



# ATDP Update! *February 2023*

## Message from the ATDP Team

On behalf of the DVA ATDP team, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped with the program over the years, especially considering the impact of the disruptions we faced due to COVID.

The Department is deeply appreciative of the role you play to assist ex-Service Organisations (ESOs) in giving our veterans and their families the advocacy support they need.

The ATDP is now six years old and continues to deliver advocate training, development and support to ESOs.

Since 1 July 2022, ATDP and the team delivering the program has moved from the Community Policy Branch to the VEA Compensation and Support (VCS) Branch in the Client Benefits Division (CBD). The Deputy Commissioner of Victoria is responsible for overseeing the ATDP operations and program delivery. The internal change of responsibility has not changed the delivery of the program to the advocacy community.

We are very excited about re-launching the ATDP update. It is hoped that as we progress, it becomes an important communication channel to the ATDP community. It was also valuable to meet with the Regional Managers in-person on 9 February to discuss a range of ATDP matters and strengthen our communication.

Thank you for your continuous support to veterans and their families, and your contribution to improving the delivery of ATDP.

Lee Barker

Assistant Director for the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP)

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## Program Support

We move into a new year and the team is looking forward to supporting the ATDP community.

Amanda Williams, Philip Boys and Samone Mason are still heading up the Program Support team working on the ground with ESOs, mentors, advocates and trainees. We welcome a new addition to the team to help Amanda in Region 1. Steven Hayter joined the team in November 2022, and will be job sharing with Amanda. See his welcome to the team below.

This Program Support update includes statistics which may be of interest. It's good to reflect back and see just how far we've come and map out the road ahead.

If you have any questions on any of the reports, tables, charts – please contact Elizabeth Owen, the Program Support Team Leader for further clarification.



We hope the year ahead for all is rewarding. The Program Support Team would like to thank you for your ongoing support and service to the veteran community. Keep up the great work!

#### Calendar Year Nominations for New Training

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (Feb)
200	855	769	613	358	355	368	47

In 2017, 2018 and 2019 we had a large percentage of advocates who were already trained in the previous program (TIP) and who were applying for Recognised Prior Learning (RPL).

#### Candidates Currently Undergoing Training as at 10 Feb 23

##### Trainee Advocates

Compensation Level 1	219
Compensation Level 2	91
Compensation Level 3	26
Wellbeing Level 1	149
Wellbeing Level 2	24
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>509</b>

#### Advocates Attending Program Assessments

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (Feb)
Level 1 C&A	71	47	71	59	6
Level 2 C&A	15	5	39	40	6
Level 3 C&A	6	0	11	3	5
RPL Levels 1-4	143	13	62	80	4
Basics in Mentoring	0	0	27	24	
TAEDEL404 Mentoring in the Workplace	0	6	20	6	
PSPGEN305 Workplace Mentoring				8	
Mentoring Workshop				5	5
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>26</b>

NOTE: To assess RPL candidates we could have up to a maximum of 15 in each program. With Consolidation and Assessment (C&A) programs, we have a cap at 8 per program. The low numbers in 2020 were mainly due a reduction of programs due to COVID.



## Meet the new member of the Team!



I'm Steve Hayter, new to the PSO role in Region 1 (QLD and NT) and I'm job sharing (Tuesdays and Fridays) with Amanda Williams here in Adelaide.

I have about 20 years experience in contact centre roles ranging from service consultant, team leader, call quality coach, and support. A highlight was working in the Philippines for 3 months in 2010 with Telstra helping to establish an Industry Partner call centre.

More recently I've established myself in the APS working as a contractor for the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman, DSS Community Grants Hub, and now DVA – ATDP.

During my other 5 days of the week I work with my partner as a mentor and coach online in our burgeoning boutique business. I'm a step dad to our 9 year old daughter and recently we added Nala to our family, a 6 year old rescue cat who just had her litter adopted. She is very sweet.

I look forward to getting to know you all.

## Completing the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) Checklists

As soon as a candidate is ready for Consolidation and Assessment, they are contacted to complete the final step prior to attending an online program. They are asked to complete the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) Checklist to ensure all evidence that is required at assessment is ready and at hand.

The sooner the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) checklists are returned complete, the sooner an invitation will be received to a program. We have scheduled programs available for all those who are ready, so make sure you return your PoE checklist early.

You will note in the latest WELs that the PoE's are incorporated into the process. This will enable trainees and their mentors to validate accumulated evidence as they go along.

For those who do not have the PoE as part of their WEL, you can still prepare your files and save them as soft copies so that the you are able to easily outline the detail when it is required.

