

**THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA WA BRANCH  
INCORPORATED (RSLWA)**

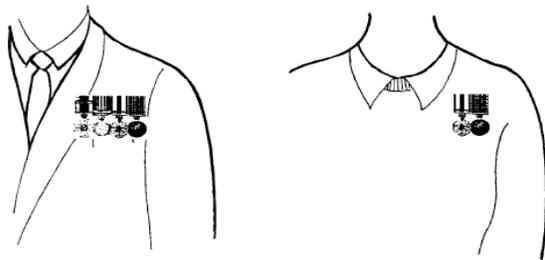
**MEDALS AND DRESS POLICY**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. When planning RSLWA ceremonies or events, strict attention should be paid to the correct forms of dress and the wearing of medals. It is essential that all members of the League are compliant with correct dress and the wearing of medals.
2. This policy is informed by the Defence Act 1903 (as amended on 1 July 2018), policy and protocols of the Australian Defence Force (Honours & Awards), the Australian War Memorial, and protocols and practices employed by other RSL State Branches and RSLWA itself.

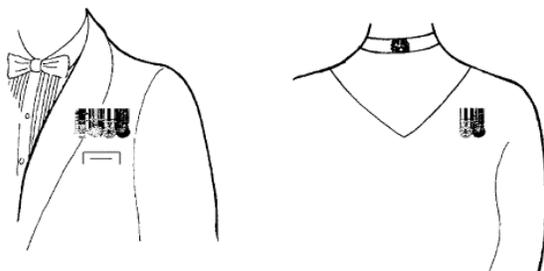
**WEARING MEDALS**

3. Medals may only be worn by the persons upon whom they were conferred and, in no case, does the right to wear these or their ribbons devolve to a family member or relative other than the provisions that are detailed within this document.
4. Medals worn on civilian attire by the recipient to whom such medals are conferred are worn on the left breast of the jacket, shirt, blouse or dress. See Figure below:



**WEARING MINIATURES**

5. Miniature medals are only to be worn with evening or formal dress after sunset. Miniatures are to be worn in a similar manner to full size medals. Miniature badges and emblems are to be worn when miniature medals are worn. See Figure below:



## **WEARING REPLICAS**

6. There are no implications resulting from wearing replicas of medals to which a person is entitled. Many serving and ex-service individuals prefer to wear replicas to keep their originals protected from loss or damage.

## **MILITARY MEDAL SUPPLIES**

7. Many serving and ex-service members source retail suppliers of replica medals and there are no implications from sourcing such replicas. That said, the replica medal industry is not regulated and most suppliers do not seek proof of entitlement.
8. Serving and ex-service members are encouraged to present documents (such as their PMKEYs printout) of their official entitlement to wear such medals or decorations when purchasing replicas. Unfortunately, suppliers are not compelled to do the same and very few ask for such evidence. This has encouraged the purchase of replicas medals by persons who are not entitled to wear such medals.
9. It is the mission of RSLWA to make concerted efforts to work collaboratively with medal suppliers to seek proof of entitlement by presenting persons before selling replica medals.

## **FRAUDULENT WEARING OF MEDALS**

10. The Defence Act stipulates that: *a person has committed an offence if the person wears a service decoration and the person is not the person on whom the decoration was conferred.* The penalty for such an offence is 30 penalty units or imprisonment for 6 months, or both.
11. The above noted, the Defence Act also provides that: *it is not an offence for a person to wear a service decoration in the course of a dramatic or other visual representation (including such a representation to be televised) or in the making of a cinematograph film.*
12. Known or suspected cases of fraudulent medal wearing should be reported to the Australian Federal Police. The Defence Act stipulates that: *“any member of the Defence Force, member or special member of the Australian Federal Police or member of the Police Force of a State or Territory, may, without warrant, arrest any person who he or she has reasonable grounds to believe has committed an offence against this section (of the Act), and take the person before a Court of summary jurisdiction to be dealt with according to law.*

## **ORDER OF WEARING**

13. The order of wearing honours and awards is determined by the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia. See [Annex A](#) for full list of the order of wearing medals and honours.

