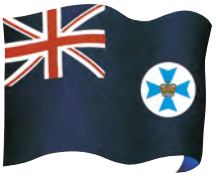
Flying the flag

The State of Queensland flag

DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND

Queensland Government

The state flag



The State of Queensland flag is the British Blue Ensign, consisting of a dark blue field with the Union flag occupying the upper hoist, differenced in the fly by the state badge. The badge comprises an azure Maltese Cross with a Royal Crown superimposed, all on a white (in lieu of silver) background.

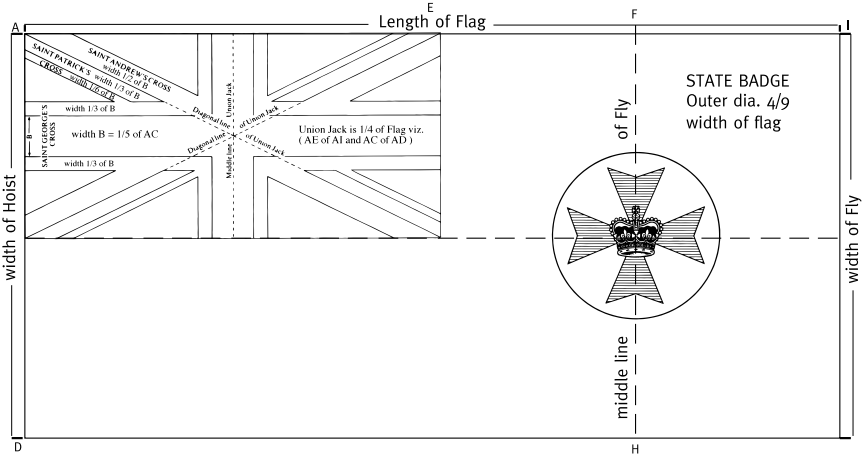
The state badge

The badge of the state evolved from the need for a seal or badge to be included in the design of the state flag. The badge is officially described as “On a Roundel Argent a Maltese Cross Azure surmounted with a Royal Crown”.

Flag colours and dimensions

The colours of the State of Queensland flag are PMS 280 blue and PMS 185 red. The colour of the Maltese Cross on the State of Queensland badge is PMS 298 light blue on a white background.

The dimensions of the State of Queensland flag are shown below.



History of the State of Queensland flag

In 1865, the Governor of Queensland was told by the Admiralty in London that the colony's vessels of war should fly the Blue Ensign imposed with the colony's badge on the stern, and a blue pennant at the masthead. Other vessels in the colony's service were to fly the same flag but not the pennant. The Governor was requested to provide the Colonial Office with a drawn badge. It is unknown if the request was acted on.

Request

Subsequently, on 14 September 1869 Governor Blackall was advised by the Secretary of State for Colonies, Earl Granville, that Her Majesty-in-Council had authorised Governors of British Colonies to fly the Union Jack with the Arms or badge of the Colony emblazoned in the centre. The Governor was requested to submit a sketch of the badge proposed for adoption and this was forwarded to the Secretary of State on 22 March 1870.

Drawings

On 23 August 1875 the Secretary of State for Colonies forwarded to Governor Cairns copies of drawings of the badges of certain colonies which the Admiralty proposed to insert in the Admiralty Flag Book. The Governor was requested to certify to the correctness of the badge of the Queensland Colony. The design was the head of Queen Victoria, facing to the right, on a dark blue background, surrounded by a white circle bearing the word *Queensland* in the upper section.

However, the Queensland Government considered that it would be too difficult to reproduce a fair representation of the head of the Queen accurately on a flag. The then Acting Colonial Secretary submitted four alternative designs to the Governor, including one incorporating an azure Maltese Cross with a Crown superimposed, which was recommended.

Design

This design was subsequently sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who replied on 14 July 1876 that the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty had approved that the Maltese Cross, with the Crown superimposed, be the "future badge of the Colony for insertion in the Union flag for use by the Governor and on the blue Ensign for use by Government Vessels".

Gazettal

Notification of adoption, together with an illustration and blazon, was published in the Queensland Government Gazette on 29 November 1876.

Precedence for the flying of flags

This section outlines the general procedures for the flying of flags in Queensland. The list is by no means exhaustive. Enquiries about the flying of flags in ways not covered in this document should be directed to Protocol and International Engagement, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

When flying the flags on, or in front of, a:

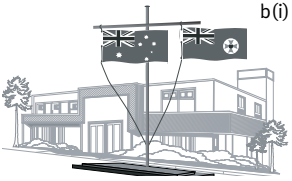
a. building with one flag pole

(i) Queensland Government buildings throughout the state —the State of Queensland flag is to be flown.

(ii) Statutory authorities throughout the state—it is recommended that the State of Queensland flag be flown.

(iii) State government schools—the Australian National flag is to be flown.

b(i)



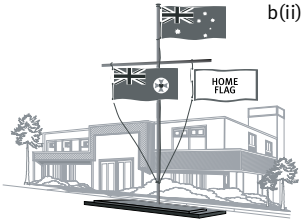
b. building with one flag pole with cross arms

(i) The Australian National flag is flown from the halyard on the left of the observer facing the building. The State of Queensland flag is flown from the right halyard.

or

(ii) The Australian National flag is flown from the masthead. The State of Queensland flag is flown from the halyard on the left of the observer facing the building. A house flag or club pennant is flown from the right halyard.

b(ii)

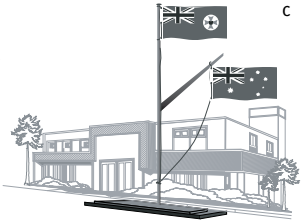


c. building with one flag pole with a gaff

If the flag pole is fitted with a gaff, the Australian National flag should be flown from the peak of the gaff, which is the position of honour, even though the Australian National flag is then lower than the flag flying from the top of the flag pole.