## Maintaining the ATDP Advocacy Register (AR)

There are many benefits in keeping the ATDP Advocacy Register (AR) up-to-date. The register is an online source where anyone seeking help from advocates, especially veterans and their families, can come and search for a local advocate. Individual advocate names are protected and not displayed in the search results. Only the ESO contact person is listed together with the advocates' level of qualifications. The AR is managed by the ESO Authorised Person/s who needs to regularly update the contact details. The ESO Authorised Person can also add/remove advocates from their ESO AR portal as necessary.

There is a requirement to update the register once every twelve months to remain current and visible on the register. If you have any questions about the AR please look at our Frequently Asked Questions on the [Advocacy Register \(advocateregister.org.au\)](http://advocateregister.org.au) or email [ATDPenquiries@dva.gov.au](mailto:ATDPenquiries@dva.gov.au)

We have recently sent out over 300 emails directly to the Authorised Persons in the ATDP Advocacy Register to ask them to update their contact details and ensure their advocates are current. If the ESO Authorised Persons need any assistance in updating the register, please contact the PSOs directly or email [ATDPenquiries@dva.gov.au](mailto:ATDPenquiries@dva.gov.au).



## Options for Progressing your Workplace Experience Logbooks (WEL)

Each WEL consists of a number of workplace experiences that trainees are required to complete as part of their workplace learning. It is important that these experiences be undertaken, wherever possible, using actual clients in real time. It is acknowledged, however, that this may not be possible or may cause excessive delays in the trainee's progression. For example, the ESO may have no DRCA or MRCA clients applying for Incapacity Payments when a trainee has reached this milestone in their WEL. Or no determinations have been received requiring a Needs Assessment to be undertaken, causing a long delay in completing that milestone. Where a Mentor has difficulty in providing a trainee with a workplace experience to match a WEL milestone, alternative methods can be employed.

In order of preference, these are:



- ✚ The Mentor may choose an historical real case from the ESO's files (preferably one of the Mentor's own clients) that matches the milestone and have the trainee work through that case as if it was the trainee's client.
- ✚ The Mentor may arrange a simulated client (played by either the Mentor or another Advocate) who's needs match the milestone requirements and have the trainee work through that case as if it was the trainee's client.
- ✚ The Mentor may email the National Training Manager and request that a Case Study be provided which the trainee can complete to meet a particular milestone.

Note that these alternatives should only be employed after all efforts are made to provide the trainee with a real workplace experience. Where one of these alternatives are employed, a note to that effect must be entered against that milestone in the trainee's WEL.

## Online Consolidation and Assessment Programs

Consolidation and Assessment (C&A) programs continue to be conducted via the Zoom meeting platform. Delivery and assessment by this method has continued to improve with time and practice, with positive feedback from both attendees and assessors.

2023 commenced with a Compensation Level 3 C&A scheduled for 31 Jan - 3 Feb. There is a Wellbeing Level 2 C&A 14 - 16 Feb and a Compensation Level 1 C&A 21 - 23 Feb. Further programs will be scheduled as candidates complete their WELs and become eligible for assessment.



## One-on-One RPL Meetings

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) remains available to experienced advocates who believe they can meet the assessment requirements of the Course in Military Advocacy without the need for further training. It should be noted that this is not meant to be a method of avoiding the training pathway, but rather recognition that the skills and knowledge required of the Units of Competency may have been acquired through other training and workplace experience. The RPL process consists of:

- ✚ Completion and submission of an Underpinning Knowledge Quiz (UKQ) for the level of competency being sought
- ✚ A one-on-one interview with an assessor who will ask questions about the candidate's skills and knowledge in providing Advocacy services at the level of competency being sought
- ✚ A review of evidence of the candidate providing Advocacy services at the level of competency being sought.



Candidates will be provided with a checklist of evidence that must be shown to their assessor during the RPL interview. As the interviews are being conducted online, the evidence must be in electronic format so that it can be viewed by the assessor through screen-sharing. Instructions on how to do this will be explained to candidates by their assessor. Candidates who cannot access electronic copies of their evidence find completion of their assessment significantly delayed.

Those Advocates who wish to undergo assessment via the RPL process need to be nominated by their ESO in the normal manner.

## Advocate/ESO Consultation – Combined Level 1

Feedback from ESOs and from consultation with advocates and Advocacy groups as part of the reaccreditation of the Course in Military Advocacy in late 2021 have indicated a need in some ESOs for Advocates trained in both Compensation and Wellbeing to allow a more holistic approach to supporting veterans and their dependants. The indication is that this would be appropriate at Level 1, with advocates then specialising in either Compensation or Wellbeing at Level 2 (or continuing on in both streams if desired).

