



# ATDP Update

October 2020

## *Roger's view*

Hullo again,

The 'Big Day' that many of us had been eagerly looking forward to has come and gone but, seemingly, nothing has changed. Why is it so ?

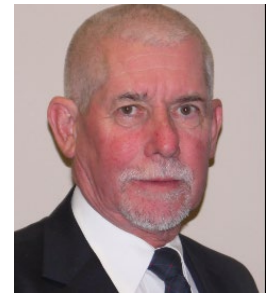
I speak, of course, of the 2020-21 Federal Budget which was handed down last night (6<sup>th</sup> October), and which many of us had been led to believe would contain significant announcements in relation to the Government's responses to the Productivity Commission Report, the Veterans' Advocacy and Support Services Scoping Study and the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade report on *Transition from the ADF*.

After the budget I asked the Department if, following the Budget, they would like to offer any information relevant to ATDP in this edition of the Update and the response is included for your information.

Alas, apart from the establishment of a Joint Transition Authority headed by BRIG Wade Stothart which attracted \$17.7 M in the Defence budget and additional funding, above the \$ 30.0 M announced last year, for an additional Veteran Wellbeing Centre (probably in Tasmania which was not included in the six centres announced last year) which gets \$5.05 M, there was no mention of advocacy apart from the Veteran Family Advocate in the preamble to the DVA Portfolio Budget Statement. So, it seems we must wait now until the May 2021-22 Budget Statement for news of the Government's response to these important reports which will have been finalised nearly two years previously by then.

Last month we conducted an on-line Level 2 Wellbeing, Consolidation and Assessment (C&A) program with six candidates. This brings to five the number of on-line C&A programs we have conducted so we now have a fairly good understanding of the pros and cons of on-line conduct of those parts of the program that are normally face-to-face. It is perhaps instructive to understand exactly what proportion of our learning pathway programs is delivered face-to-face.

As you are aware the VET training model involves 70% OJT, 20% mentoring and informal learning and 10% formal learning. All ATDP formal learning is conducted on-line with the exception of the Level 1 Compensation, Veterans' Entitlements Act module for which an on-line module is presently being developed. Our only face to face requirements are Consolidation (revision) and Assessment programs in the learning pathway and our Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment programs. While we do take the opportunity to conduct the suicide awareness program, safeTalk, it is not a formal requirement of the Units of Competency and there is not an on-line version of that program available. Generally



speaking, our Training and Assessment Team are pretty much of the view that, given the importance of interpersonal relationships in Military Advocacy, conduct of the summative assessment needs to be face to face. I often ask the question “Would you be happy to be operated on by a brain surgeon who gained their qualification on-line?”

In conclusion I must reiterate the importance of ensuring that your ESO complies with the requirements of the Insurance Underwriter if their Professional Indemnity insurance is through the Veterans’ Indemnity and Training Association (VITA). A recent case has highlighted the need to ensure that you personally have a copy of a Letter of Authorisation to act on behalf of your ESO if they are insured through VITA. Without such authorisation your ESO’s PI insurance is in jeopardy and liability in such a case could fall directly to you.

Like you all, I wish that this blip in our great program would go away so we could carry on our important work at a greater pace.

I do hope to catch up in person in the not too distant future.

My best wishes and thanks to you all – and please keep safe and keep your distance,

**Roger**



**STOP PRESS 8<sup>TH</sup> October 3:41 PM extracts from DVA Minister Chester Press Release**

## **INTERIM RESPONSE TO PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REPORT AND FINDINGS FROM THE TPI REVIEW**

THE ex-service community can be assured of the Government’s commitment to putting veterans and their families first with an interim response to the Productivity Commission report, *A Better Way to Support Veterans*, tabled in Parliament today.

“The Productivity Commission’s report is wide ranging and complex, and we are committed to consulting with the ex-service community to consider and address the remaining recommendations as part of our final response to be provided as part of the 2021–22 Budget,” Mr Chester said.

