OPERATIONALISATION OF RIG

Introduction

1. **Strategic Guidance.** The Blueprint:
   a. states that the ‘vision of ATDP is to train and develop selected practitioners to provide high quality advocacy services to current and former ADF members and their dependants, where advocacy services cover rehabilitation, compensation, appeals and welfare’ (Section 2, emphasis added); and
   b. identifies three levels of organisation below the CFMG:
      (i) **RIG.** Responsible for ‘carrying out the day-to-day administration issues of delivering the capability framework, ensuring that communities of practice for practitioners are developed and maintained, and ensuring that the capability framework management group is adequately informed in its decision making processes’ (Section 5.3).
      (ii) **Communities of Practice (CoP).** Responsible for ‘building strong, supportive networks for practitioners, engaging and developing volunteerism, identifying future practitioners and trainers and fostering the development of the broader practitioner community’ (Section 6.3.2).
      (iii) **Veterans Centres (VC) and ESOs.** Although the Blueprint does not mention VCs and only alludes to ESOs, they are a recognisable level of organisation to be addressed during operationalisation of ATDP. A relationship between ESOs (and VCs) is raised in the following terms:
         (a) ‘there is currently no formal, and only very limited informal, work done [on CoP] across the TIP/ESO community’; and
         (b) ESO ‘practitioners [need] support networks to assist them in better carrying out their core work in supporting the current and former ADF members and their dependants’ (Section 6.3.2).

2. **Scope of Paper.** This discussion paper collates the current stage in CFMG Panel Leaders’ thinking on how the RIG might be operationalised. It:
   a. addresses the collective and individual RIG Membership profile;
   b. frames the Selection Criteria, Job Descriptions and Duty Statements for the RIG Manager and RIG Members; and
   c. proposes the options by which the RIG Manager and RIG Members might be selected.

3. **Companion Papers.** Companion papers are being prepared on operationalisation at the CoP and VC-ESO-Advocate level, and on Succession. For the purpose of this paper,
the key consideration is that, to ensure the full potential of ATDP is achieved, the activities of the RIGs, CoPs and VC-ESO-Advocates will need to be tightly integrated.

4. **Agreements.** The SGB-CFMG and ATDP Secretariat have agreed that:
   a. three RIG are to be established;
   b. candidates for membership of an RIG will be invited to submit an EOI as soon as possible in FY2016-17;
   c. while RIGs may be established earlier than, autonomous operation will not commence before, 01 January 2017; and
   d. TIP Chairs for Victoria, NSW and Queensland will mentor RIG Managers until RIGs begin autonomous operation.

**Aim**

5. The aim of this paper is to facilitate finalisation of the criteria against which, and processes by which, the RIG Managers and Members will be selected.

**Operationalisation - A Systems Approach**

6. **Strategic Setting.** The ATDP vision is conjoint with the ‘*client-focused services*’ objective of the Department’s strategic plan ‘*DVA Towards 2020*’. This is a crucial consideration for operationalisation of ATDP.

7. **Intent.** The direct relationship between ATDP and ‘*DVA Towards 2020*’ enables the Blueprint ‘*vision*’ to be transformed into Programme ‘*intent*’. The resulting intent of operationalisation is to:

   ‘*transition [the ESO-DVA-TIP arrangement] to a new, system-based Programme’*\(^1\) (emphasis added) that will assure delivery to DVA clients of continuously improving advocacy services by advocates AQF certified for competency in rehabilitation,\(^2\) compensation and welfare.

8. **Learning Process.** The new *system-based Programme* will apply adult learning principles. Being implemented are separate, compensation and welfare single learning pathways. Each pathway applies two forms of adult learning to facilitate competency development:

   a. **Facilitated Learning:** sequences of nationally-provided distance learning and classroom courses, integrated with locally-sourced mentoring and OJT, culminating in certification under AQF.

   b. **Post-certification Self-directed Learning:** continuing professional learning and development, utilising the whole range of learning modalities and materials, to ensure advocates are current and increase their knowledge and advocacy skills.

