ATDP Update   December 2020

Roger's view

And so we arrive at the end of ATDP's fifth year. Perhaps a year that in some respects is better forgotten. I still remember the excitement that I had when I first decided that I wanted to be an advocate and the accompanying enthusiasm to engage in all the TIP programs I could to advance my knowledge. So, I absolutely understand the disappointment and frustration that has been experienced by around 70 advocates still awaiting assessment this year. My determination to get programs up and running to enable those in the training stream to progress as soon as possible is shared by all the Training and Assesment Team and our first Consolidation and Assessment program is underway in Brisbane this week and the team will only be taking a short break over the Christmas/New Year period and resuming in the week 11-15 January. We are aiming at a program a week until the backlog is cleared so please bear with us.

I have recently undertaken a couple of non-ATDP Units of Competency - Mentoring in the Workplace and Cross-Sector Infection Control. My understanding of how frustrating assessment requirements can be has been sharpened by the experience. Occasionally requirements are not clearly understood by the reader and it is not always the reader's fault. Our aim is to accredit candidates in our Units of Competency so that our veterans and their dependants can be assured that someone with an ATDP Statement of Attainment is able to competently represent them at the appropriate level. So, if you feel that a requirement is unnecessary or you are frustrated in some way please just politely ask your Regional Mentor for an explanation. If we can make the requirements clearer we will correct any errors that you draw to our attention. With this in mind we have introduced an 'evidence checklist' to assist in ensuring that the face-to-face assessment process can go as smoothly as possible and the National Training Manager has provided a bit more information in the following pages.

Our veterans and their dependants and I, owe so much to you all for your support throughout this difficult year. To the SGB, CFMG members, our Trainers and Assessors, Regional Mentors, Mentors, advocates and trainees and DVA support staff and your families – my sincere thanks for your tolerance and support in a difficult year. Have a safe and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Roger

Roger W Greene OAM JP
Chair
Capability Framework Management Group
Phone: 0411 431 189

National Training Manager Report

Border openings

At the time of writing the NSW Qld border has been open for 12 hours and the news has just been released that WA will relax its border controls in a week's time. This means we can start to put together some program dates with reasonable confidence. The first to run will be a MILADC001 C&A program in Brisbane beginning on the 8th December. Other high priority programs are being planned for Perth and Adelaide as well as a MILADC003 program in Brisbane early in the new year.

Workplace Experience Logs and evidence for assessment

There are still some misconceptions amongst candidates about the WEL and the evidence required for C&A assessment.

Misconception 1 – The WEL entry is the evidence. This is not the case. The WEL is arranged in such a way as for the milestones to lead a candidate through a structured, experiential learning process. The candidate's entry must state fully what was done to meet the milestone. After doing that and following a discussion with the mentor, the mentor's comments provide feedback to the candidate which assists in the learning process. The evidence required at C&A is the documents which are generated after each milestone was completed. These may be certain pages from a case file, advocate's logbook entry, claim forms, letters, action plans and the like.

Misconception 2 – My mentor is my assessor. To be an assessor for any Unit of Competency in course 10620NAT, the person must hold a suitable qualification detailed in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations, must hold the Unit of Competency being assessed, be accepted by our partner RTO and be peer assessed by ATDP. There are currently only a total of some fourteen people who meet those requirements.

We are introducing a new form to be completed prior to a candidate being offered a place at a C&A program. The form is an evidence summary/checklist which allows the candidate to collate the evidence to be presented against the WEL milestones. This allows an assessor to see what evidence will be presented at the program and make a judgement whether it is sufficient, authentic, valid, current and reliable. Both candidates and assessors benefit from this process. It means the candidate is unlikely to be found Not Yet Competent due to lack of evidence and the assessor does not need to chase up evidence after the event. Another benefit is that the case files do not need to leave the candidate at any time which adds to the security of the information contained. Until next month.

Regards,

Greg Hoving

National Training Manager

Region 1 Update – Qld, NT

Visits have been made to Communities of Practice in Townsville and Brisbane West, the latter by electronic means. Both highlighted the way in which misinformation is being spread during this period of isolation. An ATDP Update was delivered in both locations illustrating the healthy nature of the advocacy programs, the age distribution of advocates, the energy that has been put into creating avenues for Mentor training and certification, and the move to face-to-face programs. It is believed that there is a need for reactivating the culture of cooperation amongst advocates by presentations that inform and support processes.