“The Government believes major reform of the veteran support system, particularly to legislation and entitlements, should be carefully considered and implemented incrementally to limit disruption and ensure it best meets the future needs of our veterans and their families.”

The Government will also respond to the recommendations from the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into transition from the Australian Defence Force and the Veterans’ Advocacy and Support Services Scoping Study in the 2021–22 Budget.

Full Press Release link: [http://minister.dva.gov.au/media\\_releases/2020/oct/va114.htm](http://minister.dva.gov.au/media_releases/2020/oct/va114.htm)

## ***Message to ATDP volunteers from Liz Cosson AM CSC, Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs***

The Government has announced the 2020-21 Budget which includes targeted support for mental health and wellbeing of our veterans and their families, and provides for those transitioning to support them into meaningful employment. The budget also includes an interim response to the Productivity Commission Report, A Better Way to Support Veterans. While it does address a number of recommendations from the Productivity Commission report, the Government has advised a final response to this report, the Veterans' Advocacy and Support Services Scoping Study and the Committee's report on Transition from the Australian Defence Force will now be provided in the 2021-22 Budget.

As you know, in March 2020, the Government deferred handing down the 2020-21 Budget to allow more time for the economic and fiscal impacts of the coronavirus to be better understood. In the end, given the events of the last six months, the budget handed down this week has a focus on economic recovery and mental health support.

I thought it important to assure you I remain committed to continuing to provide support to Ex-Service Organisations so they can assist veterans, particularly in expanding the importance of wellbeing advocacy, and we will be working to develop and improve how this support is provided. For many years DVA has supported the ongoing role of ESO advocacy through BEST grants and the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP).

DVA is already working with ESORT to review the overall BEST grants program. I appreciate this is an important piece of work. I also want to acknowledge the success of the ATDP, which has been possible due to the support of the many ESO volunteers who have worked tirelessly in professionalising and accrediting advocate training. I believe that creating professional standards for advocates will build on the success of the ATDP and so should also be a consideration for the BEST review. Doing so will ensure DVA's support is directed to meeting the changing advocacy needs of veterans across Australia.

Without doubt the single most important factor in the extraordinary success, or more correctly, successes of the ATDP program and more broadly veterans advocacy, has been (and remains) the support and expertise provided by volunteers.

I know that amongst the ATDP volunteers and advocacy community more broadly there has been some frustration in regards to the suspension of 'face to face' training, including ATDP consolidation and assessment programs, as part of DVA's broader COVID – 19 response. I understand that since the initial suspension of training in April 2020 that the ATDP Training and Assessment team has been responsible for the development and implementation of the on-line delivery of Level 1 and more recently some Level 2 consolidation and assessment activities. I warmly commend them for their initiative and ground breaking work in moving to this new mode. Online delivery methods open up new opportunities for volunteers in rural and remote areas to access training which is a great step forward.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all of the ATDP volunteers for their on-going patience and perseverance during what has been a particularly challenging year and their commitment to providing support to our veteran community.

Liz Cosson AM CSC  
Secretary

## National Training Manager Report

### Level 1 C&A requirements

At the outset of the COVID-19 shutdown, we relaxed the requirements for candidates who had become eligible for consolidation and assessment (C&A) at level 1 to enrol in the level 2 unit. Under normal circumstances a candidate had to undertake C&A and have their statement of attainment issued before they could enrol in level 2.

Some mentors have taken this to mean that, if a candidate completes the requirements for level 2, they are no longer required to undertake level 1 C&A. This is incorrect as the level 1 qualification is a pre-requisite for level 2. In addition, the level 1 C&A is a valuable learning experience as well as a summative assessment for that level.

As a result, no candidates are being flagged as ready for level 2 C&A if they do not have a statement of attainment issued for level 1.