Planning is underway to undertake a wide consultation with ESO and Advocates to ascertain:

- ✚ whether there is need for dual-streamed Level 1 Advocates in ESOs;
- ✚ if such a need is identified, whether this need is universal, or if single-streamed Level 1 Advocates are still required;
- ✚ what skills and knowledge are required of a combined-stream Level 1 Advocate;
- ✚ what changes, if any, are required to the Level 1 Units of Competency; and
- ✚ options for training/assessing candidates.

More information of this consultation process will be released shortly.

## Compensation Level 4

Planning is underway to resurrect Compensation Level 4 Advocacy training. Consultation with the principal providers of this Level 4 training is being conducted with the aim of scheduling a Level 4 C&A in late 2023 or early 2024.



## Mentor Training

When ATDP commenced in 2016, the training of Mentors to undertake workplace training of new Advocates was conducted as part of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Workshops. RPL Workshops were being conducted regularly to allow practicing advocates trained under the TIP program to gain ATDP Statements of Attainment. Those assessed at Level 2 or above were also trained as mentors at the conclusion of the RPL process.

As the need for RPL Workshops reduced (concurrent with the outbreak of COVID), the process for RPL assessments was changed to individual presentations of evidence via the Zoom platform. This meant that training of mentors also had to change.

From mid-2020, two types of Mentor training were introduced:

- Basics in Mentoring. Designed for all ATDP mentors, this half-day program was designed to introduce the concepts of mentoring and provide information of the specific requirements for mentoring in the context of the Course in Military Advocacy.
- Mentoring in the ATDP. Designed for Regional Mentors and experienced advocates managing multiple mentors, this two-day assessed program expanded on the content of the Basics course and provided a nationally accredited Statement of Attainment.

When first introduced, the Mentoring in the ATDP program was based on TAEDEL404 Mentor in the workplace, a unit from the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. From April 2022, when MTS dropped this qualification from its scope, the unit was replaced with PSPGEN035 Provide workplace mentoring from the Certificate IV in Government. Due to a restructure of that qualification, MTS becomes unable to issue Statements of Attainment for that unit after April 2023.

Options for adding a stand-alone Mentoring unit of competency from another Training Package to MTS's scope were discussed. A decision was made that instead, the Basics in Mentoring program would be increased to a full day and would be attended by all advocates conducting workplace mentoring of trainees in the Course in Military Advocacy.

The available program is now titled Mentoring Workshop. It is a full day of training conducted via Zoom, contextualised specifically for advocates providing workplace mentoring to trainees undertaking any level of the Course in Military Advocacy. It must be undertaken before an advocate is appointed as a trainee's mentor. Advocates who were trained as mentors via an RPL Workshop are strongly encouraged to attend to refresh and update their knowledge and skills. Participants are provided with a Mentor Handbook to guide them in the future.

Darryl Proud  
National Training Manager  
Major Training Services Pty Ltd

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## Region 1 Update – QLD, NT

I believe that the impact on Advocacy of the COVID period has been felt through various factors:

- lack of communication between ESOs and from DVA,
- a transfer to Assessment by IT link,
- restructuring of the DVA organisation responsible for ATDP, and
- a general loss of cohesiveness.



DVA has supported the development of direct submission of claims (My Service), the building of Wellness Hubs and has contracted the training of Advocates to an RTO. The past, where advocates felt they were a part of a team of volunteering individuals who worked to share their knowledge and train each other in the intricacies of veteran support and claims, disappeared. A commercial and bureaucratic process rose in its place. Like so many things in Australia, those that operate away from the urban centres feel they are abandoned. While the growth of veteran hubs is in itself laudable, the fact that they are individually operated, without some form of cohesion, would appear to me to be a disadvantage.

### **Advocacy and ATDP**

The first consequence of these changes is that ATDP must be recognised as a training program, supported in full by DVA. The contracted RTO has the responsibility for delivering the program outcomes, while advocate volunteers who become Mentors, provide the workplace training and experiences. Any issues with successfully achieving the associated Statement of Attainment must be addressed to DVA via the Program Support Officers (PSO).

The other consequence is that Advocacy, the support of veterans in their dealings with DVA and their wellbeing needs or claims for compensation and rehabilitation, is a separate entity, which remains the sole responsibility of the ESO. Each ESO determines the level of resources they have, both financial and in personnel, and subsequently the nature of the support they can provide to veterans. It is important to recognise that the ESO has the responsibility to provide the support to advocates so they can carry out any interaction that is needed with veterans.

### **Mentoring**

As an integral part of the work experience process, the role of mentoring remains an important process. One day workshops are held regularly and provide an outline of the issues confronting mentors, with a Mentor Handbook to guide them in the future. Those who have not participated in this workshop are encouraged to attend to ensure they are using current practices. CPD points are allocated to this workshop.