## WEARING ANOTHER PERSON'S MEDALS

14. Allowance is made for family members of a deceased recipient to wear that person's medals on commemorative occasions. When worn by others, the protocol is that the medals are worn on the right side of the chest to show that the wearer is not the original recipient.
15. The wearing of a forebear's medals on the right breast is a convention passed down over the years and is a practice that needs to be measured with respect and decorum. They should not be worn lightly or where it would not be appropriate to do so.
16. The Defence Act allows for the wearing of another person's medals as follows: *Where the person upon whom a service decoration was conferred has died, it is not an offence for a member of the family of that person to wear the service decoration if the member of the family does not represent himself or herself as being the person upon whom the decoration was conferred.*
17. The Defence Act notes that, if a family member is challenged on the wearing of such medals and results in a charge then: *the defendant bears an evidential burden in relation to the matter.*
18. RSLWA encourages the wearing of a deceased person's medals but with strict provisions as follows:
  - a) While allowances have been made for family members (only) to wear such medals, it is also permissible to wear replica medals of those officially worn by a forebear.
  - b) Only one member of the family of a deceased veteran may wear his/her medals at any one time. As such, the wearing of authorised medals (or replicas of same) by more than one family member at the same time is not appropriate.
  - c) When wearing the medals of a deceased relative, only one full set of such medals is to be worn. Unfortunately, on more than a few occasions, relatives have been seen wearing numerous rows of the same set of medals. It is also not appropriate for a relative to wear the medals of more than one deceased relative. Like the wearing of badges and buttons, this detracts from the significance of medals and awarded decorations. It also is disrespectful to the deceased person and disrespectful to other serving and ex-service men and women.

## **UNOFFICIAL MEDALS**

19. The wearing of unofficial medals mixed with Decorations, Campaign Stars/Medals, War and Service Medals is not approved. Over a number of years some ex-service organisations have created and distributed 'commemorative' medals to mark particular periods of military service. These medals have no official status.
20. Only those medals, decorations and honours which have been created under the prerogative of the Crown, have official status. Such medals and decorations must be worn in accordance with The Order of Wearing Australian Honours and Awards on the left breast either on an official uniform or civilian dress.

## **WEARING BADGES**

21. Members of uniformed services wear the insignia in accordance with the dress regulations of their respective Service. When wearing civilian attire, serving and ex-serving personnel generally continue to wear these insignia in the same way as they are worn on Service uniform. Only approved badges and emblems of the Australian Defence Force may be worn with civilian clothing as appropriate.
22. An example of appropriate wearing of badges is provided by the Australian War Memorial in relation to the Returned from Active Service Badge (RASB). The RASB is issued to Australian Defence Force personnel who have rendered warlike service. The badge enables individuals to display their involvement in warlike service while wearing civilian attire. It is worn when the wearing of service medals is not appropriate or possible. As such wearing both the RASB, and similar badges such as the Operational Service Badge (OSB), at the same time as wearing medals is not appropriate.
23. The Returned & Services League of Australia badge is to be worn on the left breast on either the lapel of a jacket or suit or the mid position of a blouse or jumper.
24. Unofficial badges should never be worn (e.g. badges claiming to represent combat service etc). Too often members and the family of members are seen at RSLWA-endorsed events with many badges and buttons and other unofficial embellishments. The wearing of appropriate military badges is an honour and not a right and not a competition as to who can wear the most.

## **MOUNTING MEDALS**

25. Medals are to be mounted in a horizontal line suspended from a single bar. They are to be mounted in accordance with The Order of Wearing Australian Honours and Awards.
  - a) Full Size Medals. The medals are suspended from a medal bar. Bars are available in widths suitable for one, two, three, four and five medals. When more than five medals are worn they are to be overlapped sufficiently to allow the number of medals to be evenly spaced on the five medals bar (approximately 16cm) with the

highest in the order of precedence fully displayed. The medals are suspended 9.5 cm below the medal bar by the riband.

- b) Miniature Medals. Miniature medals are mounted in a similar fashion to full size medals. The medals are suspended 5 cm below the medal bar by the riband.
- c) Court Mounting. Medals may be 'court mounted' at the option of the recipient.

## **HEAD DRESS**

26. This protocol covers the wearing of civilian head dress and where the wearing of military head dress in civilian clothing has been authorised.

27. If authorised to wear Military head dress in civilian clothing the head dress is not to be removed nor is a military salute to be given. This is applicable at an outdoor Commemoration Service when the ODE is recited or the Last Post is sounded. This also applies to head dress which forms part of an association uniform.

## **SALUTING AND PAYING RESPECTS**

28. Serving ADF personnel in uniform are to salute at ceremonial events that include the National Anthem, The Ode and the Last Post. Veterans and others in civilian dress do not salute.

29. The practice of placing the right arm over the heart when laying wreaths or when the National Anthem, The Ode and/or the Last Post is not an Australian tradition. The correct paying of respects after laying a wreath is to step back two paces, stand fast with hands by the side and head bowed for 3 to 5 seconds before moving off.

## ANNEX A TO RSLWA MEDALS AND DRESS POLICY

### The Order of Wearing Australian Honours and Awards

The order of wearing honours and awards is determined by the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The most recent order was published on 25 September 2007 and is available from the [It's an Honour](#) website.

A modified version of the order of wearing, designed to include medals issued since the official list was published, is available at [Chapter 4 of the Honours and Awards Manual](#).