This international tradition originates from the days of sailing ships, when it was necessary to keep the flag free of the ship's rigging.

c



d. building with two flag poles of equal height

The Australian National flag is flown on the flag pole on the left of the observer facing the building.

The State of Queensland flag of the same size is flown on the flag pole on the observer's right.

d

e. building with three flag poles of equal height

When flying another national flag—

(i) The Australian National flag is flown on the flag pole on the left of the observer facing the building. The appropriate national flag is flown on the centre flag pole. The State of Queensland flag is flown on the flag pole on the observer's right.

e(i)

When flying a house flag or club pennant—

(ii) The Australian National flag is flown on the flag pole on the left of the observer facing the building. The State of Queensland flag is flown on the centre flag pole. A house flag or club pennant is flown on the flag pole on the observer's right.

e(ii)

f. building with three flag poles when the centre pole is higher than the other two

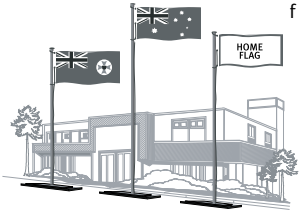
The Australian National flag is flown in the centre.

The State of Queensland flag is flown on the flag pole on the left of the observer facing the building.

A house flag or club pennant is flown on the flag pole on the observer's right. The house flag or club pennant need not be the same size or design shape.

The Australian National flag or the State of Queensland flag or club pennant should not be flown on the same halyard.

f



Note: if only the Australian National flag and the State of Queensland flag are available they should be flown on the two outside poles (omitting the higher centre pole). If two national flags are to be flown, they should be flown on the two outside poles (omitting the higher centre pole). No national flag should be flown higher than another.

g. when displayed against a wall

The top left quarter of the flag is to be placed uppermost on the observer's left, as viewed from the front.

g

h. when displayed from cross-staffs

The Australian National flag should be on the left of the observer facing the flags. The staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag. The State of Queensland flag is flown on the other staff.

h

i. when displayed on free standing flag poles on a stage or in a room

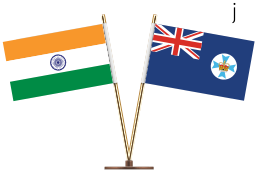
The Australian National flag should be on the left of the observer facing the flags. The Queensland flag should be flown to the right of the Australian flag. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags should be flown to the right of the Queensland flag from the point of view of the observer.

i

j. when displayed on a desk stand

When the State of Queensland flag is displayed on a desk stand with a flag of another country, the standard order of precedence applies whereby a national flag should be on the left of the observer, and the State of Queensland flag is to be displayed on the right of the observer facing the flags.

j



Special occasions on which the flags should be flown

The following days are special days on which flags should be flown:

1 January	**Anniversary of the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia**
26 January	**Australia Day**
13 February	**Anniversary of the Apology to Members of the Stolen Generation**
March	**Commonwealth Day** – 2nd Monday in March
25 April	**Anzac Day** – Flags are flown at half-mast until noon then at the peak until the usual time for closure of business.
27 May to 3 June	**National Reconciliation Week** – During Reconciliation Week each year, the Aboriginal flag or the Torres Strait Islander flag may replace the Queensland State flag where only two flagpoles are available. They should not replace the National Flag which will continue to be flown on the first flagpole in the position of precedence.
6 June	**Queensland Day**
July	**NAIDOC Week** – 1st Sunday in July until the following Sunday. During this nominated week the Aboriginal flag or the Torres Strait Islander flag may replace the Queensland State flag where only two flagpoles are available. They should not replace the National Flag which will continue to be flown on the first flagpole in the position of precedence.
3 September	**Australian National Flag Day**
October	**King's Birthday** – 1st Monday in October
24 October	**United Nations Day** – On this day, the United Nations flag should be flown where possible. The Australian National Flag should continue to be flown in the position of precedence with the United Nations flag on the second flagpole. The United Nations flag should not replace the National Flag or Queensland State flag.
11 November	**Remembrance Day** (flags at top of mast until 10.30am; at half-mast from 10.30am until 11.02am; at top of mast from 11.02am until sunset)

Half-masting of flags

Flags are flown at the half-mast position as a sign of mourning.

The flag is brought to the half-mast position by first raising it to the top of the mast and then immediately lowering it slowly to the half-mast position. The flag should be raised again to the top of mast before being lowered for the day. The position of the flag when flying at half-mast will depend on the size of the flag and the length of the flag pole.

It is essential that it be lowered at least to a position recognisably "half-mast", so as to avoid the appearance of a flag that has accidentally fallen away from the top of the mast owing to a loose halyard. A satisfactory position for half-masting would normally be when the top of the flag is one-third of the distance down from the top of the mast.

In regard to the half-masting of flags on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, please refer to page 6.

Points to remember

(a) National flags of sovereign nations should be flown on separate staffs and at the same height. If possible, all flags should be the same size. The Australian National flag should be hoisted first and lowered last.

(b) Flags should always be flown or displayed in a dignified manner, and flags should never be used for the unveiling of a monument or plaque, or used as a table or seat cover, or let fall to or lie upon the ground.

(c) Flags should be raised no earlier than first light and should be lowered no later than dusk.

(d) The flag may only be flown at night when properly illuminated.

(e) Two flags should not be flown from the same flagpole.

(f) It is undesirable that a tattered or dilapidated flag be flown or displayed. When a flag is no longer suitable for use it should be destroyed privately.

(g) Flags should not be flown upside down, even as a signal of distress.

For additional copies of this booklet or advice on the State of Queensland flag, email **protocol@premiers.qld.gov.au**, telephone **(07) 3003 9253** or visit **www.qld.gov.au**

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