

TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR  
**SOUTHWEST  
ASIA**  
SERVICE MEDAL

Persian Gulf War veterans should be proud of their service, which earned them the Southwest Asia Service Medal (SWASM). The medal recognizes one of the swiftest victories in American military history. Executive Order No. 12754 established the medal on March 12, 1991. It was awarded to all U.S. troops who served in Southwest Asia—or its contiguous waters or airspace—from Aug. 2, 1990, to Nov. 30, 1995 (covers pre- and post-war operations).

For the medal's purpose, the land area of Southwest Asia included Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar and United Arab Emirates. "Contiguous waters" was defined as the Persian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden and the portion of the Arabian Sea that lay north of 10 degrees North latitude and west of 68 degrees East longitude. GIs who served under U.S. Central Command in Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria and Jordan—or their territorial waters or airspace—between Jan. 17 and April 11, 1991, also received the medal.



As long as service members were permanently assigned to ground, shore, sea or aerial units located in the areas specified, they are eligible for the SWASM. For individuals on temporary duty, they must have served 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days. However, if they participated in actual combat—or died during their service there—these time limitations could have been waived. Perhaps as many as 670,000 Gulf vets qualified for the SWASM.

VFW has been a relentless supporter of medical benefits for vets suffering from Gulf War illnesses. Today, Persian Gulf War veterans are assuming their rightful leadership roles within the organization.

**One Bronze Service Star device was awarded for participation in each designated campaign of the Gulf War:**

- Defense of Saudi Arabia, Aug. 2, 1990 - Jan. 16, 1991.
- Liberation and Defense of Kuwait, Jan. 17, 1991 - April 1, 1991.
- Cease-Fire Campaign, April 12, 1991 - Nov. 30, 1995.

*Participants in post-Dec. 1, 1995 operations in the region were awarded the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.*



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