*Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) Context, structure and roles*

Community Policy Branch, Veteran and Family Policy Division

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# Contents

# 1. Advocacy Training and Development Program Context

## Overview

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) managed and funded Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP, or program) provides access to training and continuing professional development for advocates in ex-service organisation (ESO) advocacy services. The ATDP is a part of DVA's commitment to the provision of assistance to veterans and their families by supporting ESOs to provide high-quality advocacy services.

The ATDP uses a contracted Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to develop and deliver the *Course in Military Advocacy* ('Course'). The RTO works in conjunction with ESOs who provide 90% of the advocate competency-based training using training resources provided by the RTO.

The *Course in Military Advocacy* is an Enterprise Training Course developed by the RTO on behalf of DVA, owned by DVA, and not available to the public.

The program facilitates access to the Course for advocates nominated by their ESO, and provides a subsidy to the Veterans Indemnity and Training Assurance Association (VITA) for ESOs' professional indemnity and accident insurance.

ESOs support the delivery of high-quality advocacy services by their advocates by encouraging them to use ATDP's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) module. CPD allows an advocate to develop their skills and knowledge beyond the competencies gained through Course qualifications, and to maintain currency of these skills and knowledge.

The ATDP also provides access to a register of advocates (AAR) authorised by ESOs to act on their behalf. The AAR provides three functions:
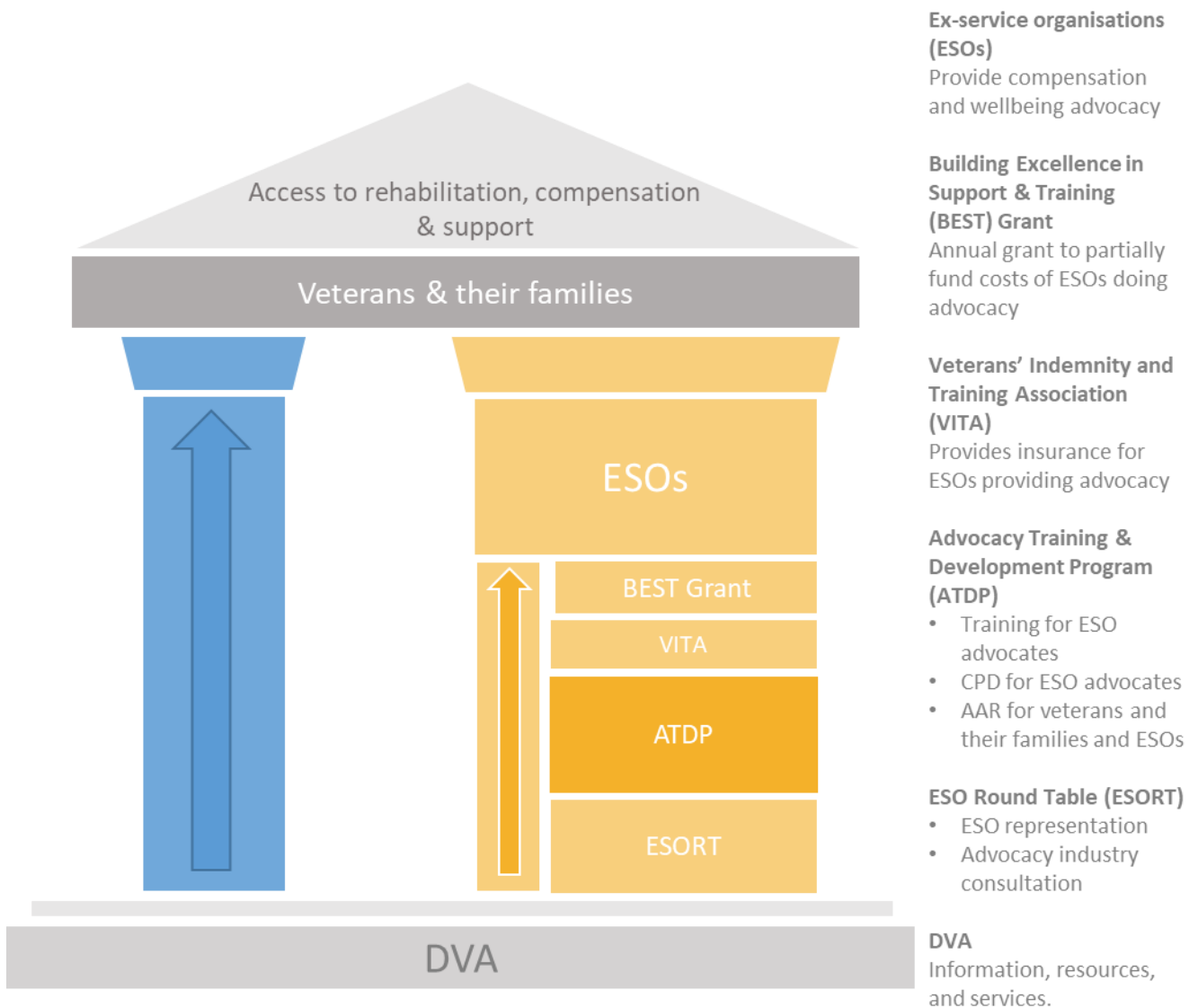
- a way for veterans and their families to find an advocacy service (advocacy register);
- a register of advocates for ESOs to support their insurance cover (accredited, or authorised advocate register) – and to nominate someone of their choosing for advocate training, and
- a tool for checking some eligibility requirements of Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) grant applications.