### New eLearning units

DVA is in the process of updating many of the eLearning units our candidates share with DVA staff. They are also having new units written such as one for the VEA which has been sadly ignored in the past. At the same time there have been changes made to the learning management system, DVAttrain, which may have resulted in some candidates losing visibility of units already completed or even losing progress results for units not yet completed.

If you think you are affected by these changes, please contact the program support office in Adelaide for assistance.

### Resumption of normal programming

While the COVID lockdown is becoming less strict, DVA does not support any 'face to face' ATDP programs until sometime after 1 January 2021, which will be subject to review in December. .

During the lockdown, we have conducted a number of programs using the meeting software Webex. The efficacy of these programs is debateable and even the participants have commented on the lack of ability to just chat with others and increase their own networks.

All the trainer/assessors on those programs are using their own equipment which lacks that which is required to present in this way. For this reason, no more online assessments will be conducted in this way.



## Assessment evidence

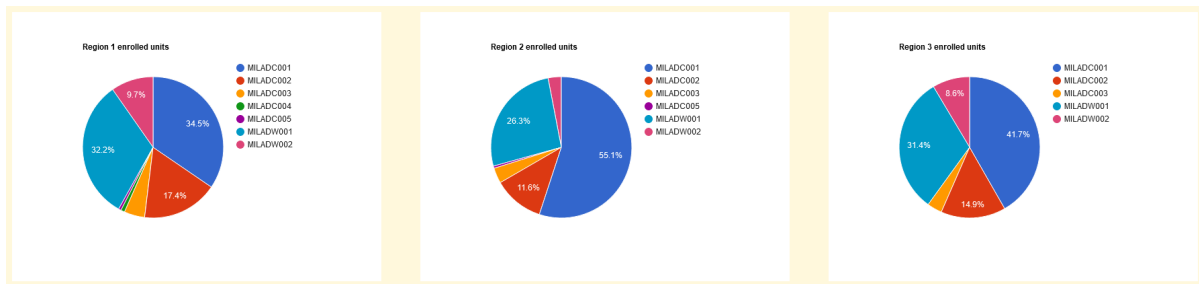
During one of the online programs we found that the submission of the evidence to validate WEL entries prior to the program has great advantages. In the past many people were arriving for C&A without the required evidence. This put a lot of strain on both the candidates and the assessors. Submission of the validating evidence prior to the program meant that where there was a shortfall in the evidence, it could be overcome before the start of the program.

This prior submission of evidence will be a feature of future face to face programs. If the evidence is found to be wanting, the candidate will not be able to attend the program.

## Budget announcement

Due to the announcement in the budget regarding programs targeting the wellbeing of veterans and their families, we have already begun to consider strategies and curriculum changes which may need to be made.

The unit of competency distribution across the regions is one case in point. From the figures below it can be seen that wellbeing unit of competency enrolments in region 2 are proportionally lower than in the other regions. It may be that ESOs will have to engender greater interest in wellbeing advocacy to ensure they are able to meet the demand.



Until next month.

Regards,

**National Training Manager**

## Region 1 Update – Qld, NT

### Region 1 Currently has:

- 23 advocates awaiting an RPL program (4 Comp, 17 Wellbeing)
- 22 advocates awaiting a C&A program (12 Comp, 10 Wellbeing)
- 1 SOA was issued for Region 1 in September 2020

As some restrictions continue into another month it is still difficult to progress any training programs. A distance learning Mentor Course is being trialled with a dozen Mentors for evaluation of the content and process. It requires the use of IT strategies and equipment by advocates, which it is argued will be the way of the future. Current pressure from DVA is to make training into an online learning mode.



The last month has again highlighted the need for improved communication networks between communities of practice within the Region as ESOs, especially those that are remote, require support with the mentoring of new potential advocates. Once again, digital platforms are being utilised and senior advocates may need to focus more on supporting others rather than being the ones to complete primary claims.

