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COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES
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COMMEMORATIONS POLICY

Eligibility Criteria for Commemoration

27 May 2020

Policy History

Version	Date	Amendment	Approved By
1	27 May 2020	Eligibility criteria collated into one policy.	Policy and Commemorations Group.
1.1	10 December 2020	Updated auxiliary organisations provided in Appendix 1.	Policy and Commemorations Group.

Next Review

This policy is reviewed every three years. The next review of this policy is scheduled to commence in May 2023.

Contact Details

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact:

Kylie Smith

Commemorations Policy Manager

Email: commemorations@cwgc.org

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1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the eligibility criteria for commemoration by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC).

2 Scope

This policy defines who we will commemorate via any of our methods of commemoration.

It does not include details of how we will commemorate those who do meet the criteria. Please refer CWGC's *Commemoration Policy: How we Commemorate War Dead* for these details.

3 Definitions

Active Service	A person is considered to have been in active service when, during the First or Second World War they were: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• in full-time service in the armed forces; or• if in part-time service in the armed forces, they were on active duty.
Armed Forces	Includes land, naval and air forces.
Auxiliary Organisation	An organisation employed to support the armed forces during the First or Second World War.
Detained by the Enemy	Held in, or in transit to or from, an enemy camp.
Member Government	Governments that fund the CWGC, namely the governments of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India.
Nationality	Nationality is determined by the service the individual served with at the time of their death.
War Periods	References to serving in the First World War or Second World War mean service at any time during the official war periods stated below: First World War: 4 August 1914 to 31 August 1921 (dates inclusive). ¹ Second World War: 3 September 1939 to 31 December 1947 (dates inclusive). ²

¹ The 4th August 1914 is the day of declaration of war by Great Britain. The 31st August 1921 is the official end of war (as per the Order in Council that declared the war ended, as required by the Termination of the Present War (Definition) Act.

² The 3rd September 1939 is the day of declaration of war by Great Britain. The 31st December 1947 is the date agreed by the participating governments to produce a post-war period roughly equal to that of the First World War.

4 Role of the Commission

In accordance with our Royal Charter of Incorporation, CWGC's role is to take responsibility for the:

- marking and care of the graves of those who served the Commonwealth³ armed forces (including specified auxiliary and civilian organisations) and lost their lives during the First or Second World War;
- commemoration of those whose graves are unknown or cannot be maintained, or whose remains were lost, buried at sea or cremated; and
- maintenance of records and registers of those who died.

5 Criteria for Commemoration

5.1 Commonwealth Armed Forces

We commemorate people who served in the Commonwealth armed forces during the First or Second World War, whose death:

- occurred during the official war period; and
- was the result of:
 - wounds inflicted or accident occurring during active service;
 - disease contracted or commencing while on active service; or
 - disease aggravated by active service.

In practice, this means that:

- serving military personnel are commemorated irrespective of the cause or circumstances of their death; and
- military personnel who died post-discharge are commemorated if it is established that they meet the above criteria.

5.2 Auxiliary Organisations

We commemorate members of auxiliary organisations that have been recognised by one of the member governments, who died during First or Second World War.

Eligibility generally requires a casualty to have died:

- overseas while employed with the armed forces; or
- from wounds inflicted while serving overseas.

There are some exceptions to this requirement. A list of recognised auxiliary organisations and conditions of eligibility are provided in [Appendix A](#).

³ Known as the Imperial armed forces during the First and Second World Wars. Our name changed from the Imperial War Graves Commission to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission on 28 March 1960.

5.3 Mercantile Marine (First World War)

Mercantile Marine Services refers to those who, during the First World War, had signed on the books for a voyage on a British or Commonwealth registered merchant ship or fishing boat.

We commemorate all sailors of the Commonwealth Mercantile Marine Services who died, while signed on for a voyage, as a direct result of enemy action or while detained by the enemy.

5.4 Commonwealth Merchant Navy (Second World War)

The Commonwealth Merchant Navy refers to those who, during the Second World War:

- were sailors of any nation and had signed on the books for a voyage on a British or Commonwealth registered merchant ship, fishing boat, salvage vessel or a Lighthouse and Pilotage Services boat; or
- were Commonwealth registered merchant sailors who had signed on the books of allied or neutral ships.

We commemorate all sailors of the Commonwealth Merchant Navies (and specified associated auxiliary organisations and the fishing fleet) who died, while signed on for a voyage:

- as a result of enemy action;
- while detained by the enemy; or
- as a result of the increased risks specified in the Pensions (Mercantile Marine) Act 1942 (see below), if there is evidence that a war pension was awarded.