### **Communities of Practice**

My reaction to the challenges that are indicated in the preceding paragraphs is that the Region needs to develop a support network that allows individual ESOs to recognise that the support they wish to deliver to a veteran may be best delivered through the expertise of another ESO. A communication system needs to be developed where services can be delivered to meet the needs of a veteran, without an individual ESO feeling they have inadequate resources to cope. I believe that the Regional Managers must look to provide a supporting network for ESOs in their advocacy role. At this stage the RIG (Regional Implementation Group) meetings provide one pathway for challenges to be conveyed to each other and information passed to DVA.





## ATDP Update Presentations

It is planned to visit various locations and present an Update. Included in the visit will be an opportunity for ESOs to inform me of issues that are currently impeding their delivery of services to veterans. I would also like to support the development of Communities of Practice and establish communication links. I would like to include a process where ESOs or Advocates can contact me to support them in their needs to enhance their support of veterans.

I am travelling to Far North Queensland from 15-17 February and visiting Townsville, Atherton and Cairns. Other regional visits are in the planning stage. I would like to hear from ESOs that would like to host a gathering of advocates for a presentation.

Dr Bob Grandin  
Regional Manager  
[rm1@atdp.org.au](mailto:rm1@atdp.org.au)  
0409615948

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## Region 2 Update – NSW, ACT, WA

RIG 2 team held a meeting on 20 Sep last year via Microsoft Teams. Discussions were held on a range of agenda items. General comments were that as a result of the Census that more Veterans were making contact, mainly to submit or update existing claims, which has increased the workload for Advocates. The proposed Wellbeing Centre in Taree was postponed from opening and a new date will be advised in the future. Discussions ensued around the structure and roles of various members of the group.

I attended a Regional Managers Inaugural meeting held in DVA offices Melbourne for all 3 Regional Managers in October last year. This was the first of these meeting with key stakeholders for the ATDP management team within DVA. We discussed a range of issues throughout the day, with action items to be completed or investigated prior to the next meeting.

### **RIG 2 meeting 31 Jan 23:**

Meeting held in DVA offices in Sydney with a mix of in person and video link, which was effective in allowing communication across all participants.

Discussions centred around a 'Way Ahead', Structure and management co-ordination across all 3 RIG's to ensure that ATDP continues to be successful, and replace the term RIG with Regional Manager (this will be addressed at the RM meeting next week).

Discussions around access for Regional Coordinators to trainee data with their region. Also access for RC's to ATDP qualified and accredited Mentors within their regions. This was determined as ongoing due to Privacy Laws and issues surrounding access. ATDP Management will investigate further.

### **Deputy Commissioner NSW Consultative Forum Wed 8 Feb 23:**

The topic for this forum was about Transitioning from Defence. The Chairperson opened the meeting by congratulating those who were on the Australia Day Honour Roll.

AIRCDRE Karin Kooij Director General, Joint Transition Authority, provided a presentation with a question and answer session at the end. A concise presentation on what happens when a Defence member is transitioning from Defence and what support is given prior to leaving and up to 2 years post discharge.





The DVA Transition Team provided a brief on their services to a discharged member which was followed by Transition Services NSW Government.

The Deputy Commissioner DVA provided an update. DVA's continued focus for 2023 is to clearing the compensation backlog. BEST Grants is now open and closes 23 Feb 23. An update on the medical Cannabis framework was given. Further information on these is on the DVA website.

#### **DVA ATDP Meeting 9 Feb 23:**

The Director advised that the ATDP website has been updated to reflect both ATDP news/updates and RM updates. The training pathway area was discussed, and this remains ongoing. All Advocates are encouraged to check out the new website.

A schedule of meetings for the remainder of the year for RM's has been promulgated. Dates are 18 May, 17 August (this may change due to commitments prior to Vietnam Veterans Day) and 16 November.

RM3 raised concerns with the training duration process and provided a table and comments. This was discussed at length and remains ongoing with ATDP management team.

The ATDP context and roles document was discussed. This document is being updated.

It was agreed by all RM's present that they are experiencing issues with Advocates not wanting to communicate with RM's, which in turn leads to a lack of group cohesiveness. We all need to work together and engage more within our groups.

The Training Manager joined by video link and provided an update on a C1/W1 training program. Options were discussed, with RM3 advising of a 4<sup>th</sup> option. These will be discussed further via consultancy and workshops. If you feel that you would like to be part of the workshop, then submit your details to your RM.

Actions Items were discussed, and responses will be provided at the next meeting.

Remember to check out the ATDP and DVA websites for updates and general information. Be positive and keep supporting each other and the team overall.

