



Government House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
16 May 2025

Distinguished Service Decorations

The Governor-General is pleased to announce the following Distinguished Service Decoration:

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

Australian Army

Colonel Ian Francis AHEARN OAM (Retd)

For distinguished leadership in warlike operations as the Gun Position Officer with 102nd Field Battery during the Battle of Fire Support Patrol Base Coral from 12 to 16 May 1968.

By Her Excellency's command

Gerard Martin PSM

Official Secretary to the Governor-General

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

Colonel Ian Francis AHEARN OAM (Retd)

For distinguished leadership in warlike operations as the Gun Position Officer with 102nd Field Battery during the Battle of Fire Support Patrol Base Coral from 12 to 16 May 1968.

Colonel (then Lieutenant) Ahearn led a desperate defensive action to repel a well-prepared and numerically superior enemy at Fire Support Patrol Base Coral on 12 May 1968. His leadership, initiative and actions prevented the enemy completely overrunning the 102nd Field Battery and the likely loss of many more lives. During a subsequent attack on 16 May 1968, he directed staff of the Battery Command Post and under intense enemy fire communicated fire orders to each gun platform to ensure a coordinated defence against the enemy forces. Lieutenant Ahearn's inspirational leadership, initiative and actions were in keeping with the finest traditions of the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.