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PRIME MINISTER

21/3

20/95

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP

MILITARY SERVICE MEDAL

I am pleased to announce today the formal establishment of a new award in the Australian honours system - the *Australian Service Medal 1945-1975* - which will be awarded to a large number of Australian service personnel who did not receive any award for their service in this period.

The creation of this award was one of the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry into Defence Awards which reported to the Government in March 1994 and final approval has now been granted by Her Majesty The Queen.

The award's aim is to recognise service in prescribed peacekeeping or non-warlike operations during the period 1945-1975 where recognition has not extended previously through an award.

The Government will be recommending that the following service will qualify for the award of the medal:

- Service in the occupation of Japan during the period 3 September 1945 to 30 June 1947 with a qualifying period of 90 days;
- Service in Korea from 28 July 1953 until 26 August 1957 with a qualifying period of 30 days;
- Service of Australian troops in anti-terrorist operations in the Thailand-Malaysia border area between 1 August 1960 and 16 August 1964 with a qualifying period of 30 days;
- Service of air crew who took part in operations in support of ground troops during the same period with a qualifying service of one operational sortie. In addition any member of air crew who in the period 17 August 1964 to 30 March 1966 flew an operational sortie in the Thailand-Malaysia border area but did not qualify for the GSM "Malay Peninsula";

- Service of Australian personnel at the Royal Thai Airforce Base Ubon during the period 1 May 1962 to 31 August 1968 with a qualifying period of 30 days;
- Service as a member of 2 Field Troop Royal Australian Engineers and other Australian personnel who participated in Operation "Crown" and served in Ban Kok Talat, Thailand during the period 1 May 1962 to 31 August 1968 with a qualifying period of 30 days;
- Service in the Territory of Papua New Guinea- from the formation of the Pacific Islands Regiment in 1951 until independence of PNG on 16 September 1975 with a qualifying period of 180 days. This also applies to personnel of all Services including RAN personnel posted to HMAS *Tarangau* and attached vessels;
- Service from 13 August 1948 to 13 February 1975 with the United Nations including the Military Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) and the United Nations India-Pakistan Observer Mission UNIPOM with a qualifying period of 90 days;
- Service with the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) force in West New Guinea during the period 1 October 1962 to 1 May 1963 with a qualifying period of 30 days;
- Other peacekeeping operations during the period 1945 to 1975 are being examined by Defence authorities with a view to establishing whether equivalent service warrants recognition by the award of this Medal. Announcement of which other operations will attract the Medal will be announced as soon as the Government has considered recommendations.

The Medal's design features the Commonwealth Coat of Arms on the obverse and is ensigned with the Crown of Saint Edward. The reverse of the Medal features the Federation Star overlaid with a plinth on which the wearer's name will be engraved. The obverse and reverse are decorated with clusters of mimosa blossoms symbolising the presence of Australian service personnel in overseas peacekeeping and other non-warlike operations. The accompanying ribbon will have bands of dark and light blue, khaki, green and gold.

The *Australian Service Medal 1945-1975* will be placed on the same level as the current *Australian Service Medal* in the Australian Order of Precedence of Honours and Awards.

CANBERRA
21 MARCH 1995

Application forms for the Medal can be obtained from:

**Navy
Director
Naval Personnel Services
Medals Section
Navy Office
Department of Defence
CANBERRA ACT 2600**

**Army
Medals Section
Soldier Career Management
Agency
Central Army Records Office
GPO Box 393D
MELBOURNE VIC 3001**

**Air Force
Director
Administrative Review
Air Force Office
Department of Defence
PO Box E33
Queen Victoria Terrace
CANBERRA ACT 2600**

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