Lorraine Grey, JP  
RIG2/Regional Manager  
ATDP

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## Region 3 Update – SA, Tas, Vic

*An error does not become a mistake until you refuse to correct it John F. Kennedy*

### PERSONNEL MATTERS

The retirement of Brian Milner in October 2021 marked the end of an era in advocacy training in Region 3. Many will recall the Training and Information Program, which ATDP replaced in 2016 and which remains the longest running ESO managed/DVA supported veteran program ever at 25 years. Brian was involved as a TIP Presenter for 22 of those 25 years!! Certainly a great example of service to fellow veterans and their families and we wish him and Sue all the best for a happy and healthy retirement.

The retirement of Brian and a couple of months before him, Ivan Standen, who were both previous TIP presenters and then ATDP Trainer/Assessors was a considerable loss not only to the Region but also to the ATDP Presenter/Assessor team. Ivan's retirement also left a vacancy in our RIG for a suitably qualified, Victorian (preferably), Wellbeing Regional Mentor. Please contact me if you are interested in taking on the role.



### ASSESSMENT STATUS REPORT 16 Jul 22 – 16 Jan 23

Candidates panelled for Consolidation & Assessment	Candidates waiting for Consolidation & Assessment	Advocates waiting for Recognition of Prior Learning
1x Compensation Level 1 1x Compensation Level 2 3x Wellbeing Level 2	6x Compensation Level 1 2x Wellbeing Level 1	2x Compensation Level 1 1x Compensation Level 3 4x Wellbeing Level 1 3x Wellbeing Level 2
Mentor Notifications (C&A)	New Enrolments	Archived
9x Compensation Level 1 3x Compensation Level 2 1x Wellbeing Level 1 2x Wellbeing Level 2	11x Compensation Level 1 4x Compensation Level 1 (RPL) 4x Compensation Level 2 3x Compensation Level 3 15x Wellbeing Level 1 4x Wellbeing Level 1 (RPL) 4x Wellbeing Level 2 3x Wellbeing Level 2 (RPL)	<u>Training</u> 8x Compensation Level 1 2x Compensation Level 2 10x Wellbeing Level 1  <u>Accredited</u> 2x Compensation Level 1 4x Compensation Level 2 1x Compensation Level 3 1x Compensation Level 4 3x Wellbeing Level 1 5x Wellbeing Level 2
SOA Issued	Program Attendance	Workshops Completed

6x Compensation Level 1 2x Compensation Level 2 1x Compensation Level 4 2x Wellbeing Level 1 1x Wellbeing Level 2 1x PSPGEN035	7x Compensation Level 1 3x Compensation Level 2 x Compensation Level 3 2x Wellbeing Level 1 1x PSPGEN035	4x Mentor Workshop
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## QUALIFICATIONS OBTAINED

Congratulations to the following on successfully completing their program since the last Update (thank you for your patience and apologies for the wait which is still averaging around 4 months from being 'ready' to being scheduled on a C&A program):

Doug	RAAF Association TAS	Compensation Level 1
Karen	RVCP Goulburn Valley VIC	Compensation Level 1
Miriam	RSL Hume Veterans Information Centre VIC	Wellbeing Level 1
Janette	Seaford RSL VIC	Wellbeing Level 1
Bianca	Devonport RSL TAS	Wellbeing Level 1
Wayne	RSL Hume Veterans Information Centre VIC	Wellbeing Level 1
Paul	Mildura RSL VIC	Wellbeing Level 1
Karin	Plympton Veterans Centre SA	Wellbeing Level 1
Jason	RSL Hume Veterans Information Centre VIC	Basics in Mentoring
Vincent	RSL Victorian Branch VIC	Compensation Level 1
Warren	MBMMC Adelaide SA	Compensation Level 1
Paul	RSL Mildura VIC	Compensation Level 1
Kuni	Plympton Veterans Centre SA	Compensation Level 1
Wayne	Geelong Surfcoast Veteran Centre VIC	Compensation Level 2
Liz	Limestone Services Hub VIC	Wellbeing Level 1
Sandra	Legacy Club of SA and Broken Hill SA	Compensation Level 1
Luke	RSL Victorian Branch VIC	Compensation Level 1
Craig	Plympton Veterans Centre SA	Compensation Level 2
Leonie	RSL SA	Compensation Level 3
Tamara	Bentleigh RSL	Wellbeing Level 1
Garry	Launceston RSL	TAEDEL404
John	Romsey Lancefield RSL	TAEDEL404
Jeff	RSL Victorian Branch	TAEDEL404
Simon		Wellbeing Level 1
Craig	Goulburn Valley Veterans' Services	Compensation Level 1
Michael	Portarlington RSL	Compensation Level 3
Justin	RSL Victorian Branch VIC	Compensation Level 2
Adrian	Launceston RSL	Compensation Level 3
Anthony	RSL Victorian Branch VIC	Compensation Level 2
Tich	Plympton Veterans Centre SA	TAEDEL404
Dianne	Plympton Veterans Centre SA	Wellbeing Level 1
Ray	Naval Association of Australia	TAEDEL404
Jason	Plympton Veterans Centre SA	Compensation Level 2
Terry	Leongatha RSL	Compensations Level 1
Ken	Port Augusta RSL	Wellbeing Level 1
Gary	Kilmore-Wallan RSL	Wellbeing Level 1
Cherylea	Adelaide Legacy	Wellbeing Level 2

