

MEDIA RELEASE



The Hon. Bruce Billson, MP
Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence

MINASST 010/06

Thursday 30 March 2006

SALUTING THEIR SERVICE WITH THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE MEDAL

Australia will recognise the service of more than one million current and former Defence Force personnel with the Australian Defence Medal (ADM), Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence Bruce Billson, announced today.

“Her Majesty the Queen has approved the official regulations and design for the award that aims to recognise current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) Regular and Reserve personnel, and volunteer and National Servicemen, who have served since the end of World War II,” Mr Billson said.

“The Australian Government is committed to recognising the outstanding contribution to our proud military history made by Australian men and women in uniform.

“After extensive consultation with veterans’ organisations and the wider community, the government has decided to broaden the eligibility criteria to include former ADF members who completed their initial enlistment period, or four years service, whichever is the lesser,” Mr Billson said.

“The criteria also recognises National Servicemen and those who could not serve the four-year qualifying period because of the ADF’s workplace and enlistment policies of the time.

“The expanded criteria also includes those who die in service or are medically discharged due to permanent injury and unable to reach four years or complete their initial period of enlistment,” Mr Billson said.

“Although creating any new medal is an extensive process which includes consultation, design and testing, Royal approval and manufacturing, the medal is an important tribute to those who have given so much for our country.

“Presentation ceremonies by senior military officers and Federal parliamentarians are expected to commence in mid-2006 as the medals become available. I encourage all those eligible to submit applications and supporting evidence as soon as possible to receive the recognition they deserve,” Mr Billson said.

For further information, a special application form for the ADM is available from the Defence website at www.defence.gov.au/dpe/dpe_site/honours_awards/ and from RSLs and other ex-service organisations or by calling 1800 111 321.

Media information:

Shane Fairlie (Minister Billson’s Office)
Defence Media Liaison

0408 680 442
(02) 6265 3343 or 0408 498 664