Regards,

***Dr Bob Grandin***

A/g Manager, Regional Implementation Group 1

## Region 2 Update – NSW, ACT, WA

**NIL to report this month.**

Regards,

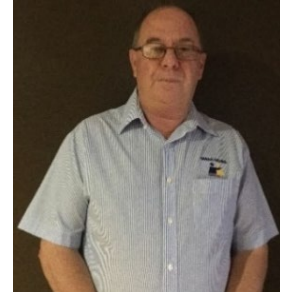
***Ian Thompson OAM***

Manager, Regional Implementation Group 2



## Region 3 Update – Vic, SA,TAS

I've looked back at my Update reports for 2020 and on the first read it seemed that not much has changed relating to COVID-19. On reading again and, taking into account the present situation across the three states there are restrictions, which present varied challenges for training. I'm pleased that in most instances where possible training has continued albeit, at a modified and reduced pace.



Mentors, Mentees (Candidates) and ESOs I encourage you to keep in touch with each other to ensure training continues at a pace that fits best with your circumstances. Some options you may want to consider are:

- Arrange a three-way (Mentor, Mentee & Veteran) interview by telephone or electronic means. One only is allowed per Work Experience Log (WEL).
- Request early assignment of eLearning unit/s. Each request will be considered on merit after a review is conducted of the current (WEL) entries
- Access the ATDP Homepage, open Documents and access the Handbooks that are appropriate to your learning path ( those not in your learning path are also well worth a read ).You will find that the Documents are a very useful reference in your role as an advocate.

For those of you that have not yet met your past year/s CPD commitments and, for those of you who have not commenced for this current cycle now, is the time to start.

<b><u>Candidates waiting for Consolidation &amp; Assessment</u></b>	Wellbeing level 1 x 4 Wellbeing level 2 x 1 Compensation level 1 x 2 Compensation level 2 x 5 Compensation level 3 x 1
<b><u>Advocates waiting for Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment</u></b>	Wellbeing level 1 x 1 Wellbeing level 2 x 3 Compensation level 2 x 2 Compensation level 3 x 4
<b><u>Mentor requests</u></b>	eLearning via DVATrain x 11 Consolidation & Assessments x 4
<b><u>New enrolments</u></b>	Wellbeing x 5 Compensation x 3

Remain wise, safe and well,

**Brian Milner,**

Manager, Regional Implementation Group 3



## Continuing Professional Development

Dear advocates

I thought I would open this month's post with a quote.

*Some people say they have 20 years' experience, when in reality, they have 1 years' experience repeated 20 times. - Richie Norton*

Now, not everyone might agree with this quote and it may not be applicable to all, but to me, this is what CPD is all about. It provides an easy to access platform to update your skills, appraise you of new practices and alert you to developments in your chosen discipline, be it compensation or wellbeing. We are all living with constant change, let's not stand still, take advantage of opportunities like this and work towards achieving those important 15 points each year. Now to this month's message...



To allow ESOs who authorise advocates to act on their behalf to have visibility of the CPD status of their advocates, we have developed a facility in the Accredited Advocate Register that allows ESO authorising officers to view their individual advocates' CPD information.

The CPD team will be sending this email to Authorised persons this week advising them on how to use this facility to view their advocates' CPD progress. The email is included for your information at the end of this article.



In May and June 2020 the ATDP contacted individual advocates to discuss CPD. In early November the ATDP will also be contacting ESO management committees advising them that authorised representatives have

access to their advocates CPD information so they can identify those that may require assistance in meeting their CPD obligations before 30 June 2021.

*'We are always on the lookout for new CPD material and would like to hear from anybody who has ideas about what they would like to see in the CPD space. This is your chance to have input into the learning elements of CPD and to help this very small team of volunteers to come up with new material. If you have any suggestions please contact us at [cpd@atdp.org.au](mailto:cpd@atdp.org.au)'.*

**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](mailto:cpd@atdp.org.au)

Regards, **Brett Warner** CPD Team Leader



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## **Letter to Authorised Persons**

### **ATDP - Continuing Professional Development Status of Advocates**

Dear Advocate

You are receiving this email because you are listed as an Authorised Person for **[ESO]** on the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) Accredited Advocate Register (AAR).