The role of individual ESOs that provide free advocacy services for veterans and their families is to oversee and manage the advocates they authorise to act on their behalf. Collectively, ESOs also provide feedback on advocacy issues to the ESO Round Table (ESORT). ESORT is part of DVA's National Consultation Framework and its membership, in addition to ESOs selected to represent the veteran and Defence communities, includes the Military Rehabilitation Compensation Commission (MRCC), Repatriation Commission (RC), DVA and the leadership of the ESO and Defence communities.

The ATDP does not include coordination, management, or quality assurance of ESO advocacy services (these functions are the responsibility of ESOs). The ATDP's contracted RTO is responsible for the quality of training and assessment provided to ESO advocates for the Course.

ESOs are encouraged to provide feedback, suggestions, or advice to DVA about their advocacy services through the ATDP Regional Implementation Groups, ATDP Advisory Groups, ESORT, relevant consultation activities, or directly to the ATDP (ATDPEnquiries@dva.gov.au).

The following diagram shows how the ATDP contributes to supporting access for veterans and their families to wellbeing support, rehabilitation, and compensation assistance.



**Ex-service organisations (ESOs)**
Provide compensation and wellbeing advocacy

**Building Excellence in Support & Training (BEST) Grant**
Annual grant to partially fund costs of ESOs doing advocacy

**Veterans' Indemnity and Training Association (VITA)**
Provides insurance for ESOs providing advocacy

**Advocacy Training & Development Program (ATDP)**
- Training for ESO advocates
- CPD for ESO advocates
- AAR for veterans and their families and ESOs

**ESO Round Table (ESORT)**
- ESO representation
- Advocacy industry consultation

**DVA**
Information, resources, and services.

# 2. Advocacy Training and Development Program Management Structure

A number of organisations and groups contribute to maintaining and running the ATDP.

The following diagram outlines the ATDP management structure.
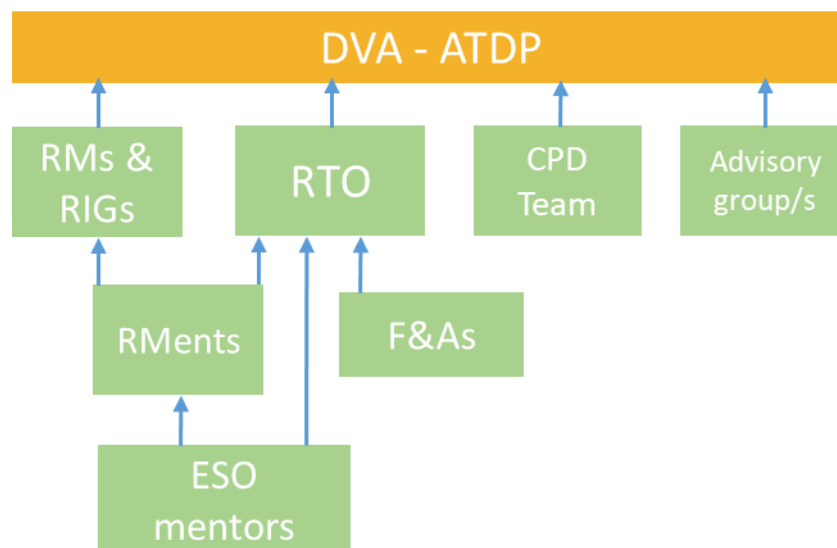


