

Royal Australian Mint

Product Development Style guide

Context

This document has been prepared to ensure consistent language, inclusions and tone in documents prepared by the Product Development team of the Royal Australian Mint. The Australian Government's *Style Manual* should be consulted for further language matters not covered in the most recent version of this style guide. This guide should be considered the authority on Product Development document queries. This document may be reviewed and amended only through consultation and discussion with the Communications teams. Where the rules herein conflict with advice given in the Australian Government's *Style Manual*, it should be considered that it is due to the special context of material which accompanies products from the Mint.

Production process

The Product Development team has a philosophy of collaborating with specialists on the topics being commemorated on coins. Key information obtained from these specialists will be collated into a writing brief for a copywriter (independently contracted or sourced from Mint staff). Through a process of negotiation and editing, the copywriter and Product Development team will finalise the key concept and tone of the packaging.

The final copy may also be presented to the Communications team for their input at this stage, before then being used to determine the content of a brief to be supplied to the designers. The Copy Writing Brief should be consulted regarding changes to the substance of the copy at this time, ensuring consistency and awareness of the original creative concept proposal.

After completion of the design for packaging and Certificates of Authenticity, the Communications and Product Development teams will proofread the designs for typographical, stylistic or typesetting concerns. The completed design and text may be used to determine the content of the Product Information Sheet (PIS), explained in detail below.

Coin title naming conventions

When creating a coin title, the following naming conventions should be followed to maintain consistency throughout the suite of Mint documents and products.

In order of precedence, the title should read:

Year	Denomination	Mark	Feature	Metal	Finish	Shape (optional)	Coin	–	Version/heading
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The 'Coin' and 'Version/heading' should be separated by a space, en dash, space. When writing out the 'Version/heading' all words other than prepositions, articles and conjunctions will be capitalised.

For example, *2014 \$10 Copper Antique Coin – For Valour: A History of the Victoria Cross.*

Or, *2014 \$10 'C' Mintmark Gold Proof Coin – A Voyage to Terra Australis.*

- Weights are categorised as a 'Feature' and are not to be included in coin titles, except where the weight is a key feature of the product. Examples of where weight would be included:
 - 5 oz Gold Numismatic Products
 - 1 kg Gold and Silver Product
 - Investment products as weight, metal and design are the key features.
The weight 'Feature' should be written as numeral, space, abbreviated weight
e.g. 5 oz or 1 kg
- 'Mark' category includes – Mintmark, Counterstamp and Privy Mark (written as seen here)

Exceptions

Colour printed:

Colour printed uncirculated coins will be referred to as 'Coloured Uncirculated' in the coin title, as the base metals are not used in titling. Nominal specifications will only state uncirculated as the finish.

Colour printed proof coins will be referred to as 'Coloured Fine Silver/Gold Proof' in the coin title so there is no confusion between whether it's a description of the metal or detailing there is a colour print on the coin. Nominal specifications will only state proof as the finish.

Uncommon shape:

When the coin is of an unusual or distinct shape, other than circular, the 'Shape' should be listed after the 'Finish' component. The descriptor of the shape should be used in the name, for example Triangular, Domed or Tetradecagon. This is in preference to referring to the coin as triangle or triangle shaped. There may be times when this is unavoidable especially for more abstract shapes, for example 'Heart Shaped.'

There should be consideration given to coins featuring mintmarks or privy marks whether the mark is mentioned in the coin title.

When referring to the coin in body copy, the coin title may be tailored and shortened for brevity. In such an instance, the 'Version/heading' may follow the 'Year' and 'Denomination' and then be taking precedence over 'Shape' (if applicable) and then 'Coin.' This is only done in supplementary materials and should not appear on packaging or certificates.

For example, *2014 \$5 Lest We Forget Triangular Coin.*

Where a coin has an overly defining characteristic this may be more appropriate to include in the shortened version of the title.

For example, *2014 \$10 Copper Antique Victoria Cross Coin.*

On these occasions shortening the 'Version/heading' if it is unwieldy, may be appropriate.

Sets or Collections:

When including number of coins in product name where all denominations are the same, the number of coins is mentioned last in coin title e.g. 2023 \$1 Coloured Uncirculated Six-Coin Set

Where a set is a mix of denominations the number of coins can be included after the date in place of the denomination e.g. 2023 Six-Coin Year Set

Collection can be used for a group of coins e.g. AFL Collection or Henry Lawson Collection.