The risks specified in the Pensions (Mercantile Marine) Act 1942 are:

- the taking of measures with a view to avoiding, preventing or hindering enemy action against ships, or as a precaution in anticipation of enemy action against ships, or for rescue or salvage purposes in consequence of enemy action against ships;
- the absence, by reason of circumstances connected with any war in which [the UK] may be engaged, of any aid to navigation for ships, or of any warning of danger to ships, being an aid or warning which would be normal in time of peace;
- the carriage, by reason of circumstances connected with any such war above, of any cargo in a manner which would be abnormal in time of peace and involves danger to the ship in which the cargo is carried or to her crew; or
- the existence on board ship of any other conditions arising out of any such war above which would be abnormal in times of peace.

5.5 Civilian War Dead

CWGC commemorates Commonwealth civilian casualties of the Second World War in its Civilian War Dead Roll of Honour if death occurred:

- as a direct consequence of enemy action or munitions;
- while detained by the enemy;
- after release from enemy detention if death was due to a condition directly attributable to the conditions suffered while detained;
- as a result of allied munitions (including accidental shootings but excluding factory accidents); or
- allied weapons of war conducting military operations, where the military are at fault.

6 Commemoration of Deserters and Servicepeople Judicially Executed

6.1 Servicepeople Judicially Executed

We commemorate all serving military personnel who were executed during the First or Second World War:

- following a General Court Martial; or
- after being found guilty of a civil crime.

6.2 Deserters

We may commemorate a person considered to be a deserter if there is evidence to show:

- their death occurred while in service with another branch of the armed forces or while serving with the Merchant Navy and they meet the eligibility criteria for commemoration for that other branch;
- the circumstances of their death provide substantial doubt about their intention to desert; or
- there are other circumstances to warrant exception e.g. burial having been permitted in good faith by a cemetery authority in a service plot.

7 Policy Review and Consultation

All reviews of this policy will be conducted through CWGC's Policy and Commemorations Group.

Member governments will be consulted as necessary.

8 Responsibilities

CWGC's **Policy and Commemorations Group** is responsible for:

- overseeing reviews of this policy; and
- approving policy revisions.

The **Commemorations Policy Manager** is responsible for:

- maintaining this policy and ensuring it is communicated clearly and applied consistently across CWGC and member government service authorities;
- scheduling and leading the review of the policy; and
- ensuring member governments are consulted as necessary on any proposed changes to eligibility criteria.

9 Related Documents

Commemoration Policy: How we Commemorate War Dead

Commemoration Policy: Caring for War Dead and our Graves

Commemoration Procedure: Determining Eligibility

10 References

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission Charter of Incorporation.

Commission Meeting Minutes (Various – refer Key Decisions Register).

Appendix A: Auxiliary Organisations

The table below details the organisations whose members are eligible for war grave treatment, subject to dates of effect and conditions.

This list was last updated in December 2020.

Formation	Effective Dates	Conditions	List
AIR TRAINING CORPS (ATC)	WW2	Any Warrant Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) or Cadet killed while on duty and flying in a Royal Air Force (RAF) aircraft, and if death is confirmed by Ministry of Defence (MOD). For part time officers, only those deaths which are attributable to service.	UK/NZ AIR AUXILIARY
AIR TRANSPORT AUXILIARY	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted, accident occurring or disease contracted, commencing or aggravated while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces For those recruited and serving in the UK, where death occurred as a result of flying on duty.	UK AIR AUXILIARY
ARMY SCRIPTURE READERS AND SOLDIERS' AND AIRMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
AUSTRALIAN CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT and CIVIL AIRLINE COMPANIES	WW2	For aircrew, where death occurred due to a flight made at the direction of the Civil Aviation Department as a result of enemy action or due to the increased risks of working in wartime conditions. For ground crew where death arose out of employment, due to enemy action, at a station where they are responsible for local defence or while in, or in transit to, a war zone.	AUSTRALIA AIR AUXILIARY
AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND	WW2	Where death is attributable to service with the forces or occurred while serving overseas with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	AUSTRALIA VOLUNTARY WAR WORK

