

Government Response
to the
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Defence and Trade

*'Visit to Australian Forces Deployed in the International
Coalition Against Terrorism'*

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
DEFENCE AND TRADE
VISIT TO AUSTRALIAN FORCES DEPLOYED IN THE INTERNATIONAL
COALITION AGAINST TERRORISM

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The Minister for Defence should consider issuing an Australian campaign medal to those Australian Defence Force personnel who have served on operations in support of the International Coalition Against Terrorism (paragraph 8.13).

Government Response:

Not Agreed. Following the release of the Committee's report, the Interdepartmental Committee on Honours and Awards to Defence Force Personnel considered the issue and is of the view that special circumstances do not exist to warrant recommending a change to existing policy.

Government policy is normally that only one Australian military service medal is awarded to recognise a single type of service. In the case of the deployment of Australian Defence Force personnel to operations in support of the International Coalition Against Terrorism, the Government has agreed to issue the Australian Active Service Medal with clasp "ICAT". At a future time, should a foreign award be offered for service to the International Coalition Against Terrorism, the Government will favourably consider supporting the proposal under the provisions of the *Guidelines Concerning the Acceptance and Wearing of Foreign Honours and Awards by Australians*.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The Minister for Defence should:

- expedite the awarding of the Australian Service Medal to those Australian Defence Force personnel deployed as part of OPERATION SLIPPER who have already returned from their deployment; and
- ensure that, in future, the Australian Active Service Medal is awarded immediately upon completion of a tour of duty (paragraph 8.14).

Government Response:

Agreed. Defence has made, and is making, every effort to expedite the processing of medals for personnel deployed with the International Coalition Against Terrorism. Defence will make every effort to ensure medals are issued by the dates requested by the Component Commands, as already occurs and indeed occurred for deployments to East Timor. The dates are normally set prior to the end of a tour of duty. The processing period is approximately 14 weeks, but is often achieved in a shorter time. This period ensures that only entitled personnel receive medals following exhaustive assessment by Defence and subsequent approval of all awards by the Governor-General.