

The Imperial Honours System

For service during WWI and WWII Australian personnel were awarded Imperial campaign medals. The same medals were issued from the Imperial system to all Commonwealth personnel. In addition, after WWI, Commonwealth countries generally issued a unique medal to recognise the service of their own people. In Australia, the Australian Service Medal 1939–45 was issued.



Private Albert Williamson
Killed in Action, Fromelles, July 1916
Awarded (in order of wear)
• The British War Medal 1914–1920
• The Victory Medal

View more information about medals,
including the significance of ribbon colours, at
www.defence.gov.au/medals

How do I apply for medals?

If you would like further information on eligibility or to ascertain what medals have been previously awarded or remain unissued, please complete an online application form at www.defence.gov.au/medals.

How do I apply for replacement medals?

Current and former serving members may apply for replacement medals if they have been lost or damaged. Defence Honours and Awards can only provide replacement medals for deceased individuals in very specific circumstances.

Please refer to www.defence.gov.au/medals for more information on the policy and to complete an online application form.

Can I wear my relative's medals?

Although not officially sanctioned, a protocol has been accepted that family members of a deceased recipient may wear that person's medals on commemorative occasions such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

In these circumstances, the medals should be worn on the right to show that the wearer is not the original recipient.

The Order of Wearing Australian Honours and Awards

Information on the wearing of Australian Decorations and Medals is determined by the Governor-General. A list outlining the order of precedence for wearing these is available on the Directorate of Honours and Awards website www.defence.gov.au/medals.

Defence Honours and Awards

www.defence.gov.au/medals
1800 333 362



Australian Government
Department of Defence

World War I Campaign Medals

World War II Campaign Medals

Directorate of Honours and Awards



Defending Australia and its National Interests
www.defence.gov.au



The war to end all wars – the Great War (WWI)

Britain declared war on Germany and its allies on 4 August 1914 and called on its Dominions and Colonies for assistance. Australia responded to the call within days and the Australian Imperial Force supported the British Empire until armistice was declared on 11 November 1918.

The Second World War (WWII)

Australia entered World War II on 3 September 1939, shortly after the invasion of Poland by Germany. Australian forces fought in both the European and Pacific theatres of WWII until 14 August 1945 when the war was officially ended and Australia was at peace again.

World War One



The 1914-15 Star

Awarded for service in specified theatres of war between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915.



The British War Medal 1914-1920

Instituted by King George V in 1919 to mark the end of the Great War. Eligibility was later extended to cover post-war mine clearance and service in Russia during 1919 and 1920.



The Mercantile Marine Medal

Awarded to members of the Mercantile Marine who qualified for the British War Medal 1914-1920 and served at sea on at least one voyage through a danger zone.



The Victory Medal

The Victory Medal commemorates the victory of the Allied Forces over the Central Powers. Each of the Allied nations issued a 'Victory Medal' to their own nationals.

World War Two



The 1939-45 Star

Awarded for service between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945.



The Atlantic Star

Awarded to commemorate the Battle of the Atlantic between 3 September 1939 and 8 May 1945.



The Air Crew Europe Star

Awarded for operational flying from United Kingdom bases over Europe between 3 September 1939 and 5 June 1944.



The Arctic Star

Awarded to those who served in areas above the Arctic Circle during World War II.



The Africa Star

Awarded for operational service in North Africa from the entry of Italy into the war, up to the cessation of operations against the enemy in North Africa on 12 May 1943.



The Pacific Star

Awarded for entry into operational service in the Pacific Theatre of Operations between 8 December 1941 and 2 September 1945.



The Burma Star

Awarded for operational service in the Burma Campaign from 11 December 1941 to 2 September 1945.



The Italy Star

Awarded for operational service on land in Sicily or Italy at any time during the campaign from 11 June 1943 until the end of active hostilities in Europe.



The France and Germany Star

Awarded for operational service on land in France, Belgium, Holland or Germany after the D-Day landings on 6 June 1944 until 8 May 1945.



The Defence Medal

Awarded for six months service in a prescribed non-operational area subject to enemy air attack or closely threatened, in Australia and overseas.



The War Medal 1939-1945

Awarded for 28 days full-time service in the Armed Forces between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945.



The Australian Service Medal 1939-1945

The Australian Service Medal 1939-45 recognises the service of members of the Australian Armed Forces and Australian Mercantile Marine during World War II.