Set and Collection can be used interchangeably. Consistency should be maintained with annual year sets and titling in series.

On Packaging

Packaging requires its own naming conventions due to the format commonly used, where the ‘Version/Heading’ is featured in a larger more striking size and sits apart from the descriptors of the coin.

Coin packaging will focus on the following descriptors:

Year	Denomination	Mark	Feature	Metal	Finish	Shape (optional)	Coin
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Packaging will only refer to metal when the product is a precious metal coin.

For example, 2014 \$1 Coloured Uncirculated Coin or \$2014 \$5 Silver Proof Triangular Coin.

The final packaging title should appear as follows:

Version/Heading

Year	Denomination	Mark	Feature	Metal	Finish	Shape (optional)	Coin
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For example

A Voyage to Terra Australis

 2014 \$10 ‘C’ Mintmark Gold Proof Coin

Or

Graham

 2014 \$1 Coloured Silver Proof Coin

In instances when the title is too long, the word Fine can be omitted from Fine Silver.

Product Information Sheets

The Product Information Sheet (PIS) is a double-sided A4 page used to promote coin products or series to a range of audiences including dealers, retailers, internal stakeholders, Mint front of house staff, partner organisations and potentially the media. The text for the front of the page will contain

a release date, an embargo date and an introduction. The text on the back of the page contains the sections 'History and Significance,' 'Features and Design' and 'Nominal Specifications.'

PIS writing style for target market

The target market for coin releases and series should be identified prior to the commencement of preparing materials including packaging and the PIS. This information may be found in the copywriting brief or by discussing this with the Product Development team. The content particularly regarding the 'History and Significance' of the product should be appropriate and tailored towards the target markets. The PIS may include a reference to the target market in the introduction, but should avoid statements explicitly saying that 'the coin is targeted at ____.' When preparing such a document please be aware that some products may attract a wide variety of interest and target markets may not be clearly defined.

Coin titles on PIS

Coin titles will normally have been determined prior to the creation of a PIS and will adhere to the style set out in the current Mint style guide. Should a coin title be in doubt or subject to questions, refer to this guide's direction on coin titles. However, the coin name which appears on the final packaging of the coin should be regarded as the correct and final name for that product.

Introduction

Appearing on the first page of the PIS, with a limit of 55 words, the introduction will feature emotive language to create a high-impact promotional message. It may highlight the coin's design, subject or theme and mention the Mint's technical innovation to produce the coin. It may be appropriate to identify the target demographic (please see above). Statements will be factual but may be more expressive or emotive.

History and Significance

This section appears on the second page of the PIS and will have a limit of 145 words, not including the heading. It should be concise, upbeat and smart. This section will state one or two notable historical or social facts about the subject or theme featured on the coin. This is an opportunity to catch people's attention and sum up why this coin has been created.

It may also be appropriate to acknowledge the history of a coin design or series. For example, it may be the eighth year in a row this coin has been released, the final release in a popular series or the first time the Mint has made such a coin in more than two decades.

These statements may also include references to the positive public feeling towards the subject or theme and its significance to Australians. It may also refer to the Mint celebrating or acknowledging it for those reasons.

Features and Design

This appears on the second page of the PIS and is limited to 120 words. It will feature a series of dot points about the features of the product. It will refer to the physical features of the product, materials or production technique. Further points will refer to the design, highlighting the significance of certain elements of the coin and the product's association with other Mint products. The final dot point will always describe the coin's obverse, stating that it features the effigy of Queen Elizabeth II and its designer. This is an opportunity to describe details which may not have been

already stated, it may refer to the designer, any awards won by the coin or by previous coins in a series. It should be remembered that some people including collectors may be more drawn to this area to find information about the coin, in preference to the story behind it, which is covered in 'History and Significance.'

Nominal Specifications

Nominal specifications appear on the second page of the PIS, as a standard table across all coin releases. This encourages consistency and provides a quick reference point for all PIS users. Depending on the management of space on the PIS, the nominal specifications table may be presented vertically or may be divided into two columns which appear horizontally on the page.

The table will include 14 rows, should be titled as follows and in this order:

Denomination, Mass, Diameter, Mark, Year, Metal, Finish, Mintage, Packaging, Obverse designer, Reverse designer, Product Code, Barcode, RRP.

Nominal Specifications on a Certificate of Authenticity are an abbreviated version of this and appear in the following form:

Denomination, Metal, Mass, Diameter, Finish, Mintage, Designer.