The ATDP has developed a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program that enables advocates' learning to continue beyond completion of a particular Unit of Competency. CPD is a points-based program similar to that used by many professions and it complements an ESO's own training and development activities. Advocates can access CPD activities and have visibility of their progress by use of password access to their ATDP CPD module.

To allow ESOs who authorise advocates to act on their behalf to have visibility of the CPD status of their advocates, we have developed a facility in the AAR that allows ESO authorising officers to view their individual advocates' CPD information.

This facility is designed to assist ESOs in identifying whether an advocates CPD status may have any implications for their professional indemnity insurance arrangements or other matters specific to the operation or rules of their individual organisations.

To access this information on the AAR:

- Login to the AAR using your normal login details: [www.advocateregister.org.au/](http://www.advocateregister.org.au/)
- In the list of advocates assigned to your ESO you will see that the names are highlighted
- Click on the name, and the CPD status of the advocate will be displayed
- ESO authorising officers can access this information at any time

In May and June 2020 the ATDP contacted individual advocates by phone and email to discuss their CPD progress and will be writing to ESO management committees in November 2020 regarding how they can monitor their advocates CPD status. As part of this communication we will inform ESOs that authorised officers such as yourself have access to their advocates CPD information.

In addition, to ensure our contact details and name for the Secretary of your ESO is accurate, we have included a section in the AAR under **Executive Officer** where these details can be recorded. It would be appreciated if you could obtain and record this information in the Executive Officer box provided in the AAR.

As a reminder, advocates who have been issued a Course in Military Advocacy Statement of Attainment, and who are not on a learning pathway, have a CPD obligation of achieving 15 CPD points each year (or pro-rata) on a rolling 3 year basis. Where an advocate is 'In Arrears' for three consecutive years they will become 'Not Current' and may lose their ATDP accreditation and be

removed from the AAR. Whilst most advocates are actively working on their CPD, some advocates may become 'Not Current' on 1 July 2021 if they do not complete their required CPD activities.

Advocates can login to their CPD information on the ATDP website at [web.atdp.org.au/](http://web.atdp.org.au/). If you have any questions about this email or CPD in general please contact the CPD Team at [cpd@atdp.org.au](mailto:cpd@atdp.org.au)



The Department of Defence 'Engage' website has recently added links to the ATDP website and the Accredited Advocate Register under 'Helplines'.

Engage is the online portal that current, transitioning, and former ADF members; their families, and/or those involved in their support can use to locate support services.

Please login to Engage at <https://engage.forcenet.gov.au>

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## 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:  
[communications@atdp.org.au](mailto:communications@atdp.org.au)



## Program Support Update

As you are now aware, face-to-face programs have been suspended until 1 January 2021. We have conducted a Welfare Level 2 Consolidation and Assessment on the 14 September but no further online programs are scheduled at this stage.

Despite the slow-down in programs, it's 'Business as Usual' for the Program Support team who are performing many housekeeping duties during the suspension of training. The telephone calls and emails are still coming through from advocates and ESOs with a range of support issues which is keeping the PSO team busy and in contact with the Advocacy community.

Spring is in the air, and this is a the perfect time for trainees to work through the Milestones in their Workplace Experience Logbook (WEL) where State community contact rules allow. It's also a perfect time to catch up on your CPD activities or perhaps eLearning.

If you have any questions you would like to ask about this, or encounter any problems with any aspect of the administration of your training or CPD, please contact our Program Support Officers who are here to help you or put you in touch with the Training and Assessment or CPD Team members where necessary. Their contact details are at the end of this newsletter.


I hope you are enjoying the spring weather, keep safe.

