CHAPTER 25

HUMANITARIAN OVERSEAS SERVICE MEDAL

Introduction

25.1 The Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal (HOSM) is a non-Defence award that is awarded to members of recognised charitable or humanitarian groups who provide humanitarian service in designated areas of the world. Description of the HOSM and information on the clasps awarded to date is contained in Volume 2, Chapter 21.

25.2 The HOSM is administered by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).

GENERAL INFORMATION

25.3 The HOSM is governed by Letters Patent and Regulations. The current version of these are contained in Commonwealth of Australia Gazette (CAG) S243 of 9 June 1999.

25.4 Each humanitarian operation that is considered to warrant recognition by the HOSM is governed by regulations, determinations or declarations for each operation. Details of these for operations that have involved Defence are provided in the following paragraphs.

Clasp ‘INDIAN OCEAN’

25.5 On 13 April 2005, the Prime Minister announced that the HOSM will be awarded to those Australians who provided emergency humanitarian assistance as part of Australia’s contribution in the wake of the Boxing Day tsunamis and the related earthquake on Nias Island. The Queen approved the extension of the HOSM to enable recognition of the humanitarian services provided to the peoples of Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, who were devastated by the tsunamis and subsequent earthquake. Those who were deployed as part of the Australian contribution to the affected regions and who meet the eligibility requirements of service in relation to the tsunamis and related earthquake will qualify for the award. The relevant regulations and determinations are shown below and can be viewed on the Directorate of Honours and Awards (DH&A) website in www.defence.gov.au/medals.

25.6 The current regulations titled Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal (2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami and Other Natural Disasters Relief) Regulations 2005 detail the eligibility criteria for the HOSM (details of the Clasp name are not prescribed in these regulations). The current version of these regulations are contained in CAG S86 of 30 May 2005, as amended by CAG S49 of 31 March 2006.

25.7 The current determination that approves eligible organisations for the clasp ‘INDIAN OCEAN’ is contained in CAG S75 of 23 April 2007, and as amended by CAG S217 of 21 December 2009.

25.8 The Australian Defence Force was approved as an eligible organisation for the award of the HOSM with Clasp ‘INDIAN OCEAN’ on 19 October 2005. The approval of the ADF as an eligible organisation includes the following task force elements:

a. TG 629.0 Headquarters Command;
b. TG 629.1 Maritime—HMAS KANIMBLA;
c. TG 629.2 Engineers;
d. TG 629.3 Health Services;
e. TG 629.4 Air Support;
f. TG 629.5 Joint Force Support Group; and
g. TG 629.6 Communications.
25.9 DH&A, in consultation with Headquarters Joint Operations Command, have identified ADF personnel who were force assigned to Operation SUMATRA ASSIST and meet the eligibility requirements for the award of the HOSM.

25.10 In order to be eligible for the HOSM, the following requirements (as detailed in the regulations) are mandatory:

a. the organisation has been approved as an eligible organisation for the operation (in this case the ADF has been approved);

b. the service took place within:

   (1) the period beginning on 26 December 2004 and ending on 12 February 2005; or

   (2) the period beginning on 28 March 2005 and ending on 18 April 2005; and

c. the service took place in one or more of the following areas:

   (1) Sumatra, Indonesia;

   (2) any of the provinces of Phuket, Ranong, Phang Nga, Krabi, Satun and Trang, Thailand;

   (3) Sri Lanka;

   (4) the Maldives; or

   (5) Nias Island, Indonesia.

d. A person is taken to have given eligible service if they gave humanitarian service for a period or periods amounting to:

   (1) at least seven days in the period beginning on 26 December 2004 and ending on 8 January 2005;

   (2) at least 14 days in the period beginning on 26 December 2004 and ending on 12 February 2005; and

   (3) at least seven days in the period beginning on 28 March 2005 and ending on 18 April 2005.

e. Also, a person may be eligible if they did not serve the required number of days, because of death, disability or illness due to that service.

Clasp 'PAKISTAN'

25.11 An Australian Defence Force medical team deployed to Pakistan to provide vital health care assistance to those affected by the earthquake of October 2005.

