



PRIME MINISTER

102/94

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON PJ KEATING MP

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SECOND WORLD WAR CIVILIAN MEDAL

I am pleased to announce today the establishment of a new Medal - the *Civilian Service Medal 1939-1945* - which will be awarded to thousands of Australian civilians who served their country during World War II.

Final approval for the Medal has now been granted by Her Majesty the Queen.

The award's aim is to recognise the contribution of those civilians who served in arduous circumstances in Australia during World War Two in organisations subject to military-like conditions. Its creation was one of the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry into Defence Awards which reported to the Government earlier this year.

The Government has so far approved four organisations as meeting the criteria for the award of the Medal. They are:

- . The Australian Women's Land Army;
- . The North Australia Railway;
- . The Civil Constructional Corps; and the
- . Voluntary Aid Detachment (for VADs who did not go on to military service during the War).

Other organisations are under consideration for the Medal and if they are found to meet the criteria their members will be eligible to receive the award.

All Australians who served in one of these organisations for 180 days or more may apply for the Medal, to be awarded by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister for Administrative Services. The Medal will also be awarded posthumously to next-of-kin, so close relatives of deceased Australians who served in these organisations may also apply.

It is estimated that around 68,000 people will qualify for the award. Recipients can choose to have their Medal personally presented by their local Federal MP or Senator, or have it posted to them.

Designed by Mr Horst Hahn, Chief Engraver of the Royal Australian Mint, the Civilian Service Medal will be made of bronze. The Medal is ensigned with the Federation Star and its design features the Southern Cross, symbolising Australia, and Golden Wattle, symbolising the civilian population combined in the defence of the nation. The accompanying ribbon will be three broad vertical bands of opal green, ochre and opal green, separated by two thin white stripes.

The Civilian Service Medal will be placed immediately under the Police Overseas Service Medal in the Australian Order of Precedence of Honours and Awards.

Application forms for the Medal can be obtained from :

- . electorate offices of Federal MPs and Senators; or
- . the Medals Validation Unit, Department of Administrative Services, GPO Box 1331, ACT 2601. Phone: 06 275 3653 or 06 275 3654.

CANBERRA
25 November 1994