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1 Blueprint, Section 5.1
2 Noting that Rehabilitation is not an independent training pathway, and has yet to placed in either the Welfare of Compensation Pathways. The Learning and Development Panel will recommend a resolution.
9. **Ramifications.**
   a. The Blueprint defines ATDP as a Programme of training and development. While that definition is necessary, it is not sufficient for operationalisation.
   b. The transformation of vision into intent makes clear that training, developing and certifying advocates are the ‘*means*’. But, as *DVA Towards 2020* stipulates, they are not the ‘*ends*’.
   c. To reiterate para 7, the intended outcome is delivery to DVA clients of continually improving high quality advocacy services.
   d. To assure the intended outcome, training and development cannot cease at certification. Certified advocates’ ongoing performance as practitioners must be measured. At least two sampling points are necessary:
      (i) **Local.** Advocates’ performance and DVA client satisfaction will need to be monitored, on-the-job, against nationally consistent standards.
      (ii) **Central.** The product of advocates’ work (claims, appeals and welfare referrals) will need to be monitored for their quality.
   e. A feedback network will be required to transfer the resulting measures to the nodes at which they can be collated.
   f. Once collated, systemic and advocate-specific performance shortfalls must be identified and remediated, continuous learning and development benchmarks negotiated, and continuous competency improvement validate.
   g. In other words, a systems approach to operationalisation will:
      (i) involve more than training, development and certification; and
      (ii) include advocates’ post-certification continuous improvement; and
      (iii) be focused finely on the quality of services received by DVA clients.
   h. Operationalisation must therefore engage the whole system. This has been implicitly recognised in the discussions of what might be an appropriate new title; viz: ‘*Military/Veterans Advocacy Programme*’.

10. **Responsibilities.** With respect to the levels of organisation below the CFMG, a systems approach to operationalisation results in the following allocations of responsibility:

   a. RIGs will provide the means for nationally consistent, client focused, continuous improvement of advocacy service delivery across their Regions;
   b. RIG Workplace Assessors will:
      (i) mentor and peer review the competence of other authorised Workplace Assessors; and
      (ii) in conjunction with the RTO, certify and validate the competence of CoP Mentors and Advocates;
   c. CoP will apply the resources administered by the RIG to assure nationally consistent, client-focused, continuously improving, advocacy services; and
d. advocates will provide continuously improving client-focused advocacy services.

11. With these broad responsibilities identified the paper now turns to operationalisation of the RIGs. It first addresses the guidelines in the Blueprint.

Operationalisation of RIGs

12. **Blueprint Framework.** The Blueprint (Section 6.3) identifies the following roles for RIGs:
   a. day-to-day delivery of training and local administrative requirements;
   b. developing and supporting ‘communities of practice’ to provide a regional support network for their practitioners and trainers;
   c. regional input to the development and delivery of the nationally consistent training Programme through representation on the CFMG;
   d. identification and prioritisation of areas with high demand for training and service delivery within their area; and
   e. identification of any other broad training issues which may have regional and/or national significance.

13. **Consolidated Roles.** Consolidating para 12, the RIGs’ primary roles will be:
   a. resource coordination,
   b. national consistency, and
   c. quality assurance.

14. **Operationalisation Framework.** The preceding roles suggest the following operationalisation framework. With respect to para 12, RIGs will be responsible for:
   a. ensuring resources are available to enable delivery of formal training courses (subparas a. and d.);
   b. ensuring VC/ESOs’ needs for nationally-consistent, certified, Mentor-OJT Provider-Workplace Assessors\(^3\) are readily available to support their advocates (subparas b., c., d., and e.); and
   c. ensuring DVA clients across the Region receive nationally-consistent, client-focused, advocacy services (subparas c. and e.).

15. **Envisaged Constituency.** The Blueprint envisages (Section 6.3.5) that ‘each [RIG] could consist of:

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\(^3\) These are to be selected, trained and certified as mentors, OJT providers and workplace assessors from the nation-wide cohort of experienced Level 3-4 Compensation/Level 2 Welfare Advocates that are expert learning facilitators and highly regarded for their expertise as practitioners. That is to say, their credibility amongst their peers will be a crucial selection criterion. The cohort will include those TIP Trainers who wish to transition into ATDP and to take on the roles of mentor, OJT provider and workplace assessor. For ease of reading, hereinafter and in the companion papers the three roles and responsibilities are shortened to the term ‘Mentor’ and ‘mentoring’ respectively.
a. three or four ESO representatives who are active practitioners (nominated by the local ESO community),
b. two or three trainer representatives, and
c. one to two DVA representatives.’

