

## ARCTIC STAR AND BOMBER COMMAND CLASP

It has been announced today, 26 February 2013, by the Minister of State for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans Mark Francois that all the details have been confirmed for the Arctic Star and the Bomber Command Clasp and the application process has now opened. This follows Sir John Holmes' independent medal review and the announcement by the Prime Minister, on 19 December 2012, that these awards should be made in recognition of the great bravery of those who contributed to two very significant campaigns of World War Two.

Her Majesty The Queen has approved designs for the new awards on the basis of recommendations made by the Royal Mint Advisory Committee. The design for the Arctic Star is based on the other World War Two Stars and the Bomber Command Clasp, to be worn on the ribbon of the 1939 to 1945 Star, follows the design of the Battle of Britain Clasp.

Production of the new Arctic Star and Bomber Command clasp will commence this week and could result in up to a quarter of a million veterans, and the families of those who have sadly died, applying to receive the new awards in recognition of their unique contribution protecting Britain during World War II. Priority in issuing the awards will be given to veterans and widows who could receive their awards in a few weeks. Other next of kin may also apply now but will have to wait slightly longer to receive their award.

### **Minister of State for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans Mark Francois said:**

*“All those who served our country in Bomber Command and on the Arctic Convoys deserve nothing but the utmost respect and admiration from us. That’s why I am delighted that these special individuals will in the next few weeks begin to receive the Bomber Command clasp and Arctic Star that they have so long deserved.*

*“I am also pleased to announce that the families of those no longer alive will also be able to apply for these awards in recognition of their loved one’s bravery.”*

The qualifying period for the Arctic Star is “service of any length” recognising the particular severity of the conditions experienced by those who served in the Arctic. Whilst the primary intent is to recognise those who served on the Arctic Convoys, eligibility is extended to include all who served north of the Arctic Circle in World War Two. Those eligible will include members of all three Services as well of course as the Merchant Navy who crewed the ships taking the vital supplies to Russia.

The criteria for the Bomber Command Clasp requires prior qualification for the 1939 to 1945 Star, to which it will be affixed, with the additional requirement to have flown at least one operational sortie with a Bomber Command operational unit. A clasp was deemed more appropriate, by Sir John, in the case of Bomber Command as aircrew had already received either the Aircrew Europe Star or the



France and Germany Star and another medal would have constituted “double-medalling” for the same service.

Further details of the criteria can be found at the [eligibility criteria](#) link on this page.

Eligible veterans and next of kin are now encouraged to apply using the relevant **application forms**, which can be found on this page, or by telephoning the MOD Medal Office on **08457 800 900** (a local rate number) for further details. An application must be made as it is simply not possible for the MOD to contact veterans or families of all of those who may be eligible going back almost 70 years.



*Bomber Command Clasp*