



## THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

- The Order of Australia is the most important and meaningful awards system in Australia.
- There are four levels: Companion of the Order (AC), Officer of the Order (AO), Member of the Order (AM) and the Medal of the Order (OAM).
- Each year, the Governor-General approves and announces awards to people for their outstanding service and achievement.
- People from all sorts of backgrounds, of all ages and who have done just about everything you can think of have been recognised through the Order of Australia.
- The system relies on nominations. People don't put their hand up to be recognised and they are not selected. They are nominated by peers and considered and recommended to the Governor-General by an independent Council.
- Anyone can nominate someone for an award and anyone – if they've worked hard and made a significant contribution to their community – can be recognised.

### Who receives the awards?

- While some recipients are well known, others are not. In fact, most awards go to members of the community who volunteer or work to help others.
- Outstanding Australians should be celebrated through the Order of Australia regardless of their background.
- Recipients are recognised for their impact – whether at the local level, nationally or internationally. The types of service vary greatly and could include volunteer work in a community, acts of charity and compassion and/or professional achievement.
- The Governor-General wants to increase awareness and understanding of the Order of Australia – particularly amongst groups that have historically being underrepresented.

### How the system works

- Nominations can be made at any time. A nomination needs to include:
  - Examples of the individual's service or achievements
  - Names and contact details of referees who can validate the individual's service
- Upon receipt, additional research is undertaken on each nomination. This includes verifying facts and claims and checking with independent referees.
- Nominations are then assessed by the independent Council for the Order of Australia – which includes members from each state and territory and community representatives.
- This assessment includes what level of award an individual should receive.
- The Governor-General acts on the Council's recommendations and approves awards, which are announced on Australia Day and on the King's Birthday in June.