Formation	Effective Dates	Conditions	List
AUSTRALIAN MUNITION AND WAR WORKERS	WW1	Where death occurred in United Kingdom during this period.	UK CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
AUSTRALIAN NAVAL AUXILIARY PATROL (RANVR) (Unmobilised members)	WW2	Where death is directly attributable to their service duty.	AUSTRALIA NAVAL AUXILIARY
AUXILIARY COASTGUARDS	3 Sep 1939 to 17 Dec 1941	Where death occurred while on duty or as a result of injury while on duty. <i>Note: this Service became part of the Armed Forces on 18 Dec 1941.</i>	UK NAVAL AUXILIARY
AUXILIARY FORCE INDIA (AFI) and INDIAN TERRITORIAL FORCE (ITF)	WW2	Those serving in embodied and unembodied units of the AFI performing whole time military service and death is from wounds inflicted, accident occurring, or disease contracted or aggravated while serving.	INDIAN AUXILIARY
AUXILIARY NURSING SERVICES (MALAYA AND HONG KONG)	WW2	Where death occurred, overseas or at home, while under contract to Commonwealth Military Forces, and death is attributable to service; or Where death occurred while held as a prisoner of war.	FAR EAST MEDICAL AUXILIARY
BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS CORPORATION	3 Sep 1939 to 15 August 1945	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted, accident occurring or disease contracted, commencing or aggravated while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces. For those recruited and serving in the UK, where death occurred as a result of flying on duty.	UK AIR AUXILIARY
CANADIAN LEGION and CANADIAN LEGION EDUCATIONAL SERVICE	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	CANADA VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
CANTEEN STAFF on H.M.AUSTRALIA SHIPS	WW2	Same circumstances apply as Merchant Navy.	AUSTRALIA NAVAL AUXILIARY

Formation	Effective Dates	Conditions	List
CANTEEN STAFF with the NZ ARMY, AIR FORCE and on H.M.NZ SHIPS	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	NZ ARMY, AIR & NAVAL AUXILIARY
CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE	WW1 and WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
CHRISTIAN SCIENCE COMMITTEE (OVERSEAS WELFARE WORKERS)	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
CHURCH ARMY including METHODIST AND UNITED BOARD CHURCHES	WW1 and WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK/NZ VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	WW1 and WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
CIVIL AFFAIRS PERSONNEL	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
CIVILIAN PROTECTIVE SERVICES	WW2	Where death occurs as a result of, or in the course of, the performance of emergency military duty.	SA CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
CIVILIAN TECHNICAL CORPS	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted, accident occurring or disease contracted, commencing or aggravated while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces For those recruited and serving in the UK, where death occurred as a result of flying on duty.	UK AIR AUXILIARY
CONTROL COMMISSION (BRITISH ELEMENT)	11 Feb 1945 to 31 Dec 1947	Where death occurred overseas (or from wounds inflicted overseas) in the Theatres of War covered by the Control Commission.	UK CIVILIAN AUXILIARY

Formation	Effective Dates	Conditions	List
DEFENCE OF INDIA UNITS	WW2	Enrolled personnel at major ports or railways who die in the actual discharge of their defence duties, and the person is buried in a permanent war cemetery.	INDIAN CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
ENTERTAINMENTS NATIONAL SERVICE ASSOCIATION (ENSA)	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
ESSENTIAL SERVICES PROTECTION CORPS	WW2	Where death occurred at any time while in service.	SA CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
FAUJI DILKHUSH SABHA (FDS)	WW2	Where death occurred while serving Indian troops and the person is buried outside of India.	INDIAN VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
FRIENDS AMBULANCE UNIT	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK MEDICAL
FRIENDS WAR VICTIMS' RELIEF COMMITTEE (QUAKERS)	WW1	Where death occurred overseas while serving with, or attached to, the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
HOME GUARD (originally Local Defence Volunteers – LDV)	WW2	Where death was due to wounds, injury or disease certified by the competent Military Authority to be attributable to their volunteer service.	UK CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
INCORPORATED SOLDIERS' SAILORS' AND AIRMEN'S HELP SOCIETY	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
INDIAN AUXILIARY NURSING SERVICES	WW2	Where death occurred while serving in hospitals, camps or convalescent homes (restricted for the use of the fighting services) in Indian operational areas.	INDIAN MEDICAL
INDIAN CIVIL WELFARE ORGANISATIONS	WW2	Where death occurred as a result of enemy action or disease while serving with Commonwealth Military Forces and the person is buried overseas or in Indian operational areas.	INDIAN VOLUNTARY WAR WORK

Formation	Effective Dates	Conditions	List
INDIAN CIVILIAN LABOUR OR TRANSPORT ORGANISATIONS	WW2	Enrolled personnel where death occurred as a result of enemy action while serving with Commonwealth Military Forces and the person is buried overseas or in a permanent war cemetery in India.	INDIAN CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
JEWISH HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	CANADA VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
MALAYA AND HONG KONG LOCAL DEFENCE CORPS (LDC) including FEDERATED MALAY STATES LDC, JOHORE LDC, KEDAH LDC AND STRAITS SETTLEMENT LDC	WW2	Where death was due to wounds, injury or disease certified by the competent Military Authority to be attributable to their volunteer service; or Where death occurred while held as a prisoner of war.	FAR EAST CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
MIDDLE EAST SUPPLY CENTRE (MESCC)	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
NAVAL AUXILIARY PATROL SERVICE	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	NZ NAVAL AUXILIARY