The distance learning Mentor Course has been trialled with a dozen Mentors for evaluation of the content and process. Initial feedback indicates that the full Mentoring in the Workplace Unit of Competency is an appropriate course for Lead Mentors – eg. Regional Mentors, Trainers and Assessors plus CoP senior mentors and hopefully a face-to-face model will be presented in the New Year to these individuals. An abridged set of modules has been developed, to be placed upon the CPD activity site for all mentors to access and work through as time permits. How this will occur, to whom it will be available and whether it is a requirement for being a mentor is yet to be determined. Training will include the use of IT strategies and equipment by advocates, which it is argued will be the way of the future.

As we approach a significant turning point with the pandemic, it is hoped that support-based activity can be generated and we all regain the sense of working together.

Regards,

Dr Bob Grandin
A/g Manager, Regional Implementation Group 1

Region 2 Update – NSW, ACT, WA

Training

No formal training activities have been undertaken in RIG 2 during the reporting period.

Following a review of candidates in the Training Pathway (all Levels) in Region Two, I can report that when ATDP Training recommences there are candidates ready to be assessed. Table 1 shows the current statistics,
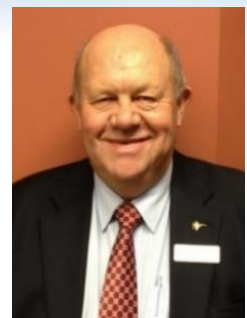
although I am somewhat surprised to note the low number of active Wellbeing 2 candidates. I encourage all candidates and mentors to press ahead with gaining experience so that when the opportunity arises there will be sufficient candidates available for Consolidation and Assessment at the various levels.

TABLE 1

UOC	Active Learners	Ready for Assessment
MILADC001	81	10
MILADC002	17	6
MILADW001	38	5
MILADW002	2	1
MILADC003	5	1
MILADC004	0	0
TOTAL	143	23

ATDP Face-to-Face Consolidation and Assessment activities are scheduled to recommence in Brisbane during the second week of December, with the conduct of a Level 1 C & A. Additional assessment events are being considered for early 2021 and I anticipate that an ATDP Training and Assessment Team will be travelling to WA in the early part of the year to cater for any candidates ready to be assessed in that region.

VITA Coverage

A matter of significant concern to me was revealed at the recent VITA AGM I attended. The Chairman of VITA indicated that during the last year, 18 Ex-Service Organisation's had withdrawn from VITA coverage, citing the increasing age of Advocates, decreasing ESO membership and the reluctance of Advocates to comply with ATDP requirements.

Notwithstanding the cited reasons for ceasing association with VITA, I believe there is a need to remind Advocates of the importance of suitable and adequate Professional Indemnity insurance for all practicing Advocates. Claims continue to be filed against Advocates by disgruntled clients and while many complaints are rejected in early investigation, the potential remains for a significant payout if a claim is successful. Without VITA or other appropriate protection, the individual Advocate could be exposed to costs against him/her should a claim succeed.

Regards,

Ian Thompson OAM

Manager, Regional Implementation Group 2

Region 3 Update – Vic, SA,TAS

Who could have predicted the disruption that has occurred in 2020? ATDP of course has not been immune to that disruption, I acknowledge that candidates, mentors and ESOs have largely done the best they can to continue training.

As the Regional Manager I have been well supported by the Regional Mentors, the PSO and the ATDP hierarchy. My main aim has been and continues to be, to encourage training and be flexible particularly in relation to the assignment of DVATrain eLearning units. Every request is considered on its merits.

COVID-19 restrictions are being relaxed across RIG 3 to varying degrees (this could change on short notice), allowing ESOs, veterans, candidates and mentors to become more active in relation to ATDP training. I am conducting a Work Experience Log and DVATrain audit to encourage and suggest ways forward in training.

