), the Committee received a number of submissions which argued for special service awards for submarine service, special operations, hazardous duties in Australia and overseas, including ADF personnel on exchange or secondment who render service in an area of hostile activity.

The Committee examined each of these proposals closely against its Principles, and on balance has decided not to recommend any new award to cover these types of service. As expressed in its Principle number 1, the Committee believes that much Defence duty is by its very nature hazardous. The current components in our national system of honours and awards and the provisions relating to foreign awards provide adequate coverage to ensure that worthy service which meets the measures established in the Committee's Principles will be recognised. In relation to submarine service and special operations, the Committee has held separate discussions with Headquarters ADF.

Other Proposals for New Awards

Numerous proposals for new awards were addressed to the Committee. These included suggestions for an award to recognise the service of any member of the ADF who has rendered diligent service for any period, anyone who has left for overseas on duty, new awards in recognition of exceptional courage and skill whilst flying in both war-time and peacetime, a special award for prisoners of war, a meritorious service medal or commendation to cover military and uniformed civilian services, a special medal for the next of kin of service personnel killed in action, and a new and discrete award for any garrison duty overseas or for participation in Australia's Defence Co-operation Programs in the Pacific and Southeast Asia.

The Committee tested each of these proposals against its Principles, and found that for various reasons, none of these proposals met the standards that the Committee had set. In relation to a special award for service personnel killed in action, the Committee notes the existence of the Next-of-Kin badge, which it supports strongly.

Proposals for Badges

Matters relating to badges, which are not part of the Australian system of honours and awards, were outside the Committee's terms of reference. Nevertheless, the Committee would like to record the widespread support given to the continuation of the Next-of-Kin badge (also known as the Mother's and Widow's Badge). The Committee would also like to record the broad support in submissions for a Wound Badge and some equivalent to the Combat Infantry Badge to denote all Australian service personnel who have seen combat duty. Among other proposals, the Committee received a suggestion for a badge to denote those who joined the armed forces in time of conflict. The Committee will write separately to Defence referring these submissions to their attention.

Unofficial medals

The Committee received submissions about various unofficial or commemorative medals struck by organisations or individuals and retailed on a commercial basis to interested people who have rendered service to the country. Many of those who drew the attention of the Committee to these medals condemned the practice as detracting from official awards and taking advantage of the sentiments of ex-servicemen and women for reason of commercial gain. It is the stated aim of some of these medals to recognise service which has not been the subject of official recognition.

The Committee's role is to examine the official system of honours and awards only. The Committee hopes that the recommendations it has made about official recognition of service will go some considerable way to assuaging the feeling of those who feel that their service has been unrecognised and who have purchased these unofficial medals as a memento or keepsake in lieu of official recognition.

The Committee commends the vigilance of those who discourage ex-service personnel from wearing commercially distributed medals together with or in place of official awards, and does not recommend official recognition of any such unofficial medals.

Other issues

Some submissions made reference to matters affecting the administration of the Australian system of honours and awards, and the role of medal issuing authorities. In general, there was satisfaction in the way in which the issuing authorities for the three Services handled requests, but frustration from a few at the rigidity with which they applied the criteria. The Committee appreciates the disappointment of those who just miss out on a service or campaign medal or who feel that their service records are incomplete, but supports fully the issuing authorities who must administer strictly and fairly the criteria for the various awards.

Various issues relating to the examination of the entitlement of a claimant to an award were raised with the Committee. These included whether extrinsic material other than the official Record of Service should be taken into account by a decision maker where it is alleged that the Record of Service is incomplete or wrong and whether there ought to be procedural guidelines to assist decision makers to ensure fairness and consistency in their decision making. The Committee believes that the issues raised are important and it does not have the mandate or the expertise to provide Government with proper guidance on the matter. The Committee has held preliminary and informal discussions with the Administrative Review Council, which has indicated its willingness to give guidance on these issues if desired.

The Committee recommends that the Department of Defence examines its existing internal decision making processes and guidelines leading to the award of Service medals in consultation with the Administrative Review Council.

Chapter 12: Conclusion

The recommendations and proposals the Committee has made in the preceding chapters have been the outcome of comprehensive discussions with the public, with policy makers and those who process and issue medals. The Committee has sought to reconcile the desire for recognition and the proposals expressed in the submissions it received, with the current imperatives of government policy and practical considerations. It has sought to do so through applying a set of readily understood measures as expressed in its guiding principles.

There is, however, a number of recommendations and proposals which either represent a departure from current practice in the Australian system of honours and awards, or which challenge or extend some aspects of existing policy. The Committee makes no apology for this. The mandate it was given by Government was to examine existing problems, anomalies and other matters from a fresh perspective. That perspective will inevitably be different to the perspective of those who have developed and administered the honours system to date. The Committee has approached the issues referred to it from the perspective of 1994 and of what is considered fair and reasonable today. It has sought to take account of changing attitudes and a changing world, to ensure that its recommendations will meet the needs of Australian society into the next century. The Committee acknowledges that the approach taken towards the recognition of service of medals today is more liberal than the approach taken at the beginning of this century, for example, in relation to World War I.

Many of the submissions received by the Committee and the meetings it held across Australia evidenced a passion and a depth of feeling which was, frankly, extraordinary. The Committee simply notes that there is a large number of ex-servicemen and women in this country, and others who have worked in military-type conditions, who feel that they have not been given the recognition they deserve. In some cases, they have carried such a view for over fifty years. It may seem a small thing to give a service medal, but the symbolism of such recognition is so powerful that it is coveted by some to the exclusion of all other forms of recognition. The Committee's recommendations and proposals should be considered in this light.

There are considerable resources involved in administering our national system of honours and awards. The Committee wishes to pay tribute to those who work in the various issuing authorities - the Honours Secretariat at Government House, the Central Army Records Office, Air Force Records and the Navy Records Office - for their diligence, their commitment and the tactful way in which they discharge a task which is sometimes difficult and sensitive. Equally, it wishes to pay tribute to those involved in establishing the policy that govern military awards - the Departments of Administrative Services, Defence, the Prime Minister and Cabinet and Government House. They have advised Government to establish a system which is workable and largely meets the needs of our society.

The Committee is aware that the implementation of this report will require additional resources. New awards will have to be created, manufactured and issued. Each of these stages has its own difficulties - some are time consuming, others involve complicated record keeping and other administrative systems. All steps should be taken to allow the relevant

issuing authorities to continue to meet the high standards they have set themselves. They are, after all, performing a service of recognition on behalf of a grateful nation.

The Committee has referred a number of issues arising from its deliberations to the Committee to be charged with stage two of this Inquiry. These have arisen from consideration of Defence and Defence-related activities, but have broader implications for the honours system. This Committee wishes the next Committee well in its deliberations.