CHAPTER 7
GALLANTRY DECORATIONS

Introduction

7.1 Gallantry Decorations are awarded in recognition of gallantry when ‘in action’. While normally awarded for actions on warlike operations, an amendment to the Gallantry Decorations Regulations provides that a decoration may also be awarded for gallantry when not ‘in action’ provided that the act ‘occurred circumstances similar to armed combat or actual operations and those concerned were deployed under military command’. Gallantry Decorations are:

a. **Star of Gallantry (SG).** The SG is only awarded for acts of great heroism or conspicuous gallantry in action in circumstances of great peril.

b. **Medal for Gallantry (MG).** The MG is only awarded for acts of gallantry in action in hazardous circumstances.

c. **Commendation for Gallantry (CG).** The CG is only awarded for acts of gallantry in action which are considered worthy of recognition.

Descriptions of Gallantry Decorations are contained in Volume 2, Chapter 13.

Nomination and processing procedures

7.2 Nomination and processing procedures are detailed in Annex A.

Definitions

7.3 The following definitions apply:

a. **In action** in a military context is the engagement between opposing forces. A member must be physically in a situation involving direct conflict between opposing forces to be determined to be ‘in action’.

b. **Minister** is the Minister for Defence.

c. **Warlike operations** are those operations declared by the Governor-General to be warlike.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Authority

7.4 The source documents for Gallantry Decorations are:


b. CAG S420 of 6 November 1996—amended Letters Patent and Regulations

c. CAG S123 of 1 August 2012—Governor-General determination on award insignia.

7.5 Copies of these documents can be viewed, see [www.defence.gov.au/medals](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals).

Eligibility

7.6 Persons eligible to be awarded Gallantry Decorations are:

a. members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF); and

b. other persons determined by the Minister.

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Awards to foreign defence force members serving on posting or exchange with the Australian Defence Force

7.7 Gallantry Decorations cannot be awarded to foreign defence force members unless the Minister makes a determination that, for the purposes of paragraph 5(b) of the Gallantry Decorations Regulations, that foreign defence force members serving on posting or exchange with the ADF are included in a class of persons who may be awarded gallantry decorations.

7.8 Also, no award may be made to a foreign defence force member without prior concurrence from the member’s government. If a nomination for an award is received for a foreign member on exchange or loan with the ADF, and the member is eligible to receive the nominated decoration, a recommendation may be made by the Minister, through the Prime Minister, to the Governor-General to offer the award to the foreign member through the relevant diplomatic channels. Once concurrence is received the Governor-General may approve the award.

Subsequent awards

7.9 Any subsequent award of the SG or MG shall be made in the form of a bar to the Star or Medal as the case may be. A subsequent award of a CG is in the form of a warrant only.

Postnominal

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

Quotas

7.11 Quotas do not apply to Gallantry Decorations

Posthumous awards

7.12 Gallantry Decorations may be awarded posthumously.

Awards to missing personnel

7.13 Members who are missing in action may be nominated for a Gallantry Decoration. Nominations are to be forwarded through the operational chain-of-command to the 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

7.14 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

7.15 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

7.16 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

7.17 The precedence of honours and awards shall be 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 is in Chapter 4, Annex A of this volume.

Post-operation nominations

7.18 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.

7.19 Nominations for Gallantry Decorations are to be submitted and considered no later than three years after the end of the conflict.

Annex:
A. Nomination and processing procedures for Gallantry Decorations