ATDP = Advocacy Training and Development Program
CPD = Continuing Professional Development Team
DVA = Department of Veterans' Affairs
ESO = Ex-service organisation
F&A = Facilitators, trainers and assessors
RIG = Regional Implementation Group, coordinated by Regional Manager (RM)
RM = Regional Manager
RMent = Regional Mentor
RTO = Registered Training Organisation

**Definition of an ESO** (from BEST grant opportunity guidelines)

A *bona fide* ESO is considered an organisation:

- whose membership consists primarily of Australian veterans, past and present members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and/or their dependants
- which is established primarily to provide pensions, advocacy and/or wellbeing assistance to Australian veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants
- which does not operate as a business or charge any fee for acting on behalf of the Australian veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants in the provision of claims or wellbeing services.

The following table shows who has responsibility for ATDP functions and program products.

| ATDP Function/Product | Responsible | DVA | RTO | F&A | RIG | RMent | ESO | CPD team | Advisory Group |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Course in Military Advocacy* | Curriculum development | ● | ● | | | | | | ● |
| *Course in Military Advocacy* | Course reaccreditation | ● | ● | | | | | | ● |
| **Training & Assess't** | Nomination & enrolment | | ● | | | | ● | | |
| **Training & Assess't** | eLearning support | ● | | | | ● | | | |
| **Training & Assess't** | Identifying regional training issues | ● | ● | | ● | | | | |
| **Training & Assess't** | Advocate OTJ training & mentoring | | ● | | ● | | ● | | |
| **Training & Assess't** | Identifying advocates ready for C&A | | ● | | | ● | ● | | |
| **Training & Assess't** | WEL check | | ● | | | ● | | | |
| **Training & Assess't** | Assessment activity arrangements | ● | ● | | | | | | |
| **Training & Assess't** | Run C&A activity | | ● | ● | | | | | |
| **Training & Assess't** | UoC check/ SoA issued/ follow up | | ● | | | | | | |
| **CPD** | Content development | ● | ● | | ● | | | ● | |
| **CPD** | Management including recording | ● | ● | | | | | ● | |
| **CoP** | Supporting ESO mentors and advocates | | | | ● | | | | |
| **ATDP management** | Strategic direction, program decisions, funding, staffing, co-ordination | ● | | | | | | | |
| **ATDP management** | Reporting, compliance, evaluation | ● | | | | | | | |
| **ATDP management** | ATDP website, ATDP Portal, AAR, CPD, servers & database | ● | | | | | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| AAR = Accredited Advocate Register | OTJ = On-the-job |
| C&A = Consolidation and Assessment – as a milestone of training | RIG = Regional Implementation Group, led by Regional Manager (RM) |
| CoP = Community of Practice | RMent = Regional Mentor |
| CPD = Continuing Professional Development | SoA = Statement of Attainment |
| F&A = Faciltators, trainers, and assessors | UoC = Unit of Competency |
| ICT = Information and Communications Technology | WEL = Workplace Experience Log |
| NTM = National Training Manager role | |

# 3. Advocacy Training and Development Program Roles

The following tables outline the role of each organisation/group in the ATDP management structure:

| Organisation/Group: | **Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)** |
|---|---|
| Role Overview: | <ul><li>Oversight and management of the ATDP including funding, staffing, and operational support.</li><li>Strategic direction of the program, including development and implementation of policy.</li><li>Delivery of nationally consistent competency-based training for advocates, delivered under training standards overseen by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and supported by continuing professional development (CPD).</li><li>The ATDP in conjunction with the RTO is responsible for the quality of training and assessment provided to ESO advocates for the *Course in Military Advocacy*.</li><li>Management of the RTO contract.</li><li>Support for the ATDP Regional Implementation Groups' role in delivering the *Course in Military Advocacy.*</li><li>Facilitation of advisory group/s of advocacy subject matter experts for curriculum development and other ATDP or advocacy issues as required.</li><li>Provision, maintenance, and promotion of CPD for ESOs in conjunction with volunteer subject matter experts.</li><li>Provision and maintenance of an advocacy register (AAR) for veterans and their families and ESOs and as an advocate register for ESOs.</li><li>Provision of access to DVATrain for trainees' eLearning and maintaining the eLearning modules in conjunction with the RTO and the ATDP advisory group/s.</li><li>Subsidy of professional indemnity and accident insurance for ESOs' advocacy services from ATDP funds.</li><li>Liaison with other parts of DVA for curriculum development, grant programs and policy development.</li><li>Liaison with ESORT (as the ESO representative body and industry consultative forum for advocacy).</li></ul>*N.B.* The ATDP does not include coordination, management, or quality assurance of ESO advocacy services (these functions are the responsibility of ESOs). |
| Reports to: | Minister for Veterans' Affairs |
| Supported by: | <ul><li>Registered Training Organisation (RTO)</li><li>Regional Implementation Groups (RIG)</li><li>CPD Team</li><li>ATDP advisory group/s</li></ul> |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Funded |

