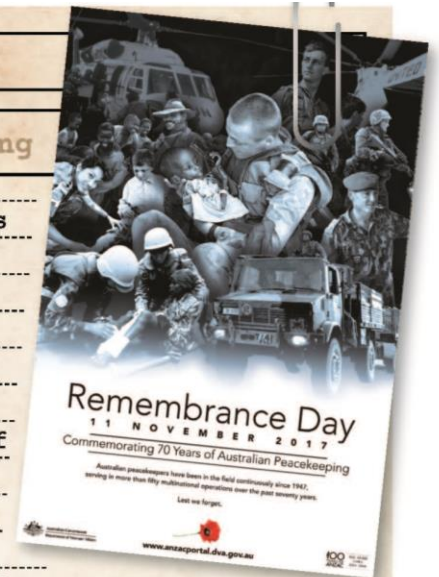


WARTIME SNAPSHOTS

Commemorating 70 years of Australian Peacekeeping

Australia's first peacekeepers deployed in 1947, just two years after the end of the Second World War. Since then, tens of thousands of Australians have served on more than fifty peacekeeping operations around the world. Some deployments have involved small numbers of individuals, while others have been large tri-service operations, sometimes also involving police officers and civilians. This poster, with its collage of images from Australian peacekeeping operations, hints at the range of missions on which Australians have served, from ceasefire monitoring in the Middle East to humanitarian work in northern Iraq. Above all, the poster emphasises the role of peacekeepers in helping individuals and countries overcome the terrible effects of war and violence around the world. Over seven decades, Australian peacekeepers have established a proud reputation for professionalism and reliability, sometimes in the most hazardous of circumstances.



Background

Australia has had peacekeepers in the field every year since the first deployment in 1947. Some deployments, such as that to the Congo in 1960, have involved just a handful of personnel, while others have been large undertakings involving each of the three services and sometimes also civilians and state and federal police. Some missions have been the exclusive undertaking of unarmed state or federal police.

Many peacekeeping missions are conducted under the auspices of the United Nations, but some are run by regional bodies. Every Australian peacekeeper has served as part of an international force and seven Australians have commanded international peacekeeping missions. Most deployments have proceeded with little fanfare, largely unnoticed by the public. Only the largest operations, most of which took place in the 1990s and early 2000s, have received widespread media attention and entered the community's consciousness.

By its nature, peacekeeping takes service personnel, police and civilians to some of the world's most dangerous places. The Australian War Memorial notes that to date sixteen Australian peacekeepers have lost their lives on operations, a mercifully low toll that is not necessarily a measure of the risks that peacekeepers face. That more have not been killed or wounded is a testament to their professionalism.

Peacekeeping operations vary enormously, taking Australians to places as remote as Western Sahara and the Pacific Islands and demanding a wide range of skills, from military expertise to understanding how to organise and run democratic elections. Many of those who have been on peacekeeping deployments take great pride in having served, seeing their time as peacekeepers as a highlight of their military, police or civilian careers. Peacekeeping has confronted thousands of Australians with scenes of enormous suffering and extraordinary violence, but it has also afforded peacekeepers the opportunity to employ their training and skills in the most testing of environments.

<https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/peacekeeping>

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