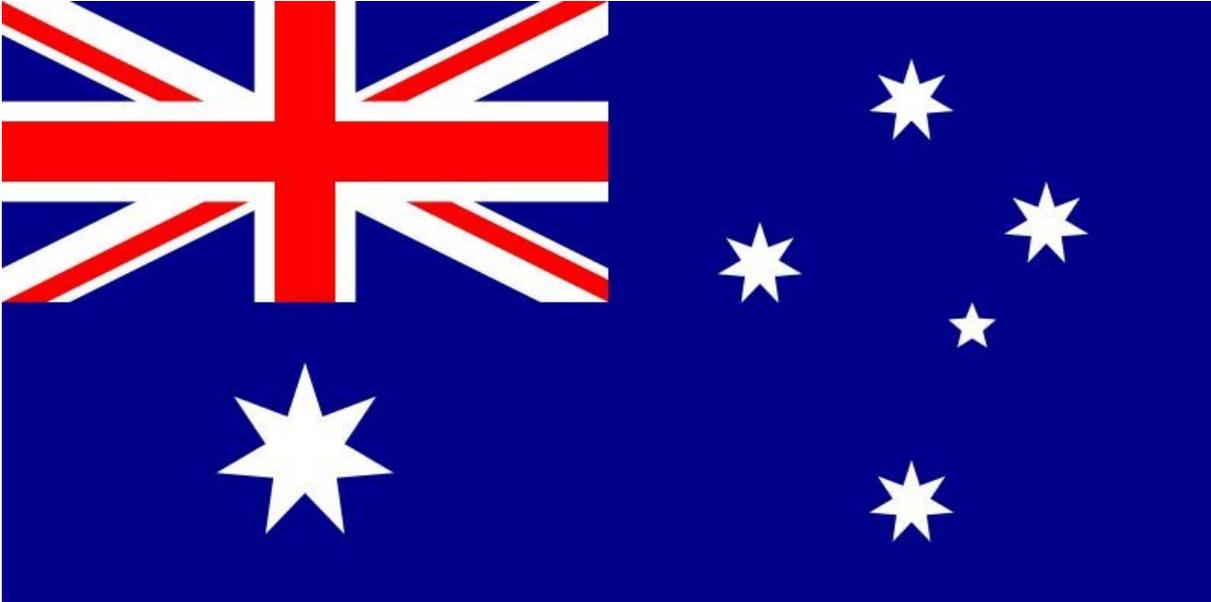


The Australian National Flag



There is much misinformation propagated about the Australian flag. It is not a symbol of British imperialism but of Australian nationalism.

Following the federation of the six Australian colonies into one nation, a competition was held to design an Australian flag. It brought forward an amazing 32,823 entries from around the world. The Australian judges selected the current design and the new, unique, Australian flag was flown for the first time from the temporary Parliament House, at the Exhibition Building in Melbourne in September 1901

The Flag has been designed on a vivid blue background and comprises three components:

The Union Jack, which represents the Patron Saints of the United Kingdom St George of England, St. Andrew of Scotland and St. Patrick of Ireland.* The crosses of these Saints have been incorporated into the Australian Flag, not to symbolise domination from Britain, but to honour the early settlers who sweated and laboured to create modern Australia.

The white Commonwealth Star's seven points represent the six States with one point representing the two Territories and the Southern Cross represents all those, including the original inhabitants, the aborigines, who live in this great country, under the constellation.

Each September, Australia celebrates National Flag Day which commemorates the first time the flag was flown on September the 3rd 1901.

The flag has flown in two world wars and in other conflicts such as the Vietnam war and Afghanistan. Many armed forces personnel as well as civilians have died in overseas wars whilst fighting under the flag and so it has huge significance for all the armed forces and for all of us who know our history. It is a flag with significance and symbolism. The fact that it is beautifully designed and recognised the world over is almost incidental to its meaning.

Many republicans support the flag and say nothing will change if we become a republic. However, given that so many who support a republic are anti- British, it stands to reason that the first thing that will change should we become a republic, will be the flag.

* St. David of Wales is not included in the Union Jack.

QUESTIONS:

How was the design of the Australian Flag chosen?

When was it first flown?

What does the Union Jack represent?

What does the Commonwealth Star represent?

If Australia becomes of republic, do you think the Australian Flag will remain unchanged?