| Organisation/Group | **Registered Training Organisation (RTO)** |
|---|---|
| Role Overview: | • Development, maintenance, and delivery of the *Course in Military Advocacy.*<br>• Provision of training and assessment materials.<br>• Responsibility for meeting the training standards enforced by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) – including the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.*<br>• Oversight of the standards of on-the-job training of trainees through ESO mentors and Regional Mentors.<br>• Management of the assessment of candidates for Units of Competency.<br>• Ensure assessors hold relevant formal vocational competencies and training and assessment credentials to train and assess.<br>• Management of continuing professional development for assessors.<br>• Issue of Statements of Attainment. |
| Reports to: | DVA<br>Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) |
| Supported by: | • Facilitators, trainers, and assessors<br>• Mentors<br>• Regional Mentors |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Funded |

| Organisation/Group | **Facilitators, trainers, assessors (F&As)** |
|---|---|
| Role Overview: | • Facilitators, trainers, and assessors conduct the formal assessment components of the *Course in Military Advocacy* through the RTO to education industry standards. These standards are contained in the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*.<br>• Provide consolidation training in assessment activities.<br>• Provide additional training for candidates as necessary to achieve competency. |
| Reports to: | RTO, but choose the level of their involvement |
| Supported by: | RTO |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Volunteer (working independently of their ESO) |

| Organisation/Group | **Ex-service organisations (ESO)** |
|---|---|
| Role Overview: | ESOs are responsible for their advocacy services and the advocates they authorise to act on their behalf in providing help and advice to veterans and their families for their wellbeing and for compensation claims related to eligible conditions.<br><br>This includes: |

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|---|---|
| | • recruitment of advocates |
| | • assessment of their suitability for gaining a qualification through the *Course in Military Advocacy* |
| | • provision of sufficient and suitable work to undertake on-the-job training |
| | • ensuring each trainee has supervision and access to a suitable mentor |
| | • maintenance of a supportive work environment with access to wellbeing help |
| | • support for trainee assessment activities, including travel and subsistence costs if required |
| | • authority for an advocate to be a part of the ESO's advocacy service |
| | • assistance for advocates in keeping auditable records of each and every case |
| | • encouragement of advocates to develop professionally, including linking with other advocates. |
| Reports to: | N/A |
| Supported by: | Advocates |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Volunteer |

| | |
|---|---|
| Organisation/Group | **Regional Implementation Groups (RIGs)** |
| Role Overview: | • Support ATDP's provision of training and professional development for ESO advocacy services. |
| | • Support the nationally consistent approach to the delivery of the *Course in Military Advocacy*. |
| | • Monitor implementation of the ATDP in their region, provide advice to ESOs as required, and report issues, trends, or feedback to ATDP through the Regional Manager as appropriate. |
| | • Provision of advice and suggestions to ATDP on ways to simplify and improve delivery of training and CPD while maintaining quality of advocacy services for veterans and their families. |
| | • Encouragement of the formation and maintenance of Communities of Practice by groups of ESOs. |
| | It is acknowledged that RIG members also support the coordination of advocacy across their regions through Communities of Practice and other networking. While this is not a function of the ATDP, the RIGs are useful to ESOs for such activities. |
| Reports to: | Regional Manager |
| Supported by: | Regional Mentors |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Volunteer |

| Organisation/Group | **Regional Manager (RM)** |
|---|---|
| Role Overview: | • Management of the RIG on behalf of the ATDP<br>• Coordination of Regional Mentors<br>• Monitor the delivery of training and CPD through ATDP in their region and provide advice to ATDP on regional or national training issues.<br><br>It is acknowledged that Regional Managers also support the coordination of advocacy across their regions through networking and while this is not a function of the ATDP this role is useful to ESOs for such an activity. |
| Reports to: | Director, Advocacy Policy |
| Supported by: | RIG |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Volunteer |