A RIG3 meeting (via WEBEX) was conducted on 13 November attended by the chair Capability Framework Management Group, the National Training Manager, Regional Mentors and the PSO. The topics of discussion varied but mainly concentrated on training and its associated administration.

Candidates waiting for Consolidation & Assessment
- Compensation level 1 x 6
- Compensation level 2 x 5
- Compensation level 3 x 1
- Wellbeing level 1 x 6
- Wellbeing level 2 x 1

Advocates waiting for Recognition of Prior Learning
- Compensation level 2 x 1
- Compensation level 3 x 4
- Wellbeing level 1 x 1
- Wellbeing level 2 x3

Mentor Notifications
- eLearning via DVATrain x 7 Consolidation & Assessment x 4

New Enrolments
- Compensation level 1 x 2
- Compensation level 2 x 1
- Wellbeing level 1 x 5
- Wellbeing level 2 x 1

Archived

- Compensation level 1 x 1 *(training)*
- Compensation level 2 x *1 (training)*
- Wellbeing level 2 x 1*(accredited)*

Remain wise, safe and well.

Brian Milner

Manager, Regional Implementation Group

Continuing Professional Development

Dear Advocates, another year has almost gone by and what a year it's been. Somehow we've seen it through, and hopefully 2021 will be better as the pandemic retreats into the background, the economy bounces back, and we start resuming some sort of normality again, including conducting regular ATDP assessment programs. And then of course there's xmas, which is just around the corner, hopefully we can all catch up with family and friends and reflect on the year that was, and plan for what will keep us occupied and interested in 2021.

In this last CPD article for the year, I'd like to touch on the data and let you know of some great offerings for Mentors that will be coming up early in the New Year.

To the data, I've had a quick look at our management data for the year and there are presently 311 advocates who are completely up to date with CPD, 151 advocates who still need to make up some points, but are well on the way to achieving those points, and 113 advocates who have not started CPD at all but have a CPD obligation. For those who haven't started, I encourage you to have a look at the CPD workspace when you log into CPD next and see if there is anything you would like to do. I think once you start looking you'll realise a lot of the information is beneficial and actually interesting! Not the least because it's been developed by experts in the military advocacy field and is directly relevant to your advocacy skills.

Secondly, to some great developments for Mentors. At a meeting of ATDP Presenters and Assessors in Sydney in December 2019, it was identified that as most Mentors had gained their endorsement to be a mentor via the Recognition of Prior Learning pathway, very few, if any, had ever had any direct experience of the eLearning modules that their Mentees were required to complete as part of their learning pathway. The question was 'How can a Mentor provide meaningful feedback to a Mentee about the content and learnings in an eLearning module without having done it themselves?'

To address this situation, Mentors will soon be able to complete all relevant eLearning modules that their Mentees are doing with the added benefit of being able to earn CPD points. Mentors will be able to register their intent to participate by completing an On-line application form. This form will be found in the CPD Homepage by going to Workplace Activities, clicking on the item Mentor eLearning and once completed, the form can then be submitted online. The Mentor eLearning is still under development but will be available to Mentors early in the new-year and I'll provided more detailed information then.

The ATDP also recently trialled an assessed "Mentoring in the ATDP" Course, based on the unit of competency TAEDEL404 Mentor in the workplace. Due to COVID restrictions, the trial was conducted as a distance education course, although the plan is to provide it in face-to-face mode when this is possible. The course is aimed at Regional Mentors and Advocates who may be required to mentor other mentors.

A non-assessed version of the course has been developed to be made available to all ATDP mentors as a CPD Module. The CPD Mentoring Module consists of 5 units, each worth 2 CPD points. Each unit is provided as a PowerPoint presentation with audio and a short quiz, much like the CPD Update Units. Although the units may be undertaken in any order, the most benefit will be gained from completing them in sequence. The 5 units are:

- Mentoring in the ATDP Context
- Understanding Diversity in Learning Approaches
- Communications, Reflective Practice and the WEL
- Providing Mentoring Support
- Monitoring Mentoring

Mentors must view the PowerPoint presentation and gain 100% in the quiz to receive the 2 CPD points for each unit. The CPD Mentoring Module should be available on the ATDP CPD website shortly. Both of these Units are under development and will be available soon.

