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# THE SACRIFICE MEDAL

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**NOTE:** Following the reaction to the announcement of the creation of the Medal in some circles, the Minister of National Defence has asked the Chief of the Defence staff to conduct a review of the existing criteria and make recommendations to the appropriate government committee. The review is currently underway and the inaugural presentation of the Medal, and therefore general distribution, has been postponed until a final decision with regards to the criteria is made and announced. The Canadian Army Journal will post updates as they become available.



The Sacrifice Medal was created in the context of increased casualties in overseas operations to fulfill the desire of Canadians and the Government to provide formal recognition, through the award of an official medal emanating from the Crown, to those who are killed or wounded by hostile action. This honour replaces the Wound Stripe.

## ELIGIBILITY & CRITERIA

The Medal may be awarded to members of the Canadian Forces, members of an allied force working as an integral part of the Canadian Forces such as exchange personnel, civilian employees of the Government of Canada or Canadian citizens under contract with the Government of Canada, on the condition that they were deployed as part of a military mission under the authority of the Canadian Forces, that have, on or after October 7, 2001, died or been wounded under honourable circumstances as a direct result of a hostile or perceived hostile action on the condition that the wounds that were sustained required treatment by a physician and the treatment has been documented.

### Eligible cases include but are not limited to:

- death or wounds due to a terrorist attack, mine or bomb disposal duty, direct or indirect fire, rescue duty, collision of an aircraft, vehicle or vessel, on the condition that

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the occurrence is directly related to a hostile action;

- death or wounds as a direct result of friendly fire aimed at a hostile force or what is or was thought to be a hostile force;
- wounds that require not less than seven days of treatment in hospital, or an equivalent course of treatment, and that were caused by:
  - exposure to the elements as a consequence of an aircraft, vehicle or vessel being destroyed or disabled by a hostile action;
  - harsh treatment or neglect while a captive of a hostile force; or
  - use of nuclear, biological or chemical agents by a hostile force.
- death caused by:
  - exposure to the elements as a consequence of an aircraft, vehicle or vessel being destroyed or disabled by a hostile action;
  - harsh treatment or neglect while a captive of a hostile force, or
  - use of nuclear, biological or chemical agents by a hostile force; or
- mental disorders that are, based on a review by a qualified mental health care practitioner, directly attributable to a hostile or perceived hostile action.

**Ineligible cases include but are not limited to:**

- death or wounds due to exposure to the elements other than listed above, or caused by acts of God;
- death or wounds caused by an accident arising from their employment in a theatre of operations but were not directly attributable to a hostile action;
- death or wounds caused by disease; or
- death or wounds that were self-inflicted or caused by the victim's negligence.

## DESCRIPTION

The Sacrifice Medal will be a circular silver medal, bearing:

on the obverse a contemporary effigy of Her Majesty The Queen wearing a Canadian diadem composed of alternating maple leaves and snowflakes circumscribed with the inscriptions "ELIZABETH II DEI GRATIA REGINA" and "CANADA", separated by small maple leaves and on the reverse a representation of the statue named "Canada"—which forms part of the Canadian National Vimy Memorial—facing right, overlooking the horizon with the inscription "SACRIFICE" appearing in the lower right half of the Medal.

The effigy of Her Majesty represents not only The Queen as Canada's Head of State (highlighted by the word CANADA and the maple leaves) and Head of the armed forces but also as the FONS HONORIS (the Fount of All Honours). The Queen is the only person who can create an official honour in Canada and all Canadian Honours are bestowed in Her name. The tradition generally followed since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century has been to depict who the medal is from on the obverse, what the medal is for on the reverse and who the medal is for on the edge. The Statue "Canada", designed by architect Walter Seymour Allward as part of the Canadian National Vimy Memorial, symbolizes Canada, the mother of a nation grieving for her fallen. This saddened figure personifies the sorrow for the lives lost and broken by conflict and makes a connection with Vimy, acclaimed by many as the birthplace of the nation and one of the most important military engagements in Canadian history. She faces a large field representing the loneliness and isolation of mourning but also the future. The statue depicts the figure of a woman, hooded and cloaked, head heavy, with her eyes cast down and her chin resting on her hand. She holds some laurel branches in her right hand, symbol of peace, honour and sacrifice.



Obverse-Avers



Reverse-Revers

The medal is fitted with a straight suspension bar ornamented with the Royal Crown.

The ribbon is a watered ribbon, 32 mm wide, with a black central stripe (10 mm), flanked by red edges (11 mm each) centered on which are 1 mm white stripes. Black represents the mourning of the dead and the shock of the wounds, the red represent the blood that has been spilled and the white, the hope for a better future. Red and white are also the official colours of Canada as decreed by King George V in 1921.

The bar has a raised edge and bears a central maple leaf overall.

#### BAR(S)

A bar is awarded for further occasions which would have warranted award of the Medal.

#### WEARING

The Sacrifice Medal shall be worn in the sequence prescribed in the Canadian Orders, Decorations and Medals Directive, and in the following manner:

- On the left breast, suspended from the ribbon described above, between the Royal Victorian Medal and the Gulf and Kuwait Medal.

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- One bar is worn centred on the ribbon; if multiple bars have been awarded, they shall be evenly spaced on the ribbon.
  - Where the undress ribbon is worn, a silver maple leaf shall be worn centred on the ribbon of the Medal to indicate the award of a Bar, a gold maple leaf shall be worn to indicate the award of a second Bar, a red maple leaf shall be worn to indicate the award of a third Bar and a combination of these devices may be worn to indicate the award of more than three bars (e.g. a red maple leaf and a gold maple leaf representing 5 bars, etc).

## POSTNOMINALS

The use of a post-nominal is not authorized for this medal.

## HISTORICAL NOTES

Captain Carl Gauthier of the Directorate of Honours & Recognition and Cathy Bursey-Sabourin, Fraser Herald at the Canadian Heraldic Authority at the Chancellery of Honours, Rideau Hall, collaborated to create the design.

The Medal is made of Sterling Silver and lacquered to prevent tarnishing. It is manufactured by the Royal Canadian Mint.

The Medal is engraved on the edge with the service number, abbreviated substantive rank, initials and surname of military recipients and the forenames and name of civilian recipients.

The inaugural presentation ceremony will be held by the Governor General at Rideau Hall at a later date on which occasion Her Excellency will present the Medal to approximately 50 representative recipients. General distribution will follow with priority given to posthumous awards. There were an estimated 360 potential recipients at the time of the announcement of the creation of the medal.

Questions from the media and the public regarding the creation of this honour should be addressed to the Honours Information Officer at Rideau Hall.