**If you would like any assistance from the Program Support Officers during this period, please feel free to contact us. It's business as usual!**

Regards,

***Elizabeth Owen***

Program Support Team Leader



**Training  
news**

## 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.

**My ATDP priorities for the past month have been:**

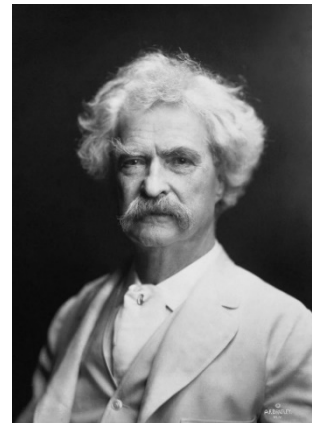
- The CPD start date calculation has changed. The CPD start date for all advocates is now the date of their first Statement of Attainment for Recognition of Prior Learning candidates, and the date of the most recent Statement of Attainment for training candidates.

- The CPD case study modules have been updated with reading instructions added for each case study.
- An action log has been added in the Accredited Advocate Register to record the adding and removing of advocates from each ESO profile.
- The mentor acceptance process has been automated for existing candidates and linked to the mentor.
- Create an email template in preparation to send out emails to all AAR authorised persons
- Supported the security test process for the ATDP website.
- Continued to develop processes to improve the upcoming Orderly Room Blog functionalities for the ATDP website.

## Wayne's Words of Wisdom

This month's words of wisdom comes from **Mark Twain**.

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (November 30, 1835 – April 21, 1910), known by his pen name Mark Twain, was an American writer, humorist, entrepreneur, publisher, and lecturer. He was lauded as the "greatest humorist [the United States] has produced", and has been called "the father of American literature". His novels include *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and its sequel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), the latter often called "The Great American Novel".



***"It's better to be an optimist who is sometimes wrong than a pessimist who is always right".***

## ATDP Contacts

<b>ATDP</b>	Information	<a href="mailto:info@atdp.org.au">info@atdp.org.au</a>
<b>ATDP Enquiries</b>	Enquiries	<a href="mailto:ATDPenquiries@dva.gov.au">ATDPenquiries@dva.gov.au</a>
<b>ATDP Communications</b>	Communications	<a href="mailto:communications@atdp.org.au">communications@atdp.org.au</a>
<b>ATDP National Training Manager</b>	Greg Hoving	<a href="mailto:ntm@atdp.org.au">ntm@atdp.org.au</a>
<b>Continuing Professional Development Manager</b>	Brett Warner	<a href="mailto:cpd@atdp.org.au">cpd@atdp.org.au</a>
<b>Regional Manager 1 Qld/NT</b>	Bob Grandin	<a href="mailto:rm1@atdp.org.au">rm1@atdp.org.au</a>
<b>Regional Manager 2 NSW/WA/ACT</b>	Ian Thompson	<a href="mailto:rm2@atdp.org.au">rm2@atdp.org.au</a>
<b>Regional Manager 3 Vic/SA/Tas</b>	Brian Milner	<a href="mailto:rm3@atdp.org.au">rm3@atdp.org.au</a>
<b>Program Support Team Leader</b>	Elizabeth Owen	<a href="mailto:psomanager@atdp.org.au">psomanager@atdp.org.au</a> 08 8290 0499 or 0484 093 016
<b>Region 1 Program Support Officer</b> SA time, 8.30-4.00 Mon-Fri	Amanda Williams	<a href="mailto:ps01@atdp.org.au">ps01@atdp.org.au</a> 08 8290 0283 or 0484 820 620
<b>Region 2 Program Support Officer</b> SA time, 8.30-4.00 Mon-Fri	Elizabeth Owen	<a href="mailto:ps02@atdp.org.au">ps02@atdp.org.au</a> 08 8290 0499 or 0484 093 016
<b>Region 3 Program Support Officer</b> SA time, 8.30-4.00 Mon-Fri	Phil Boys	<a href="mailto:ps03@atdp.org.au">ps03@atdp.org.au</a> 08 8290 0273 or 0484 594 791

## ATDP Contacts Acronyms and Abbreviations

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