



Australian Government  
Department of the  
Prime Minister and Cabinet

# COMMONWEALTH Coat of Arms

The Commonwealth Coat of Arms is the formal symbol of the Commonwealth of Australia. It signifies Commonwealth authority and ownership. It is used by Australian Government departments, agencies, authorities, the Parliament and Commonwealth courts and tribunals.

## HISTORY

### First Commonwealth Coat of Arms

King Edward VII first officially granted a Coat of Arms to the Commonwealth of Australia in a Royal Warrant on 7 May 1908. The first Coat of Arms was a simple shield of white and blue. On the shield was the cross of St George, with five six-pointed white stars along the cross and six small shields (escutcheons) around the edge of the shield.

The shield was supported by a kangaroo and an emu standing on a grassy mound. Above the shield was the crest containing the seven-pointed gold star of Federation, on a wreath of white and blue. The motto 'Advance Australia' was written at the base of the grassy mound.

### Current Commonwealth Coat of Arms

King George V granted the second Commonwealth Coat of Arms in a Royal Warrant on 19 September 1912. This includes a 'blazon', or official description, of the Commonwealth Coat of Arms. This 1912 Coat of Arms is the official Commonwealth Coat of Arms.

The second Commonwealth Coat of Arms was designed because the first Coat of Arms didn't include any reference to the states or territories.



1908 Coat of Arms



Left: Coin - Florin (2 Shillings), Australia, 1914. Artist: Sir Bertram Mackennal. Source: Museums Victoria



Right: A close up of the shield on the 1912 Commonwealth Coat of Arms.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH COAT OF ARMS

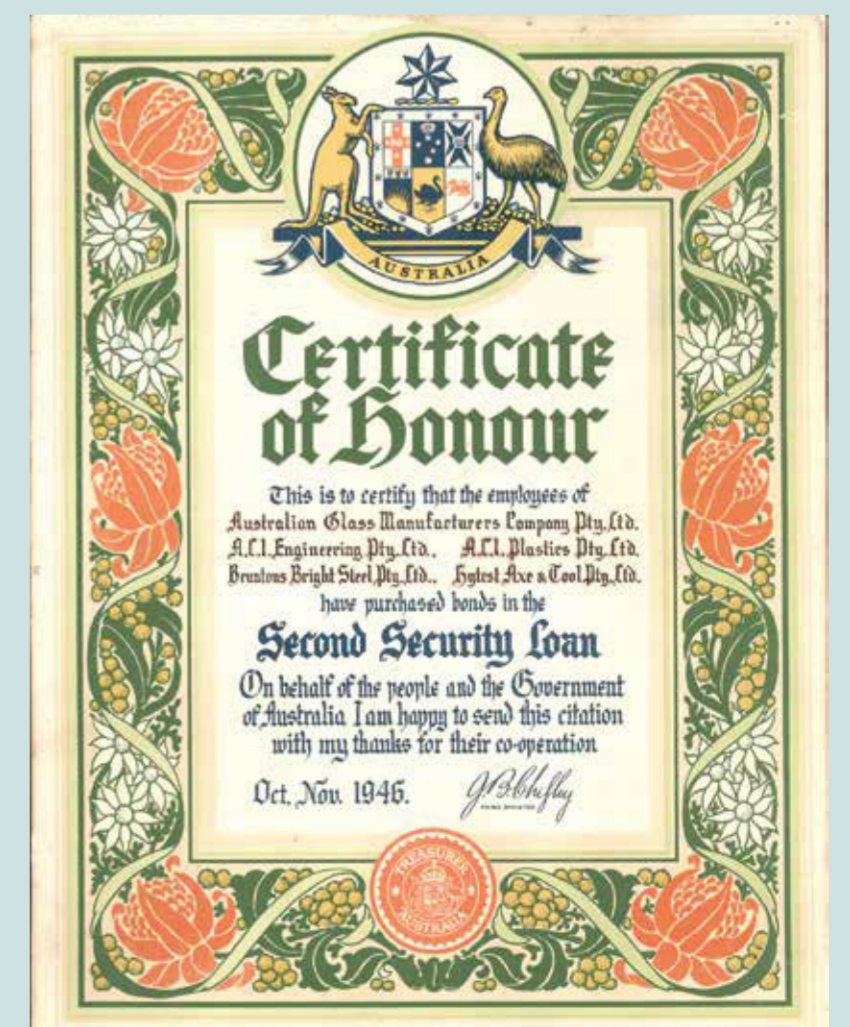
The centre of the shield includes symbols of Australia's six states. The border of the shield symbolises federation.

The shield is held up by a kangaroo and emu, native Australian animals. These animals were chosen to symbolise a nation moving forward, based on the fact that neither animal can move backwards easily.

A seven-point gold Commonwealth Star sits above the shield. Six of the star's points represent the Australian states while the seventh point represents the territories.

A wreath of gold and blue sits under the Commonwealth Star. Gold and blue are the Commonwealth Coat of Arms' 'livery' or identifying colours.

Stylised flowering wattle, frames the shield and the kangaroo and emu and at the bottom of the shield you will see a scroll containing the word 'Australia'.



Honour Certificate - Second Security Loan, Australia, Oct-Nov 1946. Source: Museums Victoria

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