Honours and Awards listed in the Schedule and Annexes in **BOLD** and **UPPER CASE** print are:

- those within the Australian honours and awards system;
- those conferred by The Sovereign in exercise of the Royal Prerogative;
- those within the Order of St John; and
- foreign awards, the acceptance and wearing of which have been authorised by the Governor-General.

All imperial British awards made to Australian citizens after 5 October 1992 are foreign awards and should be worn accordingly.

#### List

- **VICTORIA CROSS – VC (1)**
- George Cross – GC
- **CROSS OF VALOUR – CV**
- **KNIGHT/LADY OF THE GARTER – KG/LG**
- **KNIGHT/LADY OF THE THISTLE – KT/LT**
- Knight/Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath – GCB
- **ORDER OF MERIT – OM**
- **KNIGHT/DAME OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA – AK/AD (2)**
- Knight/Dame Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George – GCMG
- **KNIGHT/DAME GRAND CROSS OF THE ROYAL VICTORIAN ORDER – GCVO**
- Knight/Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire – GBE
- **COMPANION OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA – AC**
- Companion of Honour – CH
- Knight/Dame Commander of the Order of the Bath – KCB/DCB
- Knight/Dame Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George – KCMG/DCMG
- **KNIGHT/DAME COMMANDER OF THE ROYAL VICTORIAN ORDER – KCVO/DCVO**
- Knight/Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire – KBE/DBE
- Knight Bachelor (NB: Confers title of 'Sir'—no post nominal)
- **OFFICER OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA – AO**
- Companion of the Order of the Bath – CB
- Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George – CMG
- **COMMANDER OF THE ROYAL VICTORIAN ORDER – CVO**
- Commander of the Order of the British Empire – CBE
- **STAR OF GALLANTRY – SG**

- **STAR OF COURAGE – SC**
- Companion of the Distinguished Service Order – DSO
- **DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS – DSC**
- **MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA – AM**
- **LIEUTENANT OF THE ROYAL VICTORIAN ORDER – LVO**
- Officer of the Order of the British Empire – OBE
- Companion of the Imperial Service Order – ISO
- **MEMBER OF THE ROYAL VICTORIAN ORDER – MVO**
- Member of the Order of the British Empire – MBE
- **CONSPICUOUS SERVICE CROSS – CSC**
- **NURSING SERVICE CROSS – NSC**
- Royal Red Cross (1st Class) – RRC
- Distinguished Service Cross – DSC
- Military Cross – MC
- Distinguished Flying Cross – DFC
- Air Force Cross – AFC
- Royal Red Cross (2nd Class) – ARRC
- **MEDAL FOR GALLANTRY – MG**
- **BRAVERY MEDAL – BM**
- **DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL – DSM**
- **PUBLIC SERVICE MEDAL – PSM**
- **AUSTRALIAN POLICE MEDAL – APM**
- **AUSTRALIAN FIRE SERVICE MEDAL – FSM**
- **AMBULANCE SERVICE MEDAL – ASM**
- **EMERGENCY SERVICES MEDAL – ESM**
- **MEDAL OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA – OAM**
- **ORDER OF ST JOHN (3)**
- Distinguished Conduct Medal – DCM
- Conspicuous Gallantry Medal – CGM
- George Medal – GM
- **CONSPICUOUS SERVICE MEDAL – CSM**
- **AUSTRALIAN ANTARCTIC MEDAL – AAM (4)**
- Queen’s Police Medal for Gallantry – QPM
- Queen’s Fire Service Medal for Gallantry – QFSM
- Distinguished Service Medal – DSM
- Military Medal – MM
- Distinguished Flying Medal – DFM
- Air Force Medal – AFM
- Queen’s Gallantry Medal – QGM
- **ROYAL VICTORIAN MEDAL – RVM**
- British Empire Medal – BEM
- Queen’s Police Medal for Distinguished Service – QPM
- Queen’s Fire Service Medal for Distinguished Service – QFSM
- **COMMENDATION FOR GALLANTRY**
- **COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT**
- Queen’s Commendation for Brave Conduct
- **COMMENDATION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE**

## War medals, campaign medals, active service medals and service medals:

### *South African War:*

- Queen's South Africa Medal
- King's South Africa Medal

### *World War I*

- 1914 Star
- 1914–1915 Star (5)
- British War Medal
- Mercantile Marine War Medal
- Victory Medal
- Naval General Service Medal 1915–1962 (6) (7)
- General Service Medal 1918–1962 (6) (7)

### *World War II*

- 1939–1945 Star
- Atlantic Star (8)
- Air Crew Europe Star (8)
- Arctic Star
- Africa Star
- Pacific Star (9)
- Burma Star (9)
- Italy Star
- France and Germany Star (8)
- Defence Medal
- War Medal 1939–1945
- **AUSTRALIA SERVICE MEDAL 1939–1945**

