



Australian Government

IT'S AN HONOUR

Australia Celebrating Australians

Victoria Cross for Australia

The Victoria Cross for Australia is the pre-eminent award for acts of bravery in wartime and Australia's highest military honour.

It is awarded to persons who, in the presence of the enemy, display the most conspicuous gallantry; a daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice; or extreme devotion to duty.

About the award

The Victoria Cross for Australia was introduced as part of the Australian honours system in 1991. It replaced the Imperial Victoria Cross. The Imperial Victoria Cross was created by The Queen in 1856 and made retrospective to 1854 to cover the period of the Crimean War.

The Imperial Victoria Cross has been awarded to ninety six Australians in the following conflicts:

- 6 in the Boer War 1899-1902
- 64 in World War I 1914-1918
- 2 in North Russia 1919
- 20 in World War II 1939-1945
- 4 in Vietnam 1962-1972

Nine of the crosses awarded in World War I were for Australians at Gallipoli. While most recipients received the Victoria Cross while serving with Australian forces, five Australians received the award while serving with South African and British units.

The first award of the Victoria Cross for Australia was made in 2009 for action in Afghanistan.

How it is awarded

The Governor-General awards the Victoria Cross for Australia, with the approval of the Sovereign, on the recommendation of the Minister for Defence.

The Victoria Cross may be awarded posthumously. The post-nominal entitlement for the Victoria Cross is VC.



The Victoria Cross is a Maltese Cross cast in bronze from cannons captured during the Crimean War (1854-1856).

Medal design

The Victoria Cross is a Maltese Cross cast in bronze from cannons captured during the Crimean War (1854-1856). The obverse of the Victoria Cross bears a crowned lion standing on a royal crown. The words 'FOR VALOUR' are inscribed on a semi-circular scroll beneath the crown.

The reverse of the cross is engraved with the date of the act of gallantry and the name, rank and unit of the recipient.

Medal ribbon

The medal ribbon of the Victoria Cross is crimson.

Fast facts

POST NOMINAL:

VC

INTRODUCED INTO THE AUSTRALIAN HONOURS SYSTEM:

by Letters Patent on 15 January 1991

More information

IT'S AN HONOUR WEBSITE: www.itsanhonour.gov.au

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL WEBSITE:
www.awm.gov.au