25.12 The immediate aim of the relief effort was to provide medical assistance to the people in the Dhanni area, about 20km north east of Muzaffarabad on the Pakistan side of the Kashmir Line of Control. An Australian Army Black Hawk helicopter detachment from Army's 5th Aviation Regiment enabled medical assistance to remote regional villages in rugged terrain with limited road access. These helicopters performed 74 life-saving aero-medical evacuations. Much of their work was done in trying conditions, often subject to sub-zero temperatures.

25.14 The ADF has been declared an eligible organisation for the HOSM Clasp ‘PAKISTAN’. For ADF personnel the qualifying period is 30 days during the period 9 November 2005 to 8 April 2006 within the following geographical areas:

a. The following administrative districts of Pakistan-administered Kashmir:
   
   (1) Bagh;
   
   (2) Muzzaffarabad;
   
   (3) Neelum;
   
   (4) Poonch; and

b. The following administrative districts of North West Frontier Province:
   
   (1) Abbottabad;
   
   (2) Batagram;
   
   (3) Kohistan;
   
   (4) Mansehra;
   
   (5) Shangla.

Clasp ‘PAKISTAN II’

25.15 The declaration for the HOSM Clasp ‘PAKISTAN II’ was signed on 30 April 2012 and includes the Australian Defence Force as an eligible organisation for the period 24 August 2010 to 8 November 2010.

25.16 The declared operation is the humanitarian aid operation arising out of the floods in Pakistan on 6 August 2010.

25.17 The operational area is:

a. The following administrative districts of Pakistan:
   
   (1) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa;
   
   (2) Sindh;
   
   (3) Punjab;
   
   (4) Balochistan; and

b. The regions surrounding the administrative districts mentioned in subparagraph a.

25.18 The period of the declared operation is the period beginning on 6 August 2010 and ending on 8 November 2010.

Clasp ‘JAPAN’

25.19 The amending schedule for the declaration for the HOSM Clasp ‘JAPAN’ was signed on 31 January 2013 and includes the Australian Defence Force as an eligible organisation for the period 14 March 2011 to 25 March 2011.

25.20 The declared operation is the humanitarian aid operation arising out of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan on 11 March 2011. The operational area is the administrative district of the Pacific coast of Tohoku and its surrounding regions.
25.21 The period of the declared operation is the period beginning on 11 March 2011 and ending on 28 March 2011.

25.22 Qualifying period is any seven day period during the period of the declared operation. Periods of service may be aggregated.

Clasp ‘HAITI’

25.23 The declaration for the HOSM Clasp ‘HAITI’ was signed on 31 January 2013 and includes the Australian Defence Force as an eligible organisation for the period 12 February 2010 to 15 March 2010.

25.24 The declared operation is the humanitarian aid operation arising out of the earthquake in Haiti on 12 January 2010. The operational area consists of Léogâne, Haiti and its surrounding regions.

25.25 The period of the declared operation is the period beginning on 12 January 2010 and ending on 15 March 2010.

25.26 Qualifying period is any 14 day period during the period of the declared operation. Periods of service may be aggregated.

Administration

25.27 PM&C is responsible for the administration of this award. ADF personnel who undertake qualifying service apply for the medal using the application form that can be downloaded from the PM&C website: [http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/honours/awards/medals/humanitarian_overseas_service_medal.cfm](http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/honours/awards/medals/humanitarian_overseas_service_medal.cfm). The form is to be completed and sent to DH&A at the following address:

**HOSM Application**  
Directorate of Honours and Awards  
PO Box 7952  
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

25.28 Following verification, applications will be submitted to PM&C for approval and medal issue.

Further considerations

25.29 The award of the HOSM to ADF personnel for tsunami relief has raised questions about extension to other operations.

25.30 PM&C has responsibility for assessment of all operations for the HOSM. Previous decisions on natural disaster operations, such as those in Papua New Guinea with Operations PLES DRAI and SHADDOCK, leave service on those operations ineligible. The approval of ADF as an eligible organisation for the HOSM with the clasps listed above has no impact on other operations.