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## **The Statutes of The Distinguished Service Order**

**Victoria R. & I.**

VICTORIA, by the GRACE of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India, to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting:

WHEREAS We have taken into Our Royal consideration that the means of adequately rewarding the distinguished services of Officers in Our Naval and Military Services who have been honourably mentioned in Despatches are limited; now for the purpose of attaining an end so desirable as that of rewarding individual instances of meritorious or distinguished services in war, We have instituted and created and by these presents, for Us, Our Heirs and Successors, do institute and create a new Naval and Military Order of Distinction- to be designated as hereinafter described - which We are desirous should be highly prized by the Officers of Our Naval and Military Services, and We are graciously pleased to make, ordain, and establish the following rules and ordinances for the government of the same, which shall henceforth be inviolably observed and kept;

### **Firstly.**

It is ordained, that this Order shall henceforth be styled and designated the "Distinguished Service Order".

### **Secondly.**

It is ordained that the Order shall consist of the Sovereign, and of such Members or Companions as We, Our Heirs or Successors, shall appoint.

### **Thirdly.**

It is ordained that We, Our Heirs and Successors, Kings and Queens Regnant of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Emperors and Empresses of India, are and forever shall be Sovereigns of this Order.

### **Fourthly.**

It is ordained that no person shall be eligible for this distinction who doth not actually hold, at the time of his nomination, a Commission in Our Navy, in Our Land Forces, or Marines, or Our Indian or Colonial Naval or Military Forces, or a Commission in one of the Departments of our

Navy or Army, the holder of which is entitled to Honorary or relative Navy or Army rank, nor shall any person be nominated unless his services shall have been marked by the especial mention of his name, by the Admiral or Senior Naval Officer Commanding a Squadron or detached Naval Force, or by the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in the Field, in Despatches for meritorious or distinguished service in the Field, or before the enemy.

**Fifthly.**

It is ordained that Foreign Officers who have been associated in Naval and Military operations with Our Forces shall be eligible to be Honorary Members of this Order.

**Sixthly.**

It is ordained that when We, Our Heirs and Successors, shall be pleaded to Appoint any person to be a Member of this Order, such appointment shall be made by Warrant under our Sign Manual, and countersigned by one of Our Principal Secretaries of State.

**Seventhly.**

It is ordained that the decoration of the Order shall be and shall be worn as is hereinafter set forth

**Eighthly.**

It is ordained that an Officer, shall be appointed to this Order, that is to say, a Secretary and Registrar.

**Ninthly.**

It is ordained that the Secretary and Registrar of this Order shall be appointed by Us, Our Heirs and Successors, and shall have the custody of the archives of the Order. He shall attend to the services of the Order and shall execute such directions as he may receive from Our Principal Secretary of State for War.

**Tenthly.**

It is ordained that this Order shall rank next to and immediately after Our Order of the Indian Empire, and that the Companions thereof shall in all places and assemblies whatsoever have place and precedence next to and immediately after the Companions of Our said Order of the Indian Empire, and shall rank among themselves according to the dates of their respective nominations.

**Eleventhly.**

It is ordained that the Badge of the Order, which shall consist of a gold cross, enameled white, edged gold, having on one side thereof in the centre, within a wreath of laurel enameled green, the Imperial Crown in gold, upon a red enameled ground, and on the reverse, within a similar wreath and on a similar red ground, Our Imperial and Royal cypher V.R., shall be suspended from the left breast by a red riband edged blue, of one inch in width.

**Twelfthly.**

It is ordained that the names of those upon whom We may be pleased to confer the decoration shall be published in the London Gazette, and a registry thereof kept in the office of Our Secretary of State for War.

**Lastly.**

We reserve to Ourselves, Our Heirs, and Successors, full power of annulling, altering, abrogating, augmenting, interpreting or dispensing with these Regulations or any part thereof by a notification under the Sign Manual of the Sovereign of the Order.

Given at Our Court at *Balmoral* this sixth day of September in the fiftieth year of Our Reign,  
and in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six.

By Her Majesty's Command,

W.H. Smith.