Each coin on the PIS should have a single column for its specifications. A coin set should have a column for each coin. Where the specifications between coins in a coin set differ complete each column with common specifications appearing only once on the left side of the table.

Mass should be followed by the measurement that is used, contained in parenthesis. Grams should be expressed as (g) and ounces as (oz). Mass in grams will be stated in decimal notation to two decimal places. Ounces will be stated as a fraction.

Mintmarks, privy marks and counterstamps will be stated in the 'Mark' specification. Marks will be expressed as a capital letter, or a description of the mark, where a letter is not used, followed by whether the mark is a mintmark, privy mark or counterstamp. Where coins do not contain a mark, this heading will remain on the PIS template. The lack of a mark will be indicated by a dash. Mintmark and privy mark sets containing otherwise identical coins, should indicate the various marks together, contained in parenthesis and separated by a comma (,) for example (C,B,S,M).

Numeric statistics (other than metal purity and mass in ounces) should use decimal notation to two decimal places. A single period (.) will be used as the decimal point.

Metal purity is included when describing the metal of coins made from gold or silver.

Silver content is expressed to one decimal point, for example 99.9%. Gold content is expressed to two decimal points, for example 99.99%. There is no space between the numeral and the percentage symbol. There is a space between the percentage symbol and the chemical symbol, as specified under **Metals**. The full name of the metal is not required on the nominal specification table.

The name of the designer should be the initial of the first name, full stop, space with the designer's last name following.

Style indicators – product packaging and Product Information Sheets

A or an

The pronunciation of the first letter will determine whether ‘a’ or ‘an’ precedes it. Consonant sounds are preceded by ‘a.’ Vowel sounds are preceded by ‘an.’

There are some exceptions to this rule, words such as ‘historic’ are considered transitional and are preceded by either ‘a’ or ‘an.’ As historic is a word which is likely to be used by the Mint in its PIS, the word ‘an’ should be used.

When using sets of initials, the pronunciation of the first letter will determine whether ‘a’ or ‘an’ precedes it. Therefore, ‘a UN official’ and ‘an RSPCSA animal’ would be used.

Pronounceable acronyms will be treated as whole words, and their initial sound will determine whether ‘a’ or ‘an’ precedes them. For example, ‘a RAAF pilot’ or ‘an Anzac tradition.’

Absolutes

Be aware of the misuse of superlatives when using absolute terms. Terms such as last, empty, full, impossible, unique are absolutes by definition. You can’t get any more ‘unique’ than ‘unique’, so phrases like ‘totally unique’ are unnecessary. Similarly the ‘very last’ is still the last.

ANZAC/Anzac

The term ANZAC is an acronym for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. The word should be capitalised when referring specifically to the corps. For example, ‘ANZAC soldiers landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915.’

When not referring specifically to the corps, only the ‘A’ is capitalised. This signifies that you are not using the acronym and instead are referring to the general use of the word. For example, ‘Anzac Day,’ ‘Anzac Cove’ and when referring to the soldiers in general, ‘the Anzacs.’

Australian English usage

Copy should use standard Australian English spelling. The following are examples of some common errors.

- **-ce/-se**

For words such as ‘practice’, ‘licence’ and ‘advice’, the ‘-ce’ ending will be used when the word is a noun; the ‘-se’ ending will be used when the word is a verb.

‘Defence’, ‘offence’ and ‘pretence’ will always use the ‘-ce’ ending.

- **-ise/-ize**

In all words which end in either ‘ise’ or ‘ize’, the ‘-ise’ will always be used.

- **-our/-or**

The Australian English spelling for words like colour, honour and neighbour use the ‘our’ ending.

- **Program**

Australian English has adopted the spelling 'program.' This is used in preference to 'programme' in all instances.

Colloquialisms

The Australian variation of English has a strong history of colloquialisms, it is important to make sound judgements on when it would be appropriate to use these informal references.

Calling Australian soldiers 'Diggers' came to prominence in the First World War, largely from the Western Front campaigns. It refers to the role of many soldiers in digging the trenches common across these battlefields. As a term with a great deal of history and significance to Australian servicemen and women, 'Diggers' can be used in reference to Australian soldiers, including modern day soldiers.

The rule for using colloquialisms should depend highly on the recognition of the word and what it refers to. Considerable weight should also be added at this point to the public's feelings toward the word.

The evolution of what is acceptable has seen many colloquialisms and indeed people's nicknames dumped from public buildings etc. for being inappropriate.

