

PDG Joe Mason OAM – The Father of Lionism in Western Australia

Nominated by the Lions Club of Mandurah

Past District Governor Joe Mason OAM was one of the most influential and widely respected Lions in Australian history. Joining Lions in **1959**, Joe became known throughout Western Australia as the “**Father of Lions**”, a title earned through decades of extraordinary leadership, groundbreaking initiatives, and unmatched commitment to the expansion and strengthening of Lionism.

Club Leadership

Joe was a **Charter Member of the Lions Club of City of Perth (Host) in 1962**, laying the foundation for Lions’ presence in the metropolitan region. He later transferred to the Lions Clubs of **North Perth** and **Mandurah**, remaining an active and inspiring Lion throughout his life.

In **1988**, Joe was honoured with **Life Membership of Lions Clubs International**, recognising decades of outstanding service.

District Contributions

Joe served on the **District W1 Cabinet for 18 years**, contributing leadership, knowledge, and vision across a wide range of portfolios. His most notable appointment included:

- **District Governor – 1983/84**

During his term and throughout his district service, Joe introduced programs and structures that have since become core components of Western Australian Lionism.

Founder of Key Lions Programs

Joe’s innovation and foresight led to the creation of several major Lions initiatives, including:

- **Founder – Lions Identikit (1983)**
A groundbreaking community safety program.
- **Founder – WA Lions Children of Courage Awards**
A cherished statewide initiative celebrating the bravery of young people overcoming adversity.

Joe was also a **Founding Member and Director** of both:

- **Lions Help to Hear Foundation**
- **Lions Save-Sight Foundation**

These foundations today continue to transform lives through hearing and sight-related programs, standing as lasting tributes to Joe's vision.

National & International Contributions

From **1964 to 1972**, Joe served as an **International Representative**, supporting Lions development across Australia and throughout the Pacific Islands. His influence extended far beyond Western Australia, shaping Lionism in multiple countries.

Joe's impact on membership development was unprecedented:

- **Accredited with chartering over 100 new Lions Clubs**
- **Supreme Extension Award recipient** — one of only **five Australians ever** to receive this honour
- **Four International President's Extension Awards**

His legacy in membership growth remains unmatched.

Honours and Recognition

PDG Joe Mason received some of the highest awards in Lionism and in the Australian honours system, including:

- **OAM – Medal of the Order of Australia** for service to the community through Lions Clubs International
- **James D. Richardson Honour Award**
- **50-Year Charter Monarch Chevron**

- **Nine International President's Awards**
- **Melvin Jones Fellowship**
- **International President's Appreciation Certificates**
- **Induction into the Australian Lions Foundation Hall of Fame – 2002**

Joe was also appointed a **Justice of the Peace (1981)** — the first Lion in Western Australia to hold this role.

A Lasting Legacy

PDG Joe Mason OAM was more than a Lion — he was a builder of clubs, an architect of foundations, a mentor to hundreds, and a guiding force behind the growth of Lionism in Western Australia. His pioneering leadership, remarkable achievements, and lifelong commitment to service have left a legacy that continues to inspire Lions throughout Australia and across the Pacific.