CHAPTER 6

VICTORIA CROSS FOR AUSTRALIA

Introduction

6.1 The Victoria Cross for Australia (VC) is the pre-eminent Australian decoration. The VC accords recognition to persons who ‘perform acts of the most conspicuous gallantry, acts of valour or self-sacrifice, or display extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy’. A description of the VC is contained in Volume 2, Chapter 13. The Imperial VC is described in Volume 2, Chapter 5.

Nomination and processing procedures

6.2 Nomination and processing procedures are detailed in Annex A.

Definition

6.3 The following definition applies: Minister is the Minister for Defence.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Authority


Eligibility

6.5 The VC may be awarded to:
   a. members of the Australian Defence Force; and
   b. other persons as determined by the Minister.

Subsequent awards

6.6 Any subsequent award of a VC to the same person shall be made in the form of a bar to the Cross.

Postnominal

6.7 Persons awarded the VC are entitled to use the postnominal ‘VC’. Where a person has been awarded a bar to the VC, the person is entitled to have placed after the letters ‘VC’ the words ‘and bar’ or ‘and bars’ as the case may be.

Quotas

6.8 Quotas do not apply to the VC.

Posthumous awards

6.9 The VC may be awarded posthumously.

Awards to missing personnel

6.10 Members who are missing in action may be nominated for a decoration. Nominations are to be forwarded through the operational chain-of-command to Chief of Joint Operations (CJOPS). CJOPS will advise the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) of the details of the nomination and pass the nomination to the parent Service headquarters that will:
   a. retain the details on file;
b. monitor the latest information available concerning the missing member; and 

c. if the missing member subsequently returns to service or is confirmed killed, forward the nomination to the CDF for consideration.

Awards to prisoners of war

6.11 Prisoners of War (PW) may be nominated for decorations for actions or service prior to becoming captured, during captivity or as escaped PW. Such nominations are to be forwarded through the operational chain-of-command to CJOPS. CJOPS will advise the CDF of the details of the nomination and pass the nomination to the parent Service headquarters that will:

a. retain the nomination for further consideration at the end of the hostilities; 

b. ensure that the nomination records the date that the member became a PW; and 

c. monitor the latest information available and if the captured member returns to service or is confirmed killed, forward the nomination to the CDF for consideration.

Register of awards

6.12 An official register of awards is maintained by Government House. The Directorate of Honours and Awards updates members’ PMKeyS records and maintains a record of names of those who have been awarded decorations.

Cancellation and reinstatement of awards

6.13 The Governor-General may cancel an award, and may reinstate an award so cancelled, on the recommendations of both the CDF and the Minister. The policy and procedures relating to forfeiture and restoration of service awards is contained in Chapter 46—‘Forfeiture and restoration of Service Awards’.

Precedence of awards

6.14 The precedence of honours and awards is in accordance with The Order of Wearing Australian Honours and Awards determined by the Governor-General. This can be found at http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au. A modified version, based on the official version, is in Chapter 4, Annex A.

Post-operation nominations

6.15 End of War Lists (EOWL) have sometimes been compiled following a major conflict to provide the opportunity to review previously unsuccessful or downgraded nominations, or provide new nominations which could not be processed during the operation for a range of reasons including security. With the removal of operational award quotas, and the introduction of new procedures which allow awards to be made without breaching security, EOWLS are not expected to be required in future.

6.16 Nominations for the VC are to be submitted and considered no later than three years after the end of the conflict.

Annex:

A. Nomination and processing procedures for the Victoria Cross for Australia