Francis	Defence Shed Port Adelaide	Wellbeing Level 1
Paul	Mildura RSL	Wellbeing Level 2
Michael	Portarlington RSL	Basics in Mentoring
Janette	Seaford RSL	Wellbeing Level 2
Luke	RSL Victorian Branch VIC	Compensation Level 2
Carolyn	RSL Victorian Branch VIC	Wellbeing Level 2
Joannah	RSL Victorian Branch VIC	Compensation Level 1
Kevin	Greensborough RSL	Compensation Level 1
David	Hobart Legacy	TAEDEL404
Tracey	Plympton Veterans Centre SA	Wellbeing Level 1
Steven	RSL (Tasmania)	Compensation Level 1
Anthony	Frankston RSL	Wellbeing Level 1
Doug	RAAF Assn Tas	Wellbeing Level 1
Wayne	RSL Victorian Branch	Compensation Level 1
Richard	RSL Victorian Branch	Compensation Level 4
Natalie	RSL Victorian Branch	Compensation Level 1
Vincent	RSL Victorian Branch	Compensation Level 2
Doug	RAAF Assn Tas	Compensation Level 2
Ian	Melbourne Legacy	Basics in Mentoring
Anthony	RSL Victorian Branch	Basics in Mentoring
Wayne	RSL Hume Veterans Information Centre VIC	PSPGEN035
Amanda	Portarlington RSL	Compensation Level 1
Claire	RSL Victorian Branch	Wellbeing Level 2
Steve	RSL Victorian Branch	Compensation Level 1

## MENTOR TRAINING

Our Regional Mentors completed the TAEDL404 (PSPGEN035) – Mentor in the Workplace program last year. The two-day accredited program, which has been contextualised to ATDP requirements, is aimed at making the job easier for mentors by spelling out the requirements and providing valuable hints on how to make best use of the time spent with mentees. MTS no longer run the program but a one-day alternative has been developed although it is not an accredited program. If you are interested contact your Regional Mentor or myself to express interest.

## NATIONAL RECOGNITION OF ADVOCATES

Congratulations to the following TIP/ATDP Advocates on the recognition of their service to veterans over many years:

**Mr Ian Garry HALL**, Woodford QLD 4514 (RSL Qld)

**Mr Kevin John HUNTER**, Frankston VIC 3199 (VVAA Victoria)

**Ms Susan Jane McCALLUM**, Humpty Doo NT 0836 (RSL Qld)

**Mr John Albert McARTHUR**, Armstrong Creek VIC 3217 (Torquay RSL)



## **UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

Advocates who are close to being ready for C&A might be interested in scheduled programs coming up. If your mentor considers you are ready (or close to ready) for one of these programs then recommendation should be made to the Regional Mentor as soon as possible. ESO Authorised Persons can nominate suitably experienced candidates for the mentoring program through the Advocate Register.

Compensation L1 Consolidation, 21 Feb 2023

Mentoring Workshop, 6 Mar 2023

Wellbeing L1 Consolidation, 14 Mar 2023

## **RECENT ACTIVITY**

Regional Managers have been discussing the way forward for ATDP over recent months in view of the number of ESOs/Senior Advocates expressing concern that the direction of the program seems to have been lost and there is an absence of leadership and management which has resulted in a loss of confidence in the program.

## **Background**

Vietnam Veterans first saw the need to support volunteers who were helping Vietnam Veterans with wellbeing issues and also with the submission of compensation claims. This led to a cooperative program between DVA and ESOs arising in 1992 and known as the Training and Information Program (TIP). In 2016 TIP handed over to the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) which was a cooperative program between DVA, ESOs and the Department of Defence. Then, in June 2021, in the absence of agreement with at least the ESOs, DVA abolished the Strategic Governance Board and the Capability Framework Management Group, both of which had comprised representatives of DVA, ESOs and Defence, and assumed unilateral responsibility for management of the program. The last meetings of the SGB and the CFMG were in early 2020 – nearly three years ago.

## **ATDP Today**

Since the abolition of the CFMG one meeting has been held by the Department with the three Regional Managers, in October last year. That was pretty much a ‘getting to know you’ meeting following the transfer of responsibility for ATDP from the Veteran and Family Policy Group (Community Policy) to the Veteran and Family Services Group (VEA Compensation and Support).

