



**The Hon Alan Griffin MP**  
Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Federal Member for Bruce

**A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
FOR  
MERCHANT NAVY DAY  
3 SEPTEMBER 2008**

The service and sacrifice of Australia's merchant mariners during wartime has been formally recognised with the Proclamation by the Governor-General, Major General Michael Jeffrey AC CVO MC (Retd), that 3 September each year will be a day of national observance known as Merchant Navy Day.

From this year, Merchant Navy Day will be an occasion to give merchant mariners the prominence in Australia's wartime history they deserve.

The role of Australian's merchant mariners was vital and often dangerous, evacuating civilians from threatened areas and transporting supplies and personnel to and between areas of conflict.

Thousands of Australian merchant mariners have served during wartime on Australian, Commonwealth and Allied ships. Australian and Commonwealth memorials commemorate 435 Australians who lost their lives serving in the Merchant Navy.

It is important that Australians preserve the memory and history of all our service personnel. Merchant Navy Day will serve to remind current and future generations that we owe an enormous debt to the merchant mariners whose service helped to secure the freedoms we now enjoy.

With the observance of Merchant Navy Day, all merchant mariners should be proud of their contribution to our nation.

As September 3 is also Australian National Flag Day, the flag of the Merchant Navy, the Australian red ensign and the Australian National Flag can be proudly flown on the same day.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Griffin', written over a light blue circular stamp.

Alan Griffin

- 2 SEP 2008