



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Awarding of the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation to 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment 5 May 1965 to 31 May 1966



Background:

In May 1965, the Australian Government agreed to provide military assistance to the Republic of Vietnam. In 1965 it was directed that 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) would deploy to the Republic of Vietnam and operate under control of the United States (US) Military Assistance Command, which in turn placed 1RAR under the operational command of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

The Citation was originally awarded to the United States 173rd Airborne Brigade and its attached and assigned units in 1970 to recognise its outstanding service to the Republic of Vietnam during 1965 to 1970.

The role of 1RAR was to conduct search and destroy missions, patrolling and security operations. 1RAR participated in seven operations with 173rd Airborne Brigade between 5 May 1965 and 31 May 1966 that are referred to in the citation that awarded the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation (the Citation) to 173rd Airborne Brigade.

What is the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm unit Citation?

Known as the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm and Frame Unit Citation, the Citation was awarded by the former Government of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) to specific military units that distinguished themselves to the same level as would be required for the individual award of the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry.

The Citation Emblem is in the colors of the Gallantry Cross with Palm and was issued with the Gallantry Cross ribbon bar with a bronze palm and gold frame.

Other Australian Units who have previously received this award are the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam, 2 Squadron RAAF and 8th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment.

Why is 1 RAR being awarded the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation?

1RAR is eligible to be awarded the Citation as it was attached to the United States 173rd Airborne Brigade from 05 May 1965 to 31 May 1966, a period of service for which the Citation was awarded to the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

Why is the Unit Citation being awarded 50 years after the deployment to Vietnam?

In 2011, Mr Alan Larsen, who previously served with 1RAR in Vietnam, lodged an application with the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (the Tribunal) seeking to have the Citation awarded to 1RAR and its attached units, for service in Vietnam between 5 May 1965 and 31 May 1966.

The Tribunal found that in awarding the Citation to the 173rd Airborne Brigade and its attached and assigned units, there was intent for the Citation to be awarded to 1RAR. The Tribunal recommended to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence that the award be accepted.

At the time of the awarding to 173rd Airborne Brigade, Australian policy governing acceptance and wearing of foreign awards, required the foreign government to make a formal offer to the Australian government. The Republic of Vietnam made a formal offer to the United States in 1970, however, no formal offer was made to the Australian Government for the Citation to be awarded to 1RAR and its attached units as a subordinate unit of 173rd Airborne Brigade.

The 1997 guidelines governing the acceptance and wearing of foreign awards allows the Governor-General to grant permission for the formal acceptance and wearing of foreign awards by Australians in extraordinary or unusual circumstances. As the Government of the Republic of Vietnam no longer exists, the Parliamentary Secretary considered these circumstances fell within these guidelines. As such, the Parliamentary Secretary wrote to the Governor-General recommending that he exercise his authority to accept the Citation. The Governor-General accepted on 17 April 2015.

Who is eligible to be issued the Citation insignia?

To be eligible to be issued the insignia of the Citation, individuals must have been posted to one of the units which comprised the 1RAR Battalion Group in Vietnam in 1965-66. Personnel who served in the 1RAR Battalion Group in Vietnam for the specific time periods (as set out in the table below) may apply to wear the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation insignia.

Unit	Dates of service supporting 173rd Airborne Brigade
1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment	25 May 1965 to 31 May 1966
1 Troop, A Squadron, 4/19 PWLH (redesignated as 1 APC Troop, 1 APC Squadron from late Sep 1965)	15 June 1965 to 31 March 1966
105th Field Battery, RAA	14 September 1965 to 31 May 1966
3rd Field Troop, RAE	14 September 1965 to 31 March 1966
161st Reconnaissance Flight and 161st (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight, AAAVN	14 September 1965 to 31 May 1966
1st Australian Logistic Support Company	25 May 1965 to 31 March 1966

Battery Section, 4th Field Regiment Light Aid Detachment (and redesignated in country to 105th Field Battery Section, 12th Field Regiment Light Aid Detachment RAEME	14 September 1965 to 31 March 1966 RAEME
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Who can I contact to find out if I am eligible to be issued the insignia of the Citation?