In terms of operation of the Program itself there is a DVA document ‘ATDP Context, Structure and Roles’ available on the DVA website and which is a proscriptive document limited to defining the structure and operation of the program. Notably, it stresses that neither DVA nor the ATDP have any responsibility for the delivery of advocacy services: this being purely an ESO matter.

RM 1, Bob Grandin, has eloquently differentiated between advocate training and advocacy service delivery in his Region 1 report. The essential difference between the TIP/ATDP structure which operated successfully for 30 years and that which exists now is that DVA support is strictly confined to advocacy training to the extent that support for the introduction of a Quality Assurance program to establish the effectiveness of service delivery by ATDP trained advocates has been withdrawn. The impact this has on the program is that feedback is hit and miss and program improvements are less readily identified.



A number of senior advocates have prepared a submission to the Department, the thrust of which is that ESO volunteers need to be involved in the management and administration of ATDP. Only with the involvement of ESO volunteers, supported by the ESORT, can effective liaison with ESOs and influence over the operations of ATDP and delivery of services to our veterans and their families, which are mutually dependent on each other, be assured.

## PAID ADVOCACY SERVICES

The last two years have seen a worrying (to some ESOs and volunteer advocates) increase in the number of organisations offering pay-for-service military advocacy services. Many involve veterans making a living off the Service-related misfortunes of fellow veterans.

The concerns for ATDP and ATDP qualified advocates are twofold. Firstly, how can veterans and their families be assured that those offering the service are competent and secondly, should we be sanctioning, through ATDP, training and assessment of candidates at public expense, who intend to charge veterans for their services?

We need to encourage our major ESOs to advertise widely to veterans, both serving and retired, that free support from qualified advocates is available through ESOs. ESOs should also ensure the motivation of candidates for ATDP training and assessment is in accord with the ATDP Code of Conduct.

## ATDP in the Future

For the past three years or so DVA has been silent on the future of ATDP other than Middle Management emphasising the importance of volunteers at every opportunity. The following was recently stated by a Senior RSL Officer:

*“there is considerable work being done between the RSL, DVA, ATDP and other key organisations as a result of the current Royal Commission to address a range of limitations with the current volunteer advocacy system”*

DVA’s ATDP management was asked about the statement and quickly responded they were **“not aware of any group or body of work established to address ATDP as a result of the Royal Commission”**.

## THE ADVOCATE REGISTER

The Advocate Register was established to assist veterans in locating an appropriately qualified advocate. It is maintained by each ESO ‘s nominated representative, often the Secretary. Increasingly, I am hearing that the Register is useless because it is not up to date.

In the past the CFMG monitored the Register and were able to regularly cross reference the ATDP database to check on ESO sponsorship, qualifications, CPD status and other relevant aspects. Where there were discrepancies found the ESO and the advocate were contacted. Today, many of those nominated as ESO ‘Authorised Persons’ have minimal understanding of advocacy in general or ATDP and insurance matters in particular and while ‘Authorised Persons’ can access an advocate’s CPD status no formal training of ESO ‘Authorised Representatives’ has ever been conducted to inform them of their important role.

While management of the Advocacy Register remains fragmented with hundreds of ‘Authorised Persons’ and no coordination, it is not surprising that it is no longer reliable. Those responsible for management of the Advocacy Register need access to the ATDP database and to the backend of the



system in order to be able to make necessary programming changes. DVA is the only body with such access since it assumed management responsibility for ATDP yet has no responsibility for the Register.

If the ATDP and volunteer advocates are to have any credibility then we must make sure that the Authorised Person in our ESO keeps the Register up to date. Please check today that your ESO's listing of advocates, including those in training, is up to date.

## THANKS

Finally, my thanks to all those who continue to support the Program - especially RIG 3 members 'Tich' Tyson, Ray Kemp, John Horan, Garry Beven and David Waddle. Not forgetting our PSO Philip Boys.

To all Region 3 advocates who have done such a great job supporting veterans and their families under difficult circumstances during COVID and continue to do so I also offer my sincere thanks.

Well, it is good to see the Update on the streets again. Hopefully it will not degenerate into yet another Department publication for advocates in name only and will be a forum for the passage of information on advocacy and discussion of issues affecting the provision of quality advocacy support to our veterans and their families.

Until we next meet - the very best of wishes to you and yours for a Happy and Healthy 2023 and take care.



