



PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S NATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS SYSTEM THE BRITISH IMPERIAL ORDER

The **British Imperial Honours System** is a hierarchical structure of orders, decorations, and medals conferred by the Sovereign to Recognise Gallantry, Distinguished Service, Public Achievement, and Contributions to Society throughout the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth.

1. ORDERS OF CHIVALRY

An Order of Chivalry is a society or fraternity of honour established by the Sovereign. Appointment to an Order makes the recipient a **member of that Order**, often in one of several grades or classes.

Characteristics:

- Members belong to a corporate body headed by the Sovereign.
- Most Orders have statutes, officers, insignia, and a chapel.
- Higher grades may confer the dignity of **Knight** or **Dame**.
- Members wear insignia such as collars, stars, badges, and sashes.

A. Most Noble Order of the Garter

Classes

- Stranger Knight/Lady Companion – Post Nominal (SKG/LG)
- Knight/Lady Companion – Post Nominal (KG/LG)

Eligibility

Reserved for the Sovereign's personal gift, usually senior members of the Royal Family and distinguished public figures.

B. Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle

Classes

- Knight/Lady of the Thistle – Post Nominal (KT/LT)
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C. Order of Merit

Post Nominal (OM)

Limited to 24 living members.

Recognises:

- Science

- Literature
- Arts
- Military leadership
- Public service

D. Order of the Companions of Honour

Post-nominals: CH

Limited to 65 living members.

E. Most Honourable Order of the Bath

Grade	Post-nominal
Knight/Dame Grand Cross	GCB
Knight/Dame Commander	KCB/DCB
Companion	CB

Usually awarded to senior military officers and senior civil servants.

F. Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George

Grade	Post-nominal
Knight/Dame Grand Cross	GCMG
Knight/Dame Commander	KCMG/DCMG
Companion	CMG

Commonly awarded for:

- Diplomacy
 - Foreign affairs
 - Overseas service
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G. Royal Victorian Order

Awarded personally by the Sovereign.

Grade	Post-nominal
Knight/Dame Grand Cross	GCVO
Knight/Dame Commander	KCVO/DCVO
Commander	CVO
Lieutenant	LVO
Member	MVO

H. Most Excellent Order of the British Empire

Grade	Post-nominal
Knight/Dame Grand Cross	GBE
Knight/Dame Commander	KBE/DBE

Grade	Post-nominal
Commander	CBE
Officer	OBE
Member	MBE

This is the most widely conferred order. Nominees from Papua New Guinea are awarded Honors from this list.

2. DECORATIONS FOR GALLANTRY AND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS

Decorations are honours granted for a **specific act of bravery, leadership, devotion to duty, or distinguished service**. Unlike Orders of Chivalry, they do **not confer membership in an order**.

Characteristics:

- Usually awarded for identifiable actions or exceptional service.
- May be worn with post-nominal letters.
- Often available to both military personnel and civilians.

i. Victoria Cross

Post-nominals: VC

Highest award for bravery in the presence of the enemy.

ii. George Cross

Post-nominals: GC

Highest award for Civilian Gallantry.

a) GALLANTRY SERVICE AWARDS

Decoration	Description
Victoria Cross (VC)	Highest award for bravery in the presence of the enemy
George Cross (GC)	Highest award for civilian gallantry or military gallantry not in the presence of the enemy
George Medal (GM)	Recognises acts of great bravery
King's Gallantry Medal (KGM)	Awarded for exemplary acts of courage

b) DISTINGUISHED SERVICE DECORATIONS

Decoration	Description
Distinguished Service Order (DSO)	Leadership during active military operations
Military Cross (MC)	Exemplary gallantry during land operations
Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)	Gallantry during aerial operations

Decoration	Description
Air Force Cross (AFC)	Distinguished flying service not in active combat

Examples include:

- Distinguished Service Order (DSO)
- Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)
- Air Force Cross (AFC)
- Military Cross (MC)
- Distinguished Conduct Medal (historical)

3. LONG SERVICE AND CAMPAIGN MEDALS

Medals

(Campaign, Jubilee, Coronation and Long Service Awards)

Medals commemorate participation, longevity of service, or attendance at significant national events.

