AWARD DEVICES – VALOR “V”, COMBAT “C” AND REMOTE “R” QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Q. Why was an “R” device created?**

A. DoD established the device to ensure service members will receive appropriate recognition for qualifying exceptional achievements that have a direct and immediate impact on the outcome of a combat engagement or other military engagement, albeit from a location where the Service member was neither personally exposed to hostile action, nor at significant risk of exposure to hostile action.

**Q. How will the Air Force recognize combat participation?**

A. Each Military Service will continue to maintain separate authority to recognize combat participation through the use of the Combat Action Medal, Combat Action Ribbon or Combat Action Badge based on Services cultures and historical legacies.

**Q. Do all RPA operators qualify for the “R” device?**

A. The “R” device is only authorized on individual military decorations awarded for specific meritorious achievement. The “R” device is not authorized on medals awarded for sustained meritorious service (e.g., end-of-tour or retirement decorations).

**Q. Who is eligible for the “R” device?**

A. The “R” device may be awarded to Airmen who, during the period of the act, served in the remotely piloted aircraft; cyber; space; or Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance functional areas.

**Q. Can I wear the “V”, “C”, and “R” devices together?**

A. Yes, they will be worn in order of precedence (“V”, “C”, and then “R”) from the wearer’s left of the OLCs.

**Q. What is meant by “direct impact”?**

A. Direct impact is defined as “hands-on” employment of a weapon system having direct, immediate and on-site effects to the outcome of an engagement or other operation having an effect on a designated target.

**Q. Is the “R” device awarded retroactively?**

A. Yes. The “R” device may be awarded retroactive to January 7, 2016, the day the Secretary of Defense established the device.

**Q. Why did we need a Combat “C” device when we already have a Valor “V” device?**

A. It is important that service members receive appropriate recognition for qualifying meritorious service or achievement performed under combat conditions. Although such performance does not rise to the level of valor, it deserves to be distinguished from performance in peacetime or other situation where Service members are not directly exposed to hostile action or the significant risk of hostile action.

In order to make personal recognition of meritorious service in combat appropriately distinctive and to ensure the heritage and legacy of combat medals, the Department of Defense established a common definition of “Meritorious Service Under Combat Conditions” to determine eligibility for specific combat awards. The definition will encompass meritorious service while personally exposed to hostile action or while under significant risk of hostile action.

The standardization of the “V” device as a valor-only device to ensure unambiguous and distinctive recognition of preeminent acts of combat heroism. The “V” device will be used by all Services to only denote valor on medals that have multiple uses to ensure that valor is preeminently recognized.

A new Combat “C” device was created to distinctly recognize those Service members performing meritoriously under the most arduous combat conditions. To further empathize the value placed on meritorious service under combat conditions, the “C” device may be affixed to multi-purpose performance awards earned while serving under combat condition.

**Q. Where can the V, C, and R devices be worn?**

A. The “V” device will be limited to the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal and the military Department-specific (Army, Navy and Air Force) Commendation Medals.

The “C” device may be worn on the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, military Department-specific (Army, Navy and Air Force) Commendation Medals, Joint Service Achievement Medal, and military Department-specific (Army, Navy and Air Force) Achievement Medals.

The “R” device can be worn on the Defense Superior Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, military Department-specific (Army, Navy and Air Force) Commendation Medals, Joint Service Achievement Medal, and the military Department-specific (Army, Navy and Air Force) Achievement Medals.

For further information on the wear of the devices, please reference Air Force Instruction 36-2903.

**Q. Can Air Force civilians earn the “R” device?**

A. No, the “R” device is for uniformed personnel and veterans only.

**Q.** **When is the mandatory wear date, and when is this device available for purchase in stores?**

A. The "C" and "R" devices are currently under development and the projected date of availability through the Defense Supply System is April 2017. This should not delay processing of requests for award of the “C” or “R” device.

**Q. How will an Airman who believes she/he should be awarded a device begin the process of getting the award updated in their records?**

A. If the Airman is currently serving, they must request the endorsement of their group commander/equivalent (colonel or civilian leader equivalent) to have their records be updated by their servicing Force Support Squadron. The Airman must provide proof of eligibility (e.g. performance reports, decoration citation/orders, Letters of Evaluation).

**Q. Will the base level personnel office awards and decorations section provide the initial ribbon and “C” or “R” device to qualified Air Force active duty personnel?**

A. Yes.

**Q. How does the “C” device differ from the Air Force Combat Action Medal?**

A. To receive the "C" device an Airman must be **personally at risk** of grave danger while to be awarded the AFCAM an Airman may or may not have been personally at risk of grave danger. Therefore, an Airman is eligible to receive the AFCAM and the "C" device for the same act/achievement just as an Airman may receive a BS, AFCM or AFAM and may also receive the AFCAM.

**Q. May an Airman receive the AF Combat Action Medal and the “C” or “V” device?**

A. If an Airman meets the established criteria for the AFCAM, he/she may be nominated/awarded for other types of performance recognition (decorations) normally associated with combat and may be nominated/awarded the “C” or “V” device if warranted.

**Q. What is the process for veterans (retired or separated)?**

A. Contact:

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| **Active Duty Veterans**Headquarters Air Force Personnel CenterAFPC/DP1SSP550 C Street West, Suite 12Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4714 | **Reserve and Guard Veterans**Air Reserve Personnel CenterHQ ARPC/DPTSAE18420 E Silver Creek Ave Bldg 390 MS 68 Buckley AFB, CO 80011 |

**7. POINTS OF CONTACT.**

For more information on Air Force recognition programs, visit myPers, the Air Force Personnel Services website, at <https://myPers.af.mil>. Any questions should be directed to the Total Force Service Center at 1-800- 525-0102 or (210) 565-0102. MAJCOMs may contact the Air Force Personnel Center Recognition Programs Section (AFPC/DP2SPE) 550 C Street West Suite 12, JBSA-Randolph, TX 78150-4714 for any questions.