16. **Collective Capabilities.** The preceding discussion suggests that RIGs’ responsibilities necessitate the following collective capabilities:
   a. high level management skill;
   b. robust administrative skill;
   c. sound judgement in complex and ambiguous situations;
   d. highly effective inter-personal, networking, problem solving, communication, policy representation and Programme implementation skills;
   e. experience in the ADF, DVA, and the business, Not-for-Profit, adult education, and ESO sectors;
   f. ability to stimulate volunteering and actively support volunteers;
   g. ability to achieve organisational objectives by participating in, contributing to and working collaboratively within a team environment;
   h. ability to work effectively within a volunteer, quasi-professional workforce, mentoring to leverage enthusiasm, knowledge, and skills into high quality advocacy practice;
   i. ability to monitor and provide feedback on learning and development and advocacy services within a continuous improvement environment.

17. **Individual Members Capabilities.** The following have been developed and circulated as adjunct documents to this paper:
   a. Selection Criteria (Attachment A).
   b. Job Description (Attachment B).
   c. Duty Statement (Attachment C).

18. **State-Specific Interests.** During the 2-3 June 2017 SGB-CFMG Meeting and discussion of the draft of this paper, TIP Chairs expressed concern that each State’s interests necessitated representation on the RIG. This paper acknowledges the validity of these concerns. On consideration, however, the intent of the Programme is best operationalised if RIG representatives compete for selection on merit. States’ interests are therefore best met if they identify highly qualified candidates and encourage them to submit competitive Expressions of Interest.

19. **Composition.** The RIG should comprise a good mix of knowledge, experience and skills. The following constituency is suggested:
   a. the Manager;
   b. the RIG’s ASO;
c. at least one representative formally certified and practising as a Formal Course Learning Facilitator; ⁴ 

d. Level 2 Welfare and Level 3 or 4 Compensation Advocate trained and certified as Mentor-Workplace Assessors; ⁵ 

e. younger veterans and/or practising advocates; 

f. Regional DVA Representative; and  
g. Regional ADF Representative.

20. **Summary.** The preceding discussion indicates that:  

   a. recruitment of high calibre RIG Managers is a critical success factor; 

   b. ensuring each RIG has the necessary collective expertise is also critical to successful operationalisation; and 

   c. RIGs’ collective expertise is more critical than membership numbers *per se.*

Appointment of RIG Manager.

21. **Role Requirements.** An RIG’s role requires that its Manager is a high calibre, highly skilled and experienced manager. If the other Members of the RIG have the requisite experience and expertise, RIG Managers need not have prior experience in the ADF, Department of Defence, DVA or advocacy; however, such experience would be highly regarded.

22. **Critical Skills.** Managers must, however, have certain critical skills. Given the fundamental importance of management at, and leadership of culture change by, the RIG, the Manager’s critical skill set will include high level skills and experience in:  

   a. human relations, 

   b. change coordination, 

   c. negotiation and conflict resolution, and 

   d. quality assurance.

23. **Other Skills.** If an RIG Manager has the demonstrated ability to marshal skills and expertise to achieve intended outcomes, the following area of knowledge will be less important in the selection process.  

   a. adult learning, 

   b. OJT and mentoring, and 


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⁴ That is to say a trained and certified person whose skill sets replace those previously exercised by TIP Trainers. 
⁵ The Welfare or Compensation Advocate Mentor-Workplace Assessor could also be trained and certified as a Formal Training Course Learning Facilitator, reducing the size of the RIG.
24. **Fundamental Consideration.** The preceding discussion highlights a fundamental issue: How might a person with demonstrated, high calibre, professional management expertise across a wide range of sub-disciplines be attracted into a voluntary (unpaid) appointment with so many critical outcomes at stake? Resolution will necessitate willingness to participate *pro bono* and, in turn, EOI being invited from a wide pool.

25. **Candidate Pool:**
   a. The selection criteria indicate that RIG Manager candidature might include:
      (i) ex-ADF personnel with experience in demanding command appointments,
      (ii) demanding appointments as a director or manager in the business, ESO or NFP sectors,
      (iii) demanding programme implementation appointments in the Departments of Defence or Veterans Affairs, or other departments;
      (iv) demanding leadership appointments in TIP, VET or adult learning; and
      (v) high performing advocates and trainers from the existing cohort of TIP and ESO practitioners.
   b. To maximise the likelihood that high calibre candidates are canvassed, access to the NFP and professional management sectors will necessitate access through the web. Possible avenues will include:  
      (i) Volunteering Australia: [www.volunteeringaustralia.org/](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/)

26. **Selection Options.** The SGB-CFMG-Secretariat has identified two broad options for selection of the RIG Manager. Noting that the SGB’s good governance responsibility predicates its having the final decision on selection, discussion of the options follows:
   a. **Election from Board.** As the selection criteria for RIG Members demand high calibre candidacy, and providing Members place leadership skill and managerial expertise ahead of all other consideration, it should be possible for the group with whom the Manager will work to select him/her. There are, however, two countervailing considerations. Given the calibre of the candidates being sought, each Manager should be involved in the selection of:
      (i) their Region’s ASO; and
      (ii) the Members of their RIG.

