

A GUIDE TO WEARING MEDALS AND BADGES

Reference: A. It's An Honour web site – www.itsanhonour.gov.au/honours/awards

Introduction

The following guide is designed to remove the doubt which can sometimes arise when having to decide when and how to wear awards. The official guide is to be found at Reference A; (much of which is included here), but the following is an attempt to expand this guide as it applies to primarily Vietnam Veterans, and is produced in an effort to ensure uniformity going forward.

Overview

Recipients of awards are granted insignia as a visual expression of the honour conferred on them. For most Australian awards, the presentation box usually contains a range of pieces:

- a. the full sized medal
- b. a miniature medal with ribbon
- c. a ribbon bar, and
- d. for some awards, a lapel badge or brooch.

How To Wear

Most Australian awards are pinned above the left breast.

Multiple medals are mounted on a medal bar in the order set out in the Australian Order of Wearing, usually done correctly when the medals are professionally mounted or remounted.

The Infantry Combat Badge (ICB) and the Army Combat Badge (ACB) is worn central to the medal bar and pinned so that the bottom of the badge is approximately one centimetre (1cm) above the medal bar. They are not to be attached in any way to the medal ribbons. They are not to be polished.

The Returned From Active Service (RAS) badge is worn on the left jacket lapel positioned near the button hole. The RAS badge stands alone and is not worn with any other embellishments - including full or miniature medals, i.e. when wearing medals the RAS Badge is not worn. It is also not to be polished.

Awards of deceased family members may be worn during commemorative events when the wearing of medals is appropriate, eg Anzac Day, Vietnam Veterans Day. These awards are worn on the right breast, to indicate that the awards are not their own.

Unofficial Medals/Badges

Ideally, unofficial medals should never be worn, and definitely not worn at public ceremonial and commemorative events. They are never mixed with official medals. If you really must wear an unofficial medal (one you bought), it must be worn on the right breast.

A list of unofficial (meaning not issued by the Federal Government) badges relevant to veteran members would include the VVAA badge, Long Tan Crosses of all designs, Life Membership badges, the RSL badge, the TPI badge, RAR and SASR badges, etc. There is no protocol for the wearing of these badges and they are seen as being commonly worn on the left lapel, however wearing of these badges should be kept to a minimum, particularly on formal occasions.

State Awards

These are not considered 'unofficial' and may be worn on the right breast.

When To Wear/Not To Wear

The different insignia pieces are worn according to the type of event.

Day Functions

Full size medals are worn on the left breast at day functions where decorations have been prescribed. This would include:

All Vietnam Veterans Day commemoration services,
Anzac Day services, and
Funeral services as requested

Miniature medals, RAS badges and unofficial badges should not be worn on these occasions.

Evening Functions

At events such as evening receptions, and formal dinners where decorations have been prescribed, miniature medals and miniature ICB/ACB are generally worn.

The RAS badge and unofficial badges are not worn on these occasions.

Everyday Wear

A lapel badge or brooch may be worn on civilian clothes eg suit coat or sports jacket, at any time. Only one badge or brooch is worn at a given time. This is the appropriate time to wear the RAS badge, but it is not worn when other insignia eg VVAA badge, RSL badge, are worn.