### *Post-World War II*

- **AUSTRALIAN ACTIVE SERVICE MEDAL 1945–1975 (7)**
- Korea Medal
- United Nations Service Medal for Korea (10)
- Naval General Service Medal 1915–1962 (6) (7)
- General Service Medal 1918–1962 (6) (7)
- General Service Medal 1962 (7)
- **VIETNAM MEDAL**
- **VIETNAM LOGISTIC AND SUPPORT MEDAL (11)**
- **AUSTRALIAN ACTIVE SERVICE MEDAL (7)**
- **INTERNATIONAL FORCE EAST TIMOR MEDAL**
- **AFGHANISTAN MEDAL**
- **IRAQ MEDAL**

- AUSTRALIAN SERVICE MEDAL 1945–1975 (7)
- AUSTRALIAN GENERAL SERVICE MEDAL FOR KOREA
- AUSTRALIAN SERVICE MEDAL (7)
- AUSTRALIAN OPERATIONAL SERVICE MEDAL (12)
- AUSTRALIAN OPERATIONAL SERVICE MEDAL (CIVILIAN)
- RHODESIA MEDAL
  
- POLICE OVERSEAS SERVICE MEDAL (7)
- HUMANITARIAN OVERSEAS SERVICE MEDAL (7)
- NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDAL
- CIVILIAN SERVICE MEDAL 1939–1945
- NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE MEDAL
- Polar Medal
- Imperial Service Medal

*Coronation, Jubilee, Remembrance and Commemorative medals, (in order of date of receipt)*

- KING EDWARD VII CORONATION MEDAL
- KING GEORGE V CORONATION MEDAL
- KING GEORGE V SILVER JUBILEE MEDAL
- KING GEORGE VI CORONATION MEDAL
- QUEEN ELIZABETH II CORONATION MEDAL
- QUEEN ELIZABETH II SILVER JUBILEE MEDAL
- 80th ANNIVERSARY ARMISTICE REMEMBRANCE MEDAL
- AUSTRALIAN SPORTS MEDAL
- CENTENARY MEDAL

*Australian Long Service Medals:*

- DEFENCE FORCE SERVICE MEDAL
- RESERVE FORCE DECORATION – RFD
- RESERVE FORCE MEDAL
- DEFENCE LONG SERVICE MEDAL
- NATIONAL MEDAL
- AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE MEDAL
- AUSTRALIAN CADET FORCES SERVICE MEDAL
  
- CHAMPION SHOTS MEDAL
- Long Service Medals (Imperial) (13)
- ANNIVERSARY OF NATIONAL SERVICE 1951–1972 MEDAL
- Independence and Anniversary Medals, (in order of date of receipt)
- **Foreign Awards** (in order of date of authorisation of their acceptance and wearing)

Notes:

1. Refers to the Imperial Victoria Cross and the Victoria Cross for Australia.
2. Provision for further awards at this level within the Order of Australia was removed by Her Majesty The Queen on 3 March 1986 on the advice of the Prime Minister.
3. Listed to indicate where any awards within the Order of St John should be worn; however, the Service Medal of the Order of St John should be worn as a Long Service Medal after all other Imperial Long Service awards. Post nominals within the Order of St John are not recognised as notified in the Governor-General's media release of 14 August 1982. (The Life Saving Medal is worn on the right side.)
4. The Australian Antarctic Medal was known as the Antarctic Medal until 18 December 1997.
5. Recipients of the 1914 Star are not eligible for the award of the 1914–1915 Star.
6. The order of wearing of the Naval General Service Medal 1915–1962 and General Service Medal 1918–1962 (Army and Air Force) will vary from person to person depending on when the person earned the first clasp. If the first clasp relates to service between World War I and World War II, the medals should be worn immediately after World War I war medals. If the first clasp relates to service after 2 September 1945, the medals should be worn immediately after the United Nations Service Medal for Korea.
7. Clasps to these medals should be worn on the ribbon in order of date of receipt.
8. Only one of these three Stars could be awarded to an individual. Should a person have qualified for two of these awards, the Star first earned is worn with the clasp of the second Star. Only one Star and one clasp may be worn even if the person qualified for all three Stars.
9. Only one of these two Stars could be awarded to an individual. Should a person have qualified for both the Pacific Star and the Burma Star, the Star first earned was awarded together with the appropriate clasp denoting the service that would have qualified for the other Star.
10. Uniquely, although a foreign award, the United Nations Service Medal for Korea is worn immediately after the Korea Medal. All other foreign awards for which official permission has been given to accept and wear are worn as foreign awards.
11. A person who has been awarded the Vietnam Medal, or who is eligible for the award of the Vietnam Medal, is not eligible for the award of the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal.
12. Worn in order of date of qualifying service.
13. Refers to Imperial efficiency and long service awards.