Characteristics:

- Usually do not confer post-nominal letters.
- Often awarded automatically upon meeting eligibility criteria.
- Recipients are not members of an Order.

Types of Medals

a) Campaign Medals

Recognise participation in military campaigns or operations.

Examples:

- General Service Medal
- Operational Service Medal

b) Long Service Medals

Recognise lengthy and exemplary service.

Examples:

- Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal
- Army Long Service and Good Conduct Medal
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c) Jubilee Medals

Mark anniversaries of a Sovereign's accession.

Examples:

- Golden Jubilee of Elizabeth II Medal
- Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II Medal

d) Coronation Medals

Awarded to selected participants involved in a coronation.

Examples:

- Coronation of Charles III and Camilla Medal
- Coronation of Elizabeth II Medal

ORDER OF PRECEDENCE OF MAJOR IMPERIAL HONOURS

Rank	Order	Highest Grade
1	Order of the Garter	KG/LG
2	Order of the Thistle	KT/LT
3	Order of Merit	OM
4	Order of the Companions of Honour	CH
5	Order of the Bath	GCB
6	Order of St Michael and St George	GCMG
7	Royal Victorian Order	GCVO
8	Order of the British Empire	GBE

PRINCIPAL BRITISH ORDERS OF CHIVALRY

Order	Purpose	Highest Grade
Most Noble Order of the Garter	The highest order of English chivalry, bestowed solely at the Sovereign's pleasure	KG/LG
Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle	The highest order of chivalry in Scotland	KT/LT
Most Honourable Order of the Bath	Recognises senior military officers and high-ranking civil servants	GCB
Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George	Recognises diplomats and overseas service	GCMG
Royal Victorian Order	Personal service to the Sovereign and Royal Family	GCVO
Most Excellent Order of the British Empire	Public service, arts, science, business, and community achievement	GBE

4. DYNASTIC HONOURS

(Awarded Personally by the Sovereign)

Dynastic Honours are bestowed by the Sovereign **in his or her personal capacity**, independently of ministerial advice.

Characteristics:

- They are the Sovereign's personal gift.
- The Prime Minister does not recommend recipients.
- Often reward personal loyalty or direct service to the Crown.

Principal Dynastic Honours

Honour	Description
Royal Victorian Order	Service personally rendered to the Sovereign
Royal Victorian Chain	Rare distinction for heads of state and eminent persons
Order of Merit	Exceptional achievement in arts, science, literature, or public service
Most Noble Order of the Garter	Appointments made solely by the Sovereign
Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle	Also bestowed at the Sovereign's discretion

5. STATE HONOURS - (AWARDED ON MINISTERIAL ADVICE)

State Honours are conferred by the Sovereign acting on the advice of the Government, usually through the Prime Minister and the Honours Secretariat. This classification is particularly useful as it provides a clear constitutional distinction between honours granted as a personal prerogative of the Sovereign and honours granted as acts of State.

Characteristics:

- Nominations are submitted by the public, departments, or honours committees.
- Recommendations are scrutinised by independent honours committees.
- The Sovereign formally approves appointments.

Examples of State Honours

Honour	Typical Recipients
Most Excellent Order of the British Empire	Community leaders, professionals, volunteers
Most Honourable Order of the Bath	Senior civil servants and military officers
Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George	Diplomats and international officials
King's Police Medal	Police officers for distinguished service
King's Fire Service Medal	Fire and rescue personnel

Summary Table for State Honours

Category	Nature of Honour	Membership	Post-nominals	Example
Orders of Chivalry	Membership in an Order	Yes	Usually	GCMG, GBE
Decorations	Bravery or distinguished service	No	Usually	VC, GC, DSO

Category	Nature of Honour	Membership	Post-nominals	Example
Medals	Service, campaigns, commemorations	No	Rarely	Jubilee Medal
Dynastic Honours	Sovereign's personal gift	Sometimes	Usually	GCVO, OM
State Honours	Awarded on ministerial advice	Usually	Usually	OBE, CMG

This creates a clear honours progression system that Provincial Committees and the National Honours Secretariat can use consistently when assessing nominations.