



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

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A TIME TO REFLECT ON VICTORY IN EUROPE DAY

Today marks Victory in Europe Day and Australians are encouraged to recognise all those who served in the Second World War, and specifically those who served in Europe and on and around the Mediterranean.

This day honours the service and sacrifice of those who served in the Second World War against Germany and her European allies.

On 3 September 1939, it was announced on every national and commercial radio station that because Britain had declared war on Germany, Australia was also at war.

On 7 May 1945, Germany signed an unconditional surrender on all fronts, which took effect from midnight 8–9 May and ended five years and eight months of hostilities against Germany and her European allies.

Victory in Europe Day was declared on 8 May 1945 and Australians held in European prisoner-of-war camps were liberated. Australian sailors and aircrew began returning home soon afterwards.

Almost one million Australians served during the Second World War.

In the European theatre, some 10,000 died, almost 10,000 more were wounded and some 8,000 became prisoners of war.

While Victory in Europe Day was cause of great celebration in Allied nations, Australians were still focused on the war in the Pacific against the Japanese, which had no end in sight and continued until Japan surrendered on 15 August 1945.

This year on 3 September, Australia will commemorate 80 years since it entered the Second World War.

Further information on the Second World War, and Australia's military history can be found on the [Anzac Portal](#), or on the [Australian War Memorial website](#).

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