



Government House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

25 February 2026

Guidelines concerning the acceptance and wearing of foreign honours and awards by Australians (approved by the Governor-General February 2026)

These Guidelines concerning the acceptance and wearing of foreign honours and awards (foreign awards) by Australian citizens replace all previous Guidelines.

The Sovereign has delegated authority to the Governor-General of Australia, on the advice of the Prime Minister, to amend the Guidelines as required.

Approved foreign awards

1. Foreign awards that have been officially approved to be accepted and worn by Australian citizens under the provisions of these Guidelines ('officially approved foreign awards') are listed on the Schedule of Approved Countries and Awards (the Schedule).
 - (a) Awards which are officially approved will be published via updates to the Schedule tri-annually, in February/March, June/July, and October/November each year. Updates to the Schedule outside these timeframes will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
 - (b) The Schedule is maintained by the Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat at the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General and is published on the Governor-General's website.

Recommendation and approval of foreign countries and awards

2. Approval of foreign countries and awards to be listed on the Schedule is made by the Governor-General, on the advice of the Prime Minister, or the Minister with responsibility for Australian Honours and Awards policy.
 - (a) The Minister for Defence, or the Minister with responsibility for Defence Honours and Awards, may also make recommendations about foreign military awards: directly to the Governor-General, where the conferring country or international organisation is already listed on the Schedule; or, to the Prime Minister or the Minister with responsibility for Australian Honours and Awards policy in the first instance, where the conferring country or international organisation is not already listed on the Schedule.

3. In providing advice to the Governor-General, the Australian Government considers factors including, but not limited to, whether:
 - (a) the offer of the award has been made by the Head of State or the national government of a country with which Australia maintains diplomatic relations, or an official agency of the United Nations (or other international organisations recognised diplomatically by Australia); and
 - (b) the award is part of the country's national honours system, or the international organisation's official honours system; and
 - (c) the awarding to an Australian Citizen is not otherwise inconsistent with any regulatory (or similar) provisions that apply to the award; and
 - (d) the award is equivalent to an award established wholly within the Australian Honours and Awards system.
4. The Australian Government reserves the right not to recommend listing a foreign award on the Schedule, including those which it judges to be, or have been, contrary to Australian policy or interests.
5. Awards listed on the Schedule may be reviewed periodically to ensure currency with the principles set out in these Guidelines. Any amendments to the Schedule may be made by the Governor-General, on the advice of the Prime Minister or the Minister with responsibility for Australian Honours and Awards system.

Requests for foreign award to be approved and listed on the Schedule

6. Requests for foreign awards to be officially approved and listed on the Schedule should be directed to the Honours and Symbols Section of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C); or in the case of Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel (and/or a foreign military award), the Directorate of Honours and Awards at the Department of Defence.
7. Where a foreign award is presented without sufficient notice (i.e. to enable approval under these Guidelines), it may be accepted and worn on the right breast to avoid giving offence. However, arrangements should be made as soon as possible to seek approval for the award to be listed on the Schedule.

Status and wearing of foreign awards

8. *Officially approved foreign awards* (i.e. those included on the Schedule):
 - (a) May be worn on the left breast in accordance with the *Australian Order of Wearing Honours and Awards* (Order of Wear).

(See also 'Additional requirements or considerations for individuals in accepting or wearing foreign awards' below).
 - (b) Do not attract the official use of post-nominals or formal titles in Australia.

9. *Unofficial foreign awards* (i.e. those not included on the Schedule):
- (a) Many awards made by foreign entities are not eligible to be listed on the Schedule. These include awards and honours from private organisations; not-for-profit, service and charity bodies; educational institutions; and lower tiers of foreign governments (such as states or provinces) and lower level national awards (i.e. those not made by the head of state or equivalent authority).
 - (b) Such awards may be worn on the right breast in appropriate private settings, such as a meeting of the relevant ex-service association, or a reception hosted by the relevant foreign government. Ideally, unofficial medals should not be worn at public ceremonial and commemorative events, but if they are worn as the occasion demands, the convention is that they are worn on the right breast.
 - i) These provisions also apply where a request for formal approval and listing on the Schedule: is either yet to be sought; is still under consideration; or, was sought, but was not approved.
10. Where a foreign award is not designed to be worn, it does not need to be included on the Schedule.

Additional requirements or considerations for individuals in accepting or wearing foreign awards

11. *Honours or awards given prior to becoming an Australian Citizen*: A person awarded a foreign award before becoming an Australian citizen can formally wear the award if it is on the Schedule. If it is not on the Schedule, the provisions set out at paragraph 9 (b) ('Unofficial foreign awards') apply.
12. *Senators and Members of the House of Representatives (Cwth)*: should consider any potential conflicts of interests and their obligations under Section 44 of the Constitution before accepting foreign awards, as well as any requirements to declare the foreign award as a gift or interest. Further queries regarding any such obligations should, in the first instance, be directed to the International and Parliamentary Relations Office at Parliament House, Canberra, the Registrar of Senators' Interests, or the Register of Members' Interests, as appropriate.
13. *Persons in Government, Parliamentary or Australian Defence Force (ADF) Service*: may accept foreign awards subject to these Guidelines, and any additional conditions or requirements that Chief Officers of the relevant service or employing agency may prescribe in relation to the acceptance of foreign awards.
- (a) *Wearing on Official Duty*: In addition to the provisions set out in the Order of Wear, the wearing of a foreign award on an official uniform, or when on official duty, is subject to the dress regulations and other appropriate considerations of the service or/employing agency concerned.
 - i) This requirement applies even where an award was accepted prior to entering Government, Parliamentary or ADF service.
 - ii) Requests to wear foreign awards on official duty should be addressed to the Chief Officer, or their delegate, of the relevant service or employing agency.

(b) *Definitions:*

- i) “Government service” means the service of the Australian Government or of any state or territory government and includes service in any appointment remunerated by or on behalf of any such Government.
- ii) “Parliamentary service” means the parliamentary service of the Commonwealth or of any state or territory established under legislation to provide advice and support to the respective parliament, its committees, and its members.

14. *The Sovereign’s own gift:* These Guidelines have no bearing on the right of The King of Australia honouring His Australian subjects with awards in His Personal Order or other honours which are wholly within His Majesty’s own gift. Such awards may be included on the Schedule by the Governor-General, following confirmation from the Australian Government that the awards have been offered and accepted through official channels and in accordance with established protocols.

By Her Excellency’s Command

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Martin', written in a cursive style.

Gerard Martin PSM

Official Secretary to the Governor-General