



## The Hon Darren Chester MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister for Defence Personnel

### MEDIA RELEASE

Saturday, 27 February 2021

### COMMEMORATING AUSTRALIA'S SERVICE IN THE GULF WAR

TOMORROW we commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States-led coalition declaring victory in 'Operation Desert Storm', marking the official end of the First Gulf War, and we honour the sacrifices of those who served to liberate Kuwait.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the international community responded quickly, with the United Nation's Security Council imposing sanctions on Iraq, giving them until 15 January 1991 to withdraw from Kuwait.

"Operation Desert Storm, the combat phase of the Gulf War, began when it became clear that Iraqi forces had no intention of withdrawing and Australia was quick to support this global effort," Mr Chester said.

"Australia's involvement included providing escort and logistics support during combat operations, and continued long after the ceasefire in February of 1991, as Australians remained in the region to assist with humanitarian efforts."

More than 1,800 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel from the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), Australian Army and Royal Australian Air Force deployed to the Gulf from August 1990 to September 1991. The war saw the first RAN women serve in combat-related roles in warlike service as part of the crew on the replenishment ship HMAS *Westralia*.

"While all our service men and women arrived home safely, our coalition partners did lose members of their armed forces, who we remember today," Mr Chester said.

During the Gulf War, Australian ships joined the largest fleet convened since 1945. Our commitment demonstrated that Australia was able to make an effective international contribution to a distant conflict at short notice, with this service continuing to shape Australia's military history.

More information about the Gulf War is available on the Department of Veterans' Affairs' [Anzac Portal](https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/gulf-war) — <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/gulf-war>. The Australian War Memorial also has an [online hub](http://www.awm.gov.au/articles/gulf-war) dedicated to the anniversary — [www.awm.gov.au/articles/gulf-war](http://www.awm.gov.au/articles/gulf-war).

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