

Officials introduce war on terrorism medals

2/27/2004 - **WASHINGTON (AFP)** -- Servicemembers serving at home and abroad in the war on terrorism will now be recognized for that service. Department of Defense officials announced Feb. 26 the final approval of two new medals and their criteria.

Individuals who have deployed for operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom will be awarded the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. The Global War on Terrorism Service Medal will be awarded to those who served in airport security operations in the United States following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks or who supported operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle or Iraqi Freedom.

The front of the Global War in Terrorism Expeditionary Medal features a shield adapted from the Great Seal of the United States. The back includes the eagle, serpent and swords from the medal's front-side design along with the inscription "War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal."

"These medals recognize the significant contributions members of the armed forces bring to bear in combating terrorism in all forms throughout the world -- for both current and future operations," stated a DOD news release.

Individuals can receive both medals if they meet the individual criteria, officials said.

To be awarded the expeditionary medal, individuals must have been deployed outside the United States for OEF or OIF for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days. The time requirement is not needed if the individual engaged in combat, was wounded or killed in action, or was medically evacuated for any reason, officials said.

The area of eligibility encompasses the U.S. Central Command area, (excluding the lower Horn of Africa) Middle East, eastern Turkey, Philippines, Diego Garcia and all air spaces above the land and adjacent water areas, according to the release.

Each day aircrew members fly sorties into designated areas counts as one day of deployment toward the 30- or 60-day requirement.

Individuals engaged in actual combat may be eligible for battle stars on the expeditionary medal. Only a combatant commander can initiate a request for a battle star, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the approving authority for them, the release states.

Servicemembers eligible to receive the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal must have participated in or supported operations on or after Sept. 11, 2001. Service medal eligibility dates run from Sept. 27, 2001, to May 31, 2002, for individuals who served in airport security operations.

The same 30- or 60-day requirements apply to the service medal as to the expeditionary medal.

"Each military department will prescribe appropriate regulations for processing awarding and wearing of the medals and ribbons for their servicemembers, to include application procedures for veterans, retirees and next-of-kin," the DOD release stated.



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