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b. **Independent Selection.** Whether RIG Managers are able to engage in selection of RIG Members is largely dependent on the time available. Considerations that indicate independent selection is not only possible but also desirable are:

(i) Once this paper is approved, the requisite documentation is available.
(ii) RIGs do not commence autonomous operation until 01 January 2017.
(iii) TIP Chairs will mentor RIG Managers, facilitating hand-over-take-over.

### Appointment of RIG Members

27. **Critical Skills.** The RIGs’ roles emphasise the importance of high calibre candidates for membership. Operational considerations suggest that successful candidates will have more than a background in ESO membership, veterans’ advocacy and TIP training. To assure successful operationalisation, those selected as RIG Members must be credible in the eyes of their peers in the CoP, VCs and ESOs. It is therefore essential that their peers acknowledge them as high calibre advocates and/or learning facilitators.

28. **Additional Skills.** In addition to demonstrated high calibre expertise as an advocate and/or learning facilitator, successful candidates will also have demonstrated their ability to:

a. operate effectively in complex and ambiguous situations; and
b. initiate and sustain fundamental change; and/or
c. negotiate or resolve conflict; and/or
d. achieve demanding outcomes as the member of a team in the ADF, business, NFP, adult education, or ESO advocacy sectors; and/or
e. assure performance-based quality outcomes; and/or
f. prepare and/or implement business plans and budgets.

29. **Accessing the Candidate Pool.** Given the importance of peer acknowledgement and the requirement for additional skills, the selection criteria will need to be promulgated widely and accompanied by robust reinforcement of mandatory criteria. Invitations to submit an EOI should be circulated to the following:

a. ESORT (with emphasis placed on dissemination to the local level);
b. email Address Books held by the Secretariat;
c. lists of TIP graduates lodged on the ATDP OMS;
d. the organisations identified at para 25 b. above; and
e. Veterans Centres, advocacy network websites, and Facebook sites including those listed at Annex A.

### Selection Process

30. **Selection Modalities.** Candidates for RIG Manager, Member and ASO will be:
a. shortlisted by email consideration of EOI, and
b. interviewed face-to-face or by video-conference (as is most feasible).

31. **Selection Guides.** As national consistency is critical, draft selection proforma will be prepared to guide selection once this paper has been approved.

32. **Selection Committee Membership.** To ensure National consistency, the following membership is proposed for selection of RIG Managers, Members and ASOs:
   a. **RIG Managers:** SGB, or Selection Committee chaired by the SGB Chair.
   b. **RIG Members:** SGB Chair or delegated Member and RIG Manager (Co-Chairs), and Delegates from the CFMG.
   c. **ASOs:** RIG Manager (Chair) and RIG Members.

33. **Selection Timeline.** Responses to nation-wide invitations for EOI from high calibre candidates can be expected to take time. Ideally, selection of RIG Managers, Members and ASOs should be completed not later than mid-October. The following timeline is proposed with that end-point in mind:
   a. **Advertisements for Manager, ASO and Member:** determined by time the Secretariat needs to obtain approval of expenditure.
   b. **Closure of EOI:** 4 weeks after invitations to submit EOI are placed.
   c. **Interview Short-Listed Candidates for Manager:** 2 weeks after EOI close.
   d. **Appointment of Managers:** 2 weeks after candidates are interviewed.
   e. **Selection and Appointment of Members:** 2 weeks after RIG Managers are appointed.
   f. **Interview of Short-Listed Candidates for ASO:** undertaken concurrently with selection of ASOs 4 weeks from subpara 33 e.
   g. **Appointment of ASOs:** determined by the time Secretariat needs to negotiate contracts.
   h. **Initial Training of RIGs:** 4 weeks from subpara 33 g.

