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Australian National Flag Day & Merchant Navy Day

3 September 2025

On this day, 3 September, we commemorate a defining moment in our national story. On this date in 1901 the original version of the **Australian National Flag** was flown, after being selected alongside the **Australian Red Ensign** in a competition held following federation.

Both were formally approved for use by King Edward VII on 20th Feb 1903, marking the first occasion our young nation sailed forward under its own recognised symbols.

Each year, **Australian National Flag Day** reminds us of the enduring values of unity, resilience, and service that the flag represents. On the same date, we mark **Merchant Navy Day**, paying solemn tribute to the men and women of the Australian Merchant Navy who served under the Red Ensign during times of war and peace.

In the darkest days of the two World Wars, these civilian mariners carried vital supplies, equipment, and personnel across dangerous seas. Their courage came at great cost, and many did not return. Their sacrifice has secured the Merchant Navy's rightful place alongside the Navy, Army, and Air Force as our nation's "fourth service."

Today, as the Australian flag flies proudly across the land and the Red Ensign is honoured at sea, we remember those who served and sacrificed under both. Together, these flags symbolise the freedom, security, and shared destiny of all Australians.

Lest we forget.



Sean Barrett
Chairman