



Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (RVCM) (*pictured right*) was established in 1964 by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam for service in the prescribed area of operations in Vietnam during the period commencing on 31 July 1962 and ending on 28 March 1973.

The Government of the Republic of Vietnam introduced the RVCM to show their appreciation of all personnel who fought with them against communist forces.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the RVCM Australian personnel must have completed a minimum 181 days, either continuous or aggregated, unless:

- killed on active service;
- wounded in action, this also includes psychological injury; or
- captured and later released or escaped.

Australian personnel who returned from Vietnam prior to completing the required period of service within the area of operations, and do not fall under one of the categories listed above, are not eligible to be awarded the RVCM.

I think I may be eligible, what do I do next?

Individuals who believe they could be eligible are asked to submit an application at www.defence.gov.au/medals/ via the Defence Medals Online Application Form.

Are there other awards for my Vietnam service?



Yes. The Australian Government has issued the Vietnam Medal, the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-1975 with Clasp 'VIETNAM', and the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal to recognise the valued service of Australian personnel during the Vietnam War.

Furthermore, although not awarded to directly recognise service in Vietnam, the Anniversary of National Service 1951-1972 Medal (*pictured left*) was awarded to more than 15,300 men who completed their obligation during that period.



Can Defence change the eligibility criteria for the RVCM?

No. The RVCM was introduced by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, which ceased to exist at the end of the Vietnam War when Communist forces overran Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) on 30 April 1975. The Australian Government, and the Department of Defence, do not have the authority to alter the eligibility criteria of an award from a foreign nation.

Individuals who did not complete the required 181 days have previously sought to have the eligibility criteria changed. To address this issue, the Australian Government directed the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (the Tribunal) to conduct an inquiry into the RVCM.

Between 2013 and 2015 the Tribunal conducted two public inquiries into eligibility for the RVCM. The inquiries concluded that the Australian Government does not have the legal authority to amend the eligibility criteria of the award. After considering the advice the Tribunal received from the Australian Government Solicitor, the Government accepted the Tribunal's recommendation; therefore the 181 days qualifying period for the RVCM remains extant.

Careful and exhaustive legal examinations have shown that it is not possible for the Government to amend the eligibility criteria. This matter has been duly considered by the Government and there is no intention for further review.

Further recognition for veterans of the Vietnam War

The Australian Government continues to consider recognition of past service, as well as historic acts of gallantry and meritorious service.

- 1993 – Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal recognises those who have served in Vietnam during the time of the Vietnam War for relatively short periods of time in support of Australian operations and who had not received any recognition for that service.
- 2018 – Unit Citation for Gallantry for the Battles of Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral, recognises the extraordinary gallantry displayed by members of the 1st Australia Task Force (Forward) and associated units deployed to Area of Operations SURFERS during the battles.
- 2018 – Unit Citation for Gallantry for Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam, recognises the extraordinary gallantry in action displayed by members of the Flight.
- 2023 - The Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation (the Citation) was awarded by the former Government of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) to military units that distinguished themselves in battle. Initially, only a limited number of Australian units across the three services were approved to accept and wear the Citation emblem. All Australian military units under the operational control of the United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam are now eligible for the Citation emblem.

For further information call 1800 DEFENCE (1800 333 362)
or visit www.defence.gov.au/Medals/