34. **Succession Planning.** A succession planning discussion paper will be prepared in due course that discusses policy options for SGB, CFMG and RIG appointments:
   a. terms in office,
   b. succession, and
   c. casual vacancies.

**Risk Management**

35. The following risks associated with formation of the RIGs have been identified, and risk management strategies proposed. Given the complexity of, and diversity of actors engaged in, operationalisation other risks may emerge during operationalisation. Risk
identification and development of risk management strategies will therefore remain a key governance, management and administration task. Responsibility will be shared by all engaged in operationalisation.

36. **Risks.** Three significant areas of risk have been identified:
   a. Failure of high calibre candidates to submit EOI.
   b. Selection of personnel who subsequently prove to be unsuited.
   c. Extant organisational cultures being so embedded as to be intractable.

37. **Risk Management.** The following risk management strategies are suggested:
   a. **Candidature.** Three domains of candidature risk may need to be managed:
      (i) **Qualitative/Quantitative Shortfalls.** Should there be qualitative or quantitative shortfalls, Selection Committees should appoint only those candidates for Manager, Member and ASO who clearly meet the selection criteria - while simultaneously ensuring the widest possible range of collective skills within each RIG from within the candidature.
      (ii) **Re-advertisement.** Should either qualitative or quantitative shortfalls occur, Selection Committees should recommend that a further round of invitations be promulgated for the appointments that remain unfilled.
      (iii) **Interim Operation.** Should either qualitative or quantitative shortfalls occur and a further round of invitations and selections be necessary, RIGs should start operating with the initial appointments. If the shortfalls are such as to severely limit interim operation, personnel should be co-opted from the SGB and CFMG to facilitate start-up.
   b. **Unsuitable Selections.** To minimise the short-term risk that personnel may be appointed that are unable to perform at the necessary standard, appointments should have a six month probationary period. Medium term risk should be minimised by succession planning and set terms in office (with the possibility of reappointment for high performing personnel).
   c. **Cultural Intractability.** Succession planning and set terms in office are proposed to minimise the likelihood that personnel are unable to transform culturally. Selection guidelines will include judgement on a candidate’s performance during selection as to whether he/she is more or less likely to transition culturally. Noting that shorter terms in office will be necessary to ensure a sequence of retirement, those that a Selection Committee judges are less likely to transform culturally should be appointed to a shorter term in office within the succession plan.

**Recommendations**

38. The recommendations are that:
   a. The SGB, CFMG and Secretariat propose amendments to finalise this paper.
b. Once finalised, the paper be operationalised.

c. The paper be formally reviewed quarterly during operationalisation, and amended to account for arising issues.
Arsenal A

INDICATIVE LIST OF ESO, AND WEB AND FACEBOOK SITES

Advocacy Groups:
Australian Veterans Law Advocacy Network (AVLAN): Members Only
Austvet Law: https://www.facebook.com/Austvetlaw
Association of Ex-Service Advocates Australia: Members Only
ASAC Australia: www.asacaustralia.com/assistance/list-of-advocates

Veterans Centres:
RSL NSW Welfare and Pensions Forum: Members Only
Peninsula Young Veterans Wellbeing Centre: https://www.facebook.com/Peninsula-Young-Veterans-Wellbeing-Centre-Incorporated-467759109963495/
RSL Veterans Centre East Sydney: www.rslveteranscentre.org/
Veterans Centre Sydney North Beaches (Manager): benw@vcsnb.org.au
Veterans Centre Mid North Coast: www.vcmnc.org.au/
Central Coast and Hunter Veterans Support Group: Members Only
Pte Gregory Sher Reintegration Centre:

Young Veterans Sites:
Women Veterans Network Australia: https://www.facebook.com/womensveteransassn/
Soldier On: https://www.soldieron.org.au/
Mates4Mates: https://www.facebook.com/Mates4Mates/
Australian Gulf War Veterans: https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=australian%20gulf%20war%20veterans
DVA Claims, Cards & Payments Veterans Information Group: Members Only
Australian Defence Force & Veterans Alliance Forum: Closed Group
Australian Military Aviation Toxic Exposure: Closed Group
Aussie Vets PTSD: Community Group
Wounded Heroes Australia: https://www.facebook.com/WoundedHeroesAustralia/
Peer2Peer Program: https://www.facebook.com/Peer2Peer-Program-1486938261594164/
PTSD Support and Awareness: https://www.facebook.com/PTSDaware/