

Wearing Medals and Awards

The ACT Rural Fire Service Chief Officer has issued this guideline under Section 38(1) of the *Emergencies Act 2004* – A Chief Officer may determine standards and protocols.

Purpose

The ACT Rural Fire Service (ACT RFS) values the contribution of all members and formally acknowledges this contribution through a range of awards and medals. This guideline describes how medals and ribbon bars are to be worn, in line with national protocols.

Applicability

This guideline is applicable to all members, staff and volunteers, of the ACT RFS (the Service).

Guideline

Recipients of awards are granted insignia as a visual expression of the honour conferred on them. Medals fall into two broad categories:

- Those that form part of the Australian System of Honour and Awards, e.g., National Medal, Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM)
- Those awarded by Australian states, territories and organisations, e.g., ACT Community Protection Award, ACT RFS Long Service medals and clasps.

Medals and ribbon bars are worn in order of precedence, as specified in [THE ORDER OF WEARING AUSTRALIAN HONOURS AND AWARDS](#), issued by the Governor General.

Order of precedence

The order of Australian medals and honours issued through the ACT RFS is as follows:

1. Australian Fire Service Medal
2. National Medal and Clasp.

These medals are worn on the left side of the uniform.

The order of ACT medals and honours issued through the ACT RFS is as follows:

1. ACT Community Protection Medal
2. ACT Emergency medal
3. ACT RFS Long Service Medal and Clasp

4. Other Act Emergency Service Medals, e.g., ACT SES Long Service Medal
5. Other state and territory emergency service medals.

These medals are worn on the right side of the uniform.

Mounting medals and clasps

Medals, both full size and miniatures, may be mounted in two ways:



Swing mounted (hanging from a bar)



Court-mounted (on a rigid colour-matched background). Court mounting is the most common form for more than one medal.

It is recommended that members who have been awarded more than one medal have them professionally mounted.

If medals are not mounted, they should be positioned so that the edges of each ribbon just touch and the top of the supporting ribbons is aligned. If possible, adjust the ribbon length so that the bottoms of the medals also align.

Ribbons for each medal may also be mounted on a bar, with a maximum of four ribbons/bar for a male. Females may choose to mount 3 ribbons/bar. Ribbons on each bar are centred. If more than one bar is required, the most senior awards are positioned on the bottom bar. There should not be a gap between bars.



Members may wish to purchase and wear mounted replica medals in order to preserve their originals.

Placement

Australian awards are pinned above the left side of the uniform, centred on the left breast pocket. The top of the ribbon with a medal attached should be pinned 3mm above the top of the pocket. The most senior award is worn closest to the centre of the body.

If the main insignia is in the form of a neck badge, it is worn around the neck.

ACT awards are pinned above the right side of the uniform, centred on the right breast pocket. The top of the ribbon with a medal attached should be pinned 3mm above the top of the pocket. Unit citations are worn above the medal ribbons.

Where a person holds more than one award, the most senior award is placed towards the right side of the chest and the main insignia are worn in order of precedence.

Ribbons are worn in the same order of precedence and position as medals, with the bottom of the lower ribbon bar just above the top of the pocket.

Members wearing jackets or shirts without pockets should position the ribbons in the place the pockets on a shirt would normally be, with the top of the ribbon directly below the bottom of their name plate (if worn).

Clothing

If a member does not have a service dress jacket, medals may be worn on a white uniform shirt, or a plain white shirt if a uniform shirt is not available or appropriate.

Medals are not normally worn on jumpers, but if a member does not have a service dress jacket, they may wear medals on an ACT RFS uniform jumper, provided they are worn in the position described for other garments.

Medals are not to be worn on ACT RFS polar fleece zip jackets, fireground shirts or personal protective clothing (PPC).

If brigade members only have fireground shirts or PPC to wear to a brigade function, and wish to wear their medals, they should consider wearing suitable civilian dress.

When to wear medals and clasps

Day wear – formal functions

- Full-size insignia is normally worn.
- Members with multiple awards may prefer to mount the miniatures on a bar and to wear only one full-size insignia on its ribbon, immediately below their miniatures. The full-size piece is normally the most senior award.

Evening functions, e.g., dinners

- Miniature insignia generally worn except for neck badges, which are worn in full-size.

Everyday wear

- A lapel badge may be worn on civilian clothes at any time.
- Only one badge or brooch should be worn at a given time and not in conjunction with other insignia pieces.

Information on wearing the National Medal is also available on the website:

<https://www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/government/wearing-awards>.

The following table provides a guide to wearing medals or ribbons at ceremonial and formal occasions.

Occasion	Medals	Ribbons
Opening of Service or Government facility	✓	
Service funerals, memorial services or church parades	✓	
Ceremonial occasions, parades and marches	✓	
Civic receptions	Civilian clothes with miniatures unless uniform is requested on invitation	
Service dinners	✓	✓
Diplomatic occasions, day or evening	Civilian clothes with miniatures unless uniform is requested on invitation	
Awards ceremonies (official or guest)	✓	
Awards ceremonies (recipient)		✓
Appliance handover		✓
ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day service	✓	
St Florian's Day service	✓	

Presentation ceremonies

Only ribbon bars of other awards should be worn at a presentation ceremony where a medal is being presented.

If a clasp is being presented, the medal relevant to that clasp should be worn.

Wearing awards of next-of-kin

It is normal to wear the medals of a deceased person on the right breast to signify that the awards are not those of the person wearing them.

Document information

Version history

Author	Version	Version Approval Date	Summary of Changes
Joe Murphy	1.0	20/02/2020	New guideline
Steve Quinlan	1.0	14/6/24	Administrative Review

Approved by

Name	Title/Role	Signature	Date
Rohan Scott	CO ACT RFS		

Document Owner

Position	Section
Manager	Membership

Next review due: 1/2/27

Related documents

Document name
3.3.2 Awards and Medals Guideline
3.3.3 National Medal
3.1.4 RFS Membership Service Standard
ESA Uniform Handbook
THE ORDER OF WEARING AUSTRALIAN HONOURS AND AWARDS
https://www.pmc.gov.au/government/its-honour/national-medal
https://www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/government/wearing-awards

Signed documents will be scanned and filed in TRIM.