*Roger W Greene* OAM JP

Regional Manager  
Region 3 (SA, Tas, Vic)  
Phone: 0411 431 189

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## Continuing Professional Development

### IMPORTANT MATTERS

The Department did not send out 'reminder' letters to advocates last year so it is unlikely there will be 'reminders' this year either. The 2022-23 CPD year closes on 30<sup>th</sup> June and a few important points should not be overlooked. Basically, we need to accumulate 15 CPD points each year to remain current and 45 points over a three-year period. An advocate who fails to achieve 15 points in a CPD year is deemed to be 'IN ARREARS' and three such successive years result in an advocate being considered 'NOT CURRENT'. It is important to know that an advocate who is 'NOT CURRENT' is not included in the results of an Advocacy Register search but perhaps most importantly, if the advocate's ESO is insured through VITA, Professional Indemnity insurance coverage in respect of that advocate lapses. Other insurers might also require that an advocate demonstrate currency in the event of an insurance claim being made and the safest way is to be CPD '**CURRENT**'.



*Roger W Greene* OAM JP

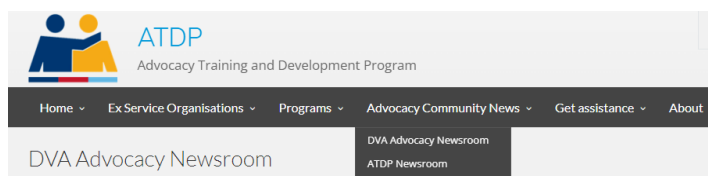
Regional Manager  
Region 3 (SA, Tas, Vic)  
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# ATDP Newsroom

Have you looked at the Advocacy Community News Tab recently?



We have been looking at ways to keep you informed! So further to our regular ATDP Update and Advocacy Newsletter, there are 2 'Newsrooms' - DVA Advocacy Newsroom and an ATDP Newsroom on the ATDP Website.

The DVA Newsroom includes articles from DVA of interest to the Veteran and Ex-Service Communities. A recent addition is an article on 'Supporting Veterans to downsize their homes' and an article on the recent Veterans' Employment Awards for example.



The ATDP Newsroom has articles such as important messages from the RTO.

Just scroll down the page to read each new article.

Of course we would also love to hear those wonderful and encouraging advocacy stories of what you are achieving and doing out in your communities. It's easy to get caught up in the 'work', so take time to reflect on the outstanding achievements and feel free to let us – and your colleagues - know what you're up to.

If you have any comments, please email [ATDPEnquiries@dva.gov.au](mailto:ATDPEnquiries@dva.gov.au)

# Help us support the veteran community by volunteering as an advocate or advocate support officer



The Information Pack can be downloaded as a Word Template and you can customise it for your ex-service organisation or Veterans Support Centre and distribute it electronically - or print out hard copies for your members. [Here is the link to Information Pack!](#)

This Information Pack outlines broadly what our volunteer advocates and advocate support officers do to assist our members and clients.

You will find out about:

- The benefits of volunteering as an advocate or advocate support officer,
- More about our advocates and advocate support officers' roles,
- What commitments our volunteers are making,
- The training and support we and the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) provide, and
- What insurance cover is provided to advocates by the Veterans' Indemnity and Training Association (VITA)

## ATDP Contacts

Please be aware that the Program Support Officers' emails and phone numbers have changed since the last ATDP Update was sent out. An email was sent out to all ATDP Update subscribers last year with the changes.

For all general enquiries: <a href="mailto:ATDPENQUIRIES@dva.gov.au">ATDPENQUIRIES@dva.gov.au</a>	
Amanda Williams / Steven Hayter Region 1 Program Support Officer (PSO1) – Qld/NT <a href="mailto:ATDP.PSO1@dva.gov.au">ATDP.PSO1@dva.gov.au</a> 0472 704 592 SA time, 8.30-4.30, Mon-Fri	Dr Bob Grandin Regional Manager (RM1) - QLD/NT <a href="mailto:rm1@atdp.org.au">rm1@atdp.org.au</a> 0409 615 948
Samone Mason Region 2 Program Support Officer (PSO2) - NSW/WA/ACT <a href="mailto:ATDP.PSO2@dva.gov.au">ATDP.PSO2@dva.gov.au</a> 0472 674 665 AEST time, 9.00-5.00, Mon-Fri	Lorraine Grey JP Regional Manager (RM2) - NSW/WA/ACT <a href="mailto:rm2@atdp.org.au">rm2@atdp.org.au</a> 0416 136 826
Phil Boys Region 3 Program Support Officer (PSO3) – Vic/SA/Tas <a href="mailto:ATDP.PSO3@dva.gov.au">ATDP.PSO3@dva.gov.au</a> 0472 704 948 SA time, 8.30-4.30, Mon-Fri	Roger Greene OAM, JP Regional Manager (RM3) - VIC/SA/TAS <a href="mailto:rm3@atdp.org.au">rm3@atdp.org.au</a> 0411 431 189
Elizabeth Owen Program Support Team Leader <a href="mailto:elizabeth.owen@dva.gov.au">elizabeth.owen@dva.gov.au</a> 0499 982 381 SA time, 8.30-4.30, Mon-Fri	