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VIETNAM MEDAL

Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. John Gorton

The Queen has approved the Royal Warrant and design for the Vietnam Medal.

In announcing this today the Prime Minister said that it was fitting that on the first occasion that Australia and New Zealand had designed a medal to recognise the operational service for members of their Defence Forces, both countries should again be fighting together helping to preserve national independence and freedom.

The medal will be circular and, in keeping with all service medals, will have the Queen's portrait on the obverse. The reverse will have "Viet Nam" inscribed above a symbolic representation of the ideological war in Vietnam, depicting the figure of man in the centre of the medal standing between spherical shapes.

The design, a departure from customary medal designs, was the work of the well-known Melbourne medallist Andor Messaros.

The medal is to be manufactured in Australia by the Royal Australian Mint.

Members of the Australian and New Zealand Armed Forces who render service in operations in Vietnam are eligible for the medal. Accredited members of approved Australian and New Zealand philanthropic organisations attached to those forces may also qualify for the award.

CANBERRA
21 June 1968

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Background:

In 1966, The Queen signified her willingness to approve the institution of the Vietnam Medal for award to Australian and New Zealand Forces who have served in Vietnam. The late Prime Minister announced this to the House of Representatives on 8 March 1966.

Since the First Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, returned to Australia on 8 June 1966, those qualified to receive the Medal have been wearing the ribbon which includes the colours traditionally symbolic of the three Services and also red and yellow which are the national colours of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam.