With the assistance of the Department of Veteran’s Affairs, Army Headquarters has established a nominal roll of members whose service records show they meet the eligibility criteria. Individuals wishing to find out if they are eligible are encouraged to contact Defence Honours and Awards on the toll-free inquiry line: 1800 111 321 (within Australia). This line is operated Monday to Thursday between the hours of 10.00am – 4.00pm (excluding public holidays).

How many members have been identified on the nominal roll as being eligible to receive the insignia of the Citation?

The original nominal roll contains a total of 1754 names from both Army and the Royal Australian Air Force.

Who do I contact if I think I am eligible but my name is not on the nominal roll?

Members who believe they are eligible and have confirmed through Defence Honours and Awards (1800 111 321) that they are not identified on the nominal roll should submit an application form to Defence Honours and Awards via their website at

<http://www.defence.gov.au/medals/Content/Applications.asp> .

The application should include details of the applicant’s service in Vietnam and the unit posted at the time of the deployment.

How do I apply to be issued the insignia of the Citation?

Members who believe they are eligible to be issued the insignia of the Citation will need to complete application form *AE532 – Application for Defence Medals* located on the Defence Honours and Awards website: <http://www.defence.gov.au/Medals/Content/Applications.asp>.

Applications can be submitted electronically through the website or by mail to:

Defence Honours and Awards
 Republic of Vietnam Unit Citation – 1 RAR
 CP2-1, Department of Defence
 PO Box 7952
 CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

Note: When completing the application form, please ensure you specifically identify the ‘*Republic of Vietnam Unit Citation for 1RAR*’ at Section H of the application form. This will ensure your application is processed correctly.

Please be aware that if you select 'Full Medal Assessment' at Section H your application will take longer to process while the necessary investigation is undertaken.

Will there be a parade or ceremony to present the Streamer of the Citation to 1RAR?

The 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment will be presented the Streamer of the Citation at a parade at 3.45pm on the 23rd November 2015 at Lavarack Barracks, Townsville.

The Streamer will be presented by the Governor-General, His Excellency General The Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove, AK, MC, as part of a larger parade to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the formation of the 65th, 66th and 67th Battalions, later to become the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment. As part of the ceremony, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions will also be presented replacement Queen's and Regimental Colours by the Governor General.

Who can I contact if I am interested in attending the ceremony?

The ceremony will be conducted at the 3.45pm on the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment Parade Ground within Lavarack Barracks, Townsville. If you are wishing to attend the ceremony please contact the following for details of the ceremony and security requirements:

Warrant Officer Class 1 Sean McGinley

Ph: (07) 4411 7451

Email: sean.mcginley@defence.gov.au

Can the insignia of the Citation be worn immediately?

Yes. Once you have been appropriately issued the insignia of the Citation by Defence Honours and Awards you are able to wear the insignia.

Will there be a ceremony to present the Citation to 1RAR?

At this time Army Headquarters is liaising with 1RAR to determine a suitable means and occasion for presenting the Citation to the unit. The Army website will be updated as further information becomes available.

Who will be the custodian of the Citation and what does this mean?

As the historical link to the Vietnam era 1RAR, the current 1RAR will be the custodians of the Citation. A Citation Streamer in the Citation colours will be presented to 1RAR in due course and they will be eligible to parade the Streamer on their Colours.

Can the Citation insignia be worn in perpetuity by current members of 1RAR?

The Citation will not be worn in perpetuity by members subsequently posted to the present day 1RAR. This is in keeping with the practice exercised by 8/9 RAR as the custodians of the Citation awarded to the 8th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment during Vietnam.

Who do I call if I have an inquiry about eligibility or application for the Citation Insignia?

If you require information not contained in the FAQ please contact Defence Honours and Awards on the toll-free inquiry line: 1800 111 321 (within Australia).