Formation	Effective Dates	Conditions	List
NAVY, ARMY & AIRFORCE INSTITUTE (NAAFI)	31 Jul 1940 to 15 Aug 1945	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces. <i>This does not include those of Royal Army Service Corp (RASC) Expeditionary Force Institute (EFI), as they are treated as military personnel.</i>	UK CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
NZ CIVIL AIRLINE PERSONNEL (AIR DEPT CIVIL STAFF) including NZ PERSONNEL OF TASMAN EMPIRE AIRWAYS AND PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS	WW2	For those recruited in New Zealand serving overseas and those recruited overseas serving in NZ, acceptance is the same as for members of the Armed Forces. For those recruited in NZ serving in NZ, only deaths which occur as a result of flying on duty.	NZ AIR AUXILIARY
ORDER OF ST JOHN OF JERUSALEM	WW1	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK MEDICAL
PATRIOTIC FUND BOARD COMMISSIONERS	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	NZ VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
RED CROSS SOCIETY including FRENCH RED CROSS SOCIETY (SECTION SANITAIRE ANGLAISE)	WW1 and WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces; or while serving in convalescent homes restricted for service casualties.	UK/CANADA/ SA/NZ MEDICAL
RED CROSS SOCIETY (AUSTRALIA)	WW1 and WW2	Where death is attributable to service with the forces or occurred while serving overseas with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	AUSTRALIA VOLUNTARY WAR WORK

Formation	Effective Dates	Conditions	List
ROYAL AIR FORCE FERRY COMMAND (renamed ROYAL AIR FORCE TRANSPORT COMMAND from 24/3/1943)	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted, accident occurring or disease contracted, commencing or aggravated while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces. For those recruited and serving in the UK, where death occurred as a result of flying on duty.	UK AIR AUXILIARY
SALVATION ARMY	WW1 and WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK/CANADA/ VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
SALVATION ARMY (AUSTRALIA)	WW1 and WW2	Where death is attributable to service with the forces or occurred while serving overseas with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	AUSTRALIA VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
SCOTTISH CHURCHES HUTS	WW1	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
SOLDIERS' SAILORS' AND AIRMEN'S FAMILIES ASSOCIATION	3 Sep 1939 to 15 August 1945	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
SOUTH AFRICAN COAST GARRISON and ACTIVE CITIZEN FORCE UNITS	WW2	Where death occurred while on duty (including while training).	SA CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE AND CIVIC GUARD	WW2	When conjoined with and serving under the control of the military forces or any portion thereof, which may be mobilized for service within the union in the event of a national emergency.	SA CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
ST. JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE	WW1 and WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces; or while serving in convalescent homes restricted to service casualties.	UK/SA/NZ MEDICAL

Formation	Effective Dates	Conditions	List
SUDAN AUXILIARY DEFENCE FORCE and SUDAN POLICE FORCE	3 Sep 1939 to 1 Jan 1946	Where death occurred as a result of active operations against the enemy.	ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN
TELCOM (Staff of CABLE & WIRELESS LTD)	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
TOC H	WW2	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
UNION DEFENCE FORCE INSTITUTES	WW2	At all times while serving with any full-time military formation or with any unit or formation mobilised in an emergency.	SA CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENT (VAD)	WW1 and WW2	Where death occurred, overseas or at home, while under contract to Commonwealth Military Forces, and death is attributable to their service	UK MEDICAL
WAR CORRESPONDENTS	WW2	Where death occurred while serving as an accredited correspondent, photographer or cameraman to the Commonwealth Military Forces. <i>If the person was also a member of the Armed Services, they are treated as such, not as a war correspondent.</i>	UK/CANADA/ SA/NZ/INDIAN CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
WAR CORRESPONDENTS	WW2	Where death is attributable to service with the forces or occurred while serving overseas with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	AUSTRALIA VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION	WW1 3 Sep 1939 to 15 August 1945	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK/CANADA/ NZ VOLUNTARY WAR WORK
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION (AUSTRALIA)	WW1 and WW2	Where death is attributable to service with the forces or occurred while serving overseas with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	AUSTRALIA VOLUNTARY WAR WORK

Formation	Effective Dates	Conditions	List
YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION	3 Sep 1939 to 15 August 1945	Where death occurred while serving overseas (or from wounds inflicted while serving overseas) with or attached to the Commonwealth Military Forces.	UK VOLUNTARY WAR WORK

In addition, while not officially auxiliary organisations, we may commemorate Admiralty civilians who died in the First World War and members of the British Army Aid Group who died during the Second World War.