Further help? If you are having problems in meeting your CPD obligations or you have any general questions relating to CPD, please contact the CPD Team at cpd@atdp.org.au

"As this is the last article from me this year I wish all advocates a happy Christmas and great new year and a special mention to thank you for your service to veterans and their families through what has been a most difficult year".

Regards,

Brett Warner

CPD Team Leader

Letters to the Editor

Do you have a 'Letter to the Editor' about advocacy? The Update and Advocacy News are wanting your stories to tell..

If you would like to submit a letter or article please send it to: ATDP.COMMUNICATIONS@dva.gov.au

Program Support Update

The Program Support team are currently working closely with the National Training Manager to provide assistance in planning for programs in the upcoming year. The PSOs back of house involvement includes checking the availability of venue hire and a range of other administrative responsibilities, including monitoring COVID-19 compliance requirements in individual States, before making particular dates live.

Following discussions with the National Training Manager we are giving a high priority to candidates on the Consolidation and Assessment (C&A) Ready list and are looking to make offers as soon as practical in the New Year to start the process of clearing those awaiting these programs. We currently have the following numbers of candidates on the Ready List:

- 77 x candidates for RPL 1-4
- 73 x candidates for C&A 1-3

With activities picking back up, this means more enquiries and emails coming through for the Program Support Officers (PSOs). We are focussed on ensuring that there is a smooth resumption of programs in the coming months.

It is business as usual for the other Program Support Officer tasks despite the recent lockdown in Adelaide.

From myself and the PSO Team I would like to wish you all a Merry Xmas and happy New year.

Elizabeth Owen
Program Support Team Leader

IT Projects Update

Blessen Babu is the resident ATDP IT specialist and provides support to the National Training Manager, the CPD team and the Program Manager on multiple IT projects including the ATDP website, AAR, Online Management System and the CPD online portal.

My ATDP priorities for the past month have been:

- Preliminary work creating a new DVAtrain Mentor eLearning unit is currently underway. The Regional Mentor interface and CPD admin interface are currently being tested.

- The ATDP user password recovery for all users is being strengthened and this option will available shortly.

- The security testing recommendations for the ATDP website are being implemented and the website will be ready for another round of security checking in the coming weeks.

- I am currently organising a group email to ESOs regarding CPD compliance.

- A candidate interface for the mentor eLearning module is under development which includes the presentation and quiz. The new module will be available in mid-December.

- I have continued to make changes and improve the upcoming Orderly Room Blog functionalities for the ATDP website. The development and implementation of this function has been delayed due to website security testing priorities and will be implemented in the new year.

Wayne's Words of Wisdom

Wayne's Words of Wisdom this month is an old *Chinese proverb.*
Chinese proverbs *(諺語, yànyǔ)* are popular sayings taken from literature, history, and famous people such as philosophers. The expressions are often used colloquially as statements of wisdom or advice. The Chinese language has over 100,000 characters, and about one in five persons speaks some or the other form of it, all over the world.

The quote for this month is…

The one who plants the tree is not the one who will enjoy its shade.

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ATDP Contacts Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAR	Accredited Advocate Register
AP	Authorised Person *(within the AAR)*
ATDP	Advocacy Training and Development Program
C&A	Consolidation and Assessment Program
C1	Compensation Advocate Level 1
C2	Compensation Advocate Level 2
C3	Compensation Advocate Level 3
C4	Compensation Advocate Level 4
W1	Wellbeing Advocate Level 1
W2	Wellbeing Advocate Level 2
W3	Wellbeing Advocate Level 3
CoP	Community of Practice
ESO	Ex-Service Organisation
MTS	Major Training Services *(ATDP's RTO)*
PSO	Program Support Officer
RIG	Regional Implementation Group
RM1, 2 and 3	Regional Managers for the 3 ATDP Regional Implementation Groups
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SoA	Statement of Attainment
TIP	Training and Information Program
UoC	Unit of Competency
VITA	Veterans Indemnity and Training Association https://web.atdp.org.au/docs/vita/VITABrochure2019.pdf
WEL	Workplace Experience Log

Merry Christmas