Referring to Mint employees as Minties is another such example. It is recognised within the Mint and possibly among collectors, but wider audiences are unlikely to connect with it. It may be appropriate in informal usage, but its presence will likely require explanation, using additional word space.

Consistency

It is important that the naming conventions as well as the terminology for defining characteristics of coins are used with consistency. The first indicator should be the coin title. All references to the coin in the PIS should reflect this name.

Characteristics such as coloured or colour printed, should be used consistently.

Coloured or Colour Printed

References to colour printed coins should describe them as 'coloured.' Awareness of sensitivities around this word, which has been used derogatorily in the past, should determine if it is appropriate. In instances where 'coloured' may be inappropriate 'colour printed' is the next preference.

Dates

When using dates in copy the correct form is XX(date) Month XXXX (year). The use of st, nd, rd and th is not required.

If starting a sentence with a date reference it should be separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma, for example 'In 1915,' or 'In April,'.

Ellipsis

The use of ellipsis (...) is a grammatical device to indicate an omission, a trailing off or hesitation. It should be avoided when preparing materials. The exception would be when using selected parts of a

direct quote, for example, “The only two certainties... death and taxes.” Where ‘in life are’ has been omitted.

Foreign words and phrases

Non-English words or phrases will appear in italics, with only proper nouns being capitalised. Where these words or phrases are followed by English translations, the English text will appear within single quotation marks.

Honorifics

Honorifics are words or titles used to convey esteem towards the subject, most often a person who has attained a certain office or recognition of service.

Members of Federal and State Parliaments (excluding the ACT) who serve as a Minister of the Government are afforded the title, ‘the Honourable’ (the Hon.). This title remains with them even after departing that office.

From March 2014, a Governor-General also becomes a Knight or Dame of the Order of Australia; the title is now "His/Her Excellency the Honourable Sir/Dame" in office, and "the Honourable Sir/Dame" in retirement.

Knights and Dames of the Order of Australia are referred to as Sir or Dame followed by their full name in the first instance along with any post-nominal (AO, OAM etc.). In subsequent references they may be referred to as Sir or Dame followed by their first name only.

For Royal honorifics, see **the Royal Family** below.

For military honorifics, see **Military References**.

Hyphens

Hyphens are used to join words to improve the sense of a sentence, for example ‘the design is state-of-the-art.’

An en dash is used to indicate spans or estimates of time, distance, or other quantities, for example ‘200–300 people.’

There should be no spaces on either side of the en dash.

A hyphen is a brief punctuation mark (-) it is not interchangeable with an em dash (–) which is noticeably longer. An en dash will always be found in a coin title.

Hyphens are used to connect numbers up to ninety-nine that comprise two words.

Metals

When describing the metals used in coins, the following terms are used:

In packaging/ certificate text	Chemical symbol
cupro nickel	CuNi
aluminium bronze	AlBr

aluminium zinc bronze	AlZnBr
silver	Ag
gold	Au

The term ‘fine silver’ or ‘fine gold’ is commonly used to indicate the purity of the metal. It is more common in international markets, where precious metal products are available in a variety of purity levels. Fine silver is recognised as 99.9% Ag and fine gold is 99.99% Au.

When to use ‘fine’

Fine silver is to be used in the coin title and will always be used in copy text on the certificate of authenticity.

Fine gold should not be used to refer to the purity of the gold.

Military References

There are many conventions already established for the Australian Military, those which will be most commonly encountered by the Royal Australian Mint are outlined below.

Capital initials should be used when referring to the Australian Defence Force (ADF). The individual services are the Royal Australian Navy, Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force. This is also their order of precedence, based on when they were officially formed. When listed, the services should be in this order.

Men and women of the ADF are referred to as servicemen and women.

The reference for servicemen and women within each of the services is: sailors, soldiers, airmen and women. This terminology can be used to describe all members of the service, including the enlisted and officers.

It is incorrect to refer to all servicemen and women as soldiers, as this refers to just members of the Army. The same rule applies when saying ‘troops’ as this also indicates soldiers.

References to servicemen and women should include their rank. When describing historic actions, the reference to the person should use the rank held at the time of the action.

Mint

When referring to mints generally, this word is written in lowercase. When referring to or implying the Royal Australian Mint, the word will be capitalised, irrespective of the presence of the words ‘Royal Australian.’

