



Honour the Fallen

Award a Killed-in-Service (KIS) clasp on their campaign or service medal to complete their story of personal service and sacrifice.



Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal

RE: Kerry Danes Addendum (2) 14 June 2021

Mr Stephen Skehill
Tribunal Chair
Committee

Dear Sir,

In my effort to assist the Tribunal in their deliberations on the *retrospective* element of the awards being considered, I initiated a small pilot poll (the poll) to gauge the opinion of others in my network. The poll was taken over four weeks from May 14, 2021, to June 14, 2021, and shared via Facebook to a very limited audience as I rarely use social media platforms. I am able to escalate the poll to a broader audience if you deem it necessary. The total number of respondents was 380 across Defence, Veterans and Civilians. The questions I presented were as follows:

The Poll (Honour the Fallen)

Which time period should cover medallic clasps recognition?

*



OPTION 1: From 3 MAR 1885



OPTION 2: From 3 SEP 1945

In the first week of polling, the wording of these options did not generate much of a response. This changed, however, after I clarified “who” precisely these periods represented.

The Poll (Honour the Fallen)

Which time period should cover medallic clasps recognition?

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OPTION 1: From 3 MAR 1885 (Representing 100% of Australians who died)



OPTION 2: From 3 SEP 1945 (Representing 1.6% of Australians who died)



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OPTION 1 - From 3 MAR 1885 onward (recognising 100% sacrifice). 'All Equal in Death'

102,911 members, including those Australians from the Sudan campaign, the ANZACS, the Lighthorse, Rats of Tobruk, Kokoda etc...through to contemporary campaigns such as Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan etc

(Including all of those members from Option 2)



OR

OPTION 2 - From 3 SEP 1945 (recognising only 1.6% sacrifice). 'Not Equal in Death'

1,648 members, including those Australians from contemporary campaigns from Korea, Malaya, Borneo, Vietnam to Afghanistan etc.

(Excluding all of those members from Option 1 who served prior to 3 SEP 1945)



The majority of respondents chose Option 1, generating **352 responses** favouring recognition awarded from 3 MAR 1885. Option 2 generated **28 responses in favour** of recognition awarded from 3 SEP 1945. Had I the time needed to take a national poll, I am confident the figures would still likely reflect a majority of support for Option 1.





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In reference to my previous submission (Addendum 11 May 2021), I confirmed that the eligibility criteria for service from 3 MAR 1885 is already recognised by the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour records as follows:

Conflict/operation	Start date	End date
Sudan	1885	1885
South Africa	11 October 1899	31 May 1902
China	6 August 1900	25 April 1901
First World War	4 August 1914	31 March 1921
Second World War	3 September 1939	30 June 1947

*Other periods specified can be found on <https://www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/honour-rolls/roll-of-honour>

The majority of respondents to the poll clearly support the thinking that it would diminish the sacrifice of Australia’s fallen if we do not recognise those 98.4 percenters or 101,263 Australians who died in service prior to 03 Sep 1945.

When our Nation and its leaders talk about storytelling, that story of sacrifice includes the ANZACs, Light Horse, the Rats of Tobruk, Kokoda, and other campaigns. In my opinion, to exclude the opportunity for medallic recognition for ALL who have fallen would not be telling our Nation’s story well or completely. Their service and sacrifice represents the very foundation of our Nation.

The Clasp Issue

As the Tribunal has suggested, some people may consider affixing a clasp to an imperial award problematic. However, I think for the sake of our Nation’s story of sacrifice we should make an effort to pursue the merits of doing so, and the majority of respondents agree. I previously addressed this issue in my previous addendum (11 May 2021) to ensure all our fallen are treated equally in death. On behalf of those who support this, I respectfully request the Tribunal make these views transparent in their final report to Government:

1. The Prime Minister write to Her Majesty The Queen and seek her approval to allow the medallic clasp awards under consideration to be affixed to Imperial awards. It is highly possible that Her Majesty may see merit in what our Nation is seeking to address. Her Majesty may not only approve a request but may also make this available to other commonwealth countries. Both His Excellency The Governor General and the Prime Minister have shown their willingness to exercise this pathway, having engaged Her Majesty to amend the Letters Patent for the Meritorious Unit Citation.



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- The alternative would be to retrospectively backdate the Australian Defence Medal to 03 March 1885 and have the medallic clasps under consideration affixed to this medal. We feel the gesture of inclusion is of national importance.

I have considered further the discussion around the provision of medallic recognition for the next of kin, in respect to the Member's medals and to give them the discretion of having the date of death affixed to the medallic clasp. I personally feel that having a date may generate more curiosity. Bystanders may be tempted to ask questions to the next of kin during times of remembrance or quiet reflection. But I do agree that this should be a personal choice for the next of kin. Regardless of whether they decide to have the date of death or another date affixed to the medallic clasp, I believe the medallic clasp must retain a significant and distinct status. It should be designed so that it is different to other bar and clasps currently awarded. I am concerned that a black bar on its own might be interpreted as a 'Strike Out' as used in protected identity photographs.

The artwork below is offered in good faith to assist the tribunal to further consider the importance of the design for the medallic clasp in obtaining significance and distinct status. I would strongly recommend the final design feature National symbolism (i.e.: wattle). A wattle medallic clasp could be affixed to the most appropriate medal to tell the story of sacrifice with or without the date of death or injury.