| Organisation/Group | **Regional Mentor (RMent)** |
|---|---|
| Role Overview: | • Support the work of ESO mentors to get their trainees ready for each stage of the training as quickly as the workload in the ESO allows, including advising on the suitability of evidence to be submitted for assessment.<br>• Support the RTO by reviewing a trainee advocate's Workplace Experience Log (WEL) and eLearning after a mentor indicates that the trainee's on-the-job training and eLearning are complete.<br>• Providing mentors with feedback on the quality of evidence of mentee learning, or following-up with mentors on mentee Workplace Experience Logs with low training activity. |
| Reports to: | RIG, but with links to RTO |
| Supported by: | N/A |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Volunteer |

| Organisation/Group | **Mentors** |
|---|---|
| Role Overview: | • Provision of support and feedback to advocates working through the training pathway.<br>• Provision of advice for an advocate on their preparation for an RPL process.<br>• Collaboration with Regional Mentors for moving trainees through their activities, and with identifying and resolving issues.<br>• If feasible, provision of mentoring services across ESOs. |
| Reports to: | RTO for structure of on-the-job training, but responsible to ESO for all else |
| Supported by: | ESO and RMent, CoP |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Volunteer, or paid by ESO |

| Organisation/Group | CPD Team |
|---|---|
| Role Overview: | • Management of operational aspects of the CPD, including the allocation of CPD points for activities, content review and development, review of advocate feedback, addressing issues or recommending solutions to DVA, and advising DVA of suggested improvements, and implications of changes.<br>• Support a broad strategic review of the future structure and delivery of CPD being conducted by DVA in consultation with the CPD Team, RIGs, and other stakeholders. |
| Reports to: | DVA |
| Supported by: | N/A |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Volunteer |

| Organisation/Group | Advisory Group/s |
|---|---|
| Role Overview: | • Provision of advice to DVA through ATDP as advocacy and ATDP stakeholders on topics relating to the delivery of training and CPD for ESO advocates.<br>• Act as a consultative group for DVA on wider advocacy issues if suitable and available.<br><br>*N.B.* Several advisory groups might be formed on different topics to manage the imposition on volunteers' time, in consideration of other volunteering done and the number of issues that may arise. |
| Reports to: | DVA |
| Supported by: | N/A |
| Funded/Volunteer: | Volunteer |

# 4. Document Version Control

| 20/09/2021 | First draft – JH, CM |
|---|---|
| 29/9/2021 | Second draft – CM, EO |
| | |

# 5. Attachment A – table of previous responsibilities

The following table shows who had responsibility for ATDP functions and program products before the Minister's decision to change the governance arrangements on 24 June 2021.

| | Responsible | DVA | RTO | CFMG | F&A | RIG | RMent | ESO | CPD team | NTM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Course in Military Advocacy** | Curriculum development | ● | ● | | | | | | | ● |
| | Course reaccreditation | ● | ● | ● | | | | | | ● |
| **Training & assess't** | Nomination & enrolment | | ● | | | | | ● | | |
| | eLearning support | ● | | | | | ● | | | |
| | Identifying regional training issues | | | ● | | ● | | | | ● |
| | Advocate OTJ training & mentoring | | ● | ● | | ● | | ● | | ● |
| | Identifying advocates ready for C&A | | | | | | ● | ● | | ● |
| | WEL check | | | | | | ● | | | ● |
| | Assessment activity arrangements | ● | ● | | | | | | | ● |
| | Run C&A activity | | | | ● | | | | | |
| | UoC check/ SoA issued/ follow up | | ● | | | | | | | |
| **CPD** | Content development | | | ● | | | | | ● | ● |
| | Management including recording | ● | | ● | | | | | ● | |
| **CoP** | Supporting ESO mentors and advocates | | | | | ● | | | | |
| **ATDP management** | Strategic direction, program decisions, funding, staffing, co-ordination | ● | | ● | | | | | | |
| | Reporting, compliance, evaluation | ● | | ● | | | | | | |
| | ATDP website, ATDP Portal, AAR, CPD, servers & database | ● | | ● | | | | | | ● |

*ATDP Function/Product*

| | |
|---|---|
| AAR = Accredited Advocate Register | OTJ = On-the-job |
| C&A = Consolidation and Assessment – as a milestone of training | RIG = Regional Implementation Group, led by Regional Manager (RM) |

| | |
|---|---|
| CoP = Community of Practice | RMent = Regional Mentor |
| CPD = Continuing Professional Development | SoA = Statement of Attainment |
| F&A = Faciltators, trainers, and assessors | UoC = Unit of Competency |
| ICT = Information and Communications Technology | WEL = Workplace Experience Log |
| NTM = National Training Manager | |