



Australian Government

IT'S AN HONOUR

Australia Celebrating Australians

Distinguished Service Medal

The Distinguished Service Medal is awarded for distinguished leadership in action.

It is the second level of the Distinguished Service Decorations.

About the award

The Distinguished Service Decorations recognise command and leadership in military action. They are awarded primarily to members of the Defence Forces.

The Distinguished Service Decorations were introduced in 1991 and replaced a number of Imperial decorations.

There are three levels of decoration:

- Distinguished Service Cross (DSC)
- Distinguished Service Medal (DSM)
- Commendation for Distinguished Service

How it is awarded

The Distinguished Service Decorations are awarded by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister for Defence.

The decoration may be awarded posthumously.

If the same person receives a further Distinguished Service Medal it is in the form of a nickel-silver bar. The bar is attached to the ribbon of the original award.

The award is announced on Australia Day (January 26) and the Queen's Birthday (June) each year.

Past recipient story

The first Distinguished Service Medal was awarded to Corporal Thomas Alexander Aitken of the Australian Army in November 1993. He was awarded the medal for distinguished leadership in Somalia during Operation Solace.



Medal design

The Distinguished Service Medal is ensigned with the Crown of St Edward in nickel-silver. The obverse has a Federation star superimposed on a circle of flames.

Medal ribbon

The medal has a nickel-silver suspender bar. The medal ribbon has alternating vertical stripes: four silver-blue and three ochre-red.

Fast facts

POST NOMINAL:

DSM

INTRODUCED INTO THE AUSTRALIAN HONOURS SYSTEM:

1991

More information

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

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE: www.defence.gov.au