When referring to the Mint as an entity, it will be preceded with the word ‘the’, in lowercase where the word does not begin a sentence. If, however, ‘Royal Australian Mint’ is used to modify a noun (with phrases such as ‘Royal Australian Mint facilities’ or ‘Royal Australian Mint designer’), the use of ‘the’ is unnecessary.

Avoid abbreviating ‘Royal Australian Mint’ to ‘RAM,’ the normal shortened form should be ‘the Mint.’

When preparing materials which are specifically aimed at the international minting community, the shortened form 'RAM' is acceptable, as 'the Mint' becomes confusing when dealing with multiple mints.

Mintage

A mintage is a limited figure by definition. Terms like 'limited mintage' or 'maximum mintage' are superfluous, but may be used to add a sense of importance. The phrase 'limited to a mintage of...' may be used when describing the mintage of a coin.

Numbers

When writing numbers there are several conventions which must be followed, depending on the number of figures and where it is being used.

In body copy, for numbers containing four or fewer numerals, there is no spacing or punctuation required, for example 2000 or 4500.

Five or more numerals will be divided into groups of three numerals, counted from the end of the number. These groups will be separated by a comma (,) for example 100,000 or 1,250,000.

The numbers one (1) to ten (10) should be written as words, rather than in numerals. When required to write numbers between 21 and 99 as words, a hyphen should be used between the words. For example, twenty-one, seventy-five and ninety-nine.

Starting a sentence with a number should be avoided wherever possible. If unavoidable the number must be written in words, such as one million two hundred and fifty seven thousand one hundred and three.

In nominal specifications, numbers containing four or fewer numerals there is no spacing or punctuation required, for example 2000 or 4500.

Five or more numerals will be divided into groups of three numerals, counted from the end of number, these groups will be separated by space, for example 100 000 or 1 250 000. The reason being, a comma is interpreted as a decimal point in some countries.

Post Nominals

Post nominal are earned titles attributed to a person. When referencing that person, it is generally appropriate to list their post nominals.

Prices

Where products are priced with complete dollar amounts, the Recommended Retail Price (RRP) will feature a decimal point followed by two zeros, for example \$85.00.

Quotations

Where quoted text appears in the copy for packaging, Certificates of Authenticity or Product Information Sheets, double quotation marks (" ") are favoured.

Single quotation marks (' ') are used to add emphasis or to separate words from the rest of a sentence.

When concluding a sentence with words requiring quotation marks, punctuation marks should be placed inside the quotation marks. For example, ‘it was a beautiful coin.’ Or ‘did you see that?’

The Royal Family

The Royal Family is regularly featured on Royal Australian Mint coins, and there is a number of naming protocols which should be noted and included when preparing materials associated with the coins.

An effigy of the reigning Monarch is included on the obverse of all Australian legal tender coins. When describing the effigy it is referred to as “the effigy of Queen Elizabeth II by Ian Rank-Broadly”.

- **Majesty and Royal Highnesses**

When making other references to the Queen, she should be named as ‘Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.’

The Queen’s consort is His Royal Highness (HRH) the Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Other members of the Royal Family are also referred to as His or Her Royal Highness, followed by their name and their title. For example His Royal Highness, Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, or Her Royal Highness, Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge.

It should be noted that when a King reigns with his Queen alongside, both are granted the honorific of Majesty.

- **Historical Monarchs**

Any references to previous monarchs should follow the format of:

King/Queen	Regnal name	Roman numeral
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For example: King Charles II, Queen Elizabeth II, King George VI.

Where there were multiple monarchs with the same regnal name, it is appropriate to style the first such monarch with the Roman numeral I for the sake of clarity. However, this will not be necessary for any instances in which only one monarch has been styled with a particular regnal name.

Therefore, ‘Queen Elizabeth I’ and ‘King George I’ would be appropriate, as would ‘Queen Victoria’ and ‘King Stephen’.

When describing Queen Elizabeth II in an historical context, it will not be necessary to use the preface ‘Her Majesty’.

Titles

Where reference is made to the title of a published work, title of a coin or series title in body copy, the titles will appear in italics, using maximal capitalisation (all words other than prepositions, articles and conjunctions will be capitalised). This could include ‘Banjo Paterson’s *Waltzing Matilda*,’

'The Little House on the Prairie' or *'the release of the 2014 \$5 Lest We Forget Triangular Coin'* or *'Lunar Series'*

Ensure series title is consistent throughout series release.

Do not include the title and series name in the copy when it already appears in the titles above.