



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs



WHAT WE DO

The Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG) cares for the commemorations of more than 321,000 Australians who died after a war or conflict and whose deaths have been determined to be related to their war service. They are at rest in more than 2,300 cemeteries, crematoriums and Gardens of Remembrance around Australia.

We also care for 13,000 of our nation's war dead of the First and Second World Wars who are at rest in 72 war cemeteries and plots within Australia and three in Papua New Guinea.

WHAT IS OFFICIAL COMMEMORATION?

Official Commemoration is the last entitlement provided to eligible veterans upon their death. The Australian Government recognises and acknowledges that the service undertaken by the veteran has caused or contributed to their death through the provision of a final and lasting commemoration.

WHAT FORM DOES OFFICIAL COMMEMORATION TAKE?

The commemoration placed for a veteran under the program of official commemoration can take the form of a memorial in a crematorium; or a general or lawn cemetery. There is a third option, but it's one that is not managed by cemeteries and crematoriums. Some eligible veterans and their families will choose to have a private memorial, but take up their entitlement of official commemoration by having OAWG place a commemorative plaque in one of the 10 Gardens of Remembrance around Australia. Whatever option is chosen, the official commemoration is maintained by the OAWG.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR OFFICIAL COMMEMORATION?

To meet the eligibility for post war commemoration, a veteran must meet one or more of the following criteria and be:

- a Victoria Cross recipient;
- in receipt of a Totally & Permanently Incapacitated pension (TPI) at the time of death and where the veteran has seen service in a war or conflict;
- in receipt of an Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA) and where the veteran has seen service in a war or conflict;
- in receipt of a temporary Special Rate Pension (TSR) or Intermediate Rate Pension (INT) and where the veteran has seen service in a war or conflict;
- a multiple amputee on Section 27.1 maximum pension rate;
- an ex-prisoner of war; or
- someone whose death has subsequently been accepted as being due to war service

Need more information? Give our official commemorations team a call on 1800 VETERAN or email wargraves@dva.gov.au



HOW DOES A VETERAN OR THEIR FAMILY KNOW IF THEY ARE ELIGIBLE?

Upon the death of a veteran, DVA will make an assessment against a prescribed criteria and notify OAWG about the veteran's eligibility. Once this information has been provided OAWG will send information and an application form for official commemoration to the nominated next-of-kin, spouse or responsible person.

If you are managing the provision of a final commemoration for someone who has served our nation in the Australian Navy, Army or Air Force, it is prudent to note that they may not have undertaken the specific type of service or have a condition that has been found to be attributable to that service. This would mean that they may not be eligible for official commemoration. Sadly one of the most upsetting things for families is when they are told that Government will pay for a commemoration only to subsequently find out that we can't. Or they put a commemoration in place and then expect they will be reimbursed and we are unable to.

If a family is unaware of eligibility, please – check with us before you provide them with any information about official commemoration.

WHAT ABOUT VETERANS AND EX-SERVICE PERSONS WHO ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR COMMEMORATION?

For those veterans and serving members who are not eligible for official commemoration, OAWG can provide permission for the relevant service badge to be used on a privately arranged and funded memorial.

While this is not an official commemoration, it does allow for all those who have served to recognise their service through the use of a relevant service badge/insignia on their private memorial. A permission letter authorising the use of a service badge/insignia for veterans of the Second World War, Korean War and Vietnam War can be downloaded from websites: www.ww2roll.gov.au; www.koreanroll.gov.au; www.vietnamroll.gov.au

Requests for permission for veterans who served in conflicts other than those listed above, should be directed to wargraves@dva.gov.au. You should include a document that provides proof of service with your request.

All costs and arrangements associated with these memorials are the responsibility of the next-of-kin or executor.

WHAT WE CAN'T DO

OAWG is unable to:

- Commemorate all veterans or ex-serving members.
- Choose a location for a grave or niche placement, this must be done by the next of kin or responsible person.
- Maintain or repair private graves.
- Manage ashes placements in our gardens of remembrance.
- Look after local war memorials or place plaques on council or RSL memorial walls.
- Inscribe personal inscriptions on cremation plaques.
- Place official commemorations on private memorials

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