Chapter 8. Commitment by, and Support of, Volunteers

8.1 Introduction
This Chapter outlines the policy and procedures that Members of the CFMG-RIG, and CoP Coordinator and Workplace Mentors acting under the auspices of the ATDP, will implement as volunteers when working with other volunteers in the VSC/ESO/YVO community.

ATDP encourages employed Members, Candidates and Advocates, as members of the profession of military advocacy, to implement this policy when interacting with volunteers, and to ensure its values are embedded in their employer’s human relationships policy.

8.2 Background
ATDP relies almost totally on volunteer effort. This creates an extraordinary challenge. On the one hand, expectations of volunteers’ efforts must be reasonable. On the other, CFMG, RIG and Mentor volunteers are the core of ATDP’s culture change efforts. To ensure ATDP is fully effective, Members must understand the commitment they are taking on as ATDP volunteers.

To be committed, ATDP volunteers must understand what it is they are committing to. To remain committed, reasonably, volunteers will have expectations about the support they will receive from ATDP. The key considerations in this reciprocal arrangement are outlined below.

8.3 Ethos and Values
Since its establishment in 2015, ATDP has endeavoured to build a culture based on the values of trust, mutual respect and dialogue. ATDP Members at all levels from SGB and CFMG-RIG, to Regional Mentors, CoP Coordinators, Advocates, and Workplace Mentors, whether volunteer or employed, are committed to the military advocacy ethos of professionalism (Library 3, Chapter 4).

In response to their commitment to professionalism, ATDP has an obligation. As a learning organisation, ATDP values diversity. It will therefore actively create opportunities for all volunteers and employees to contribute their experience, knowledge and skills to the achievement of ATDP goals. Whether volunteer or employee, ATDP acknowledges that equal opportunity to participate is central to good governance, effective management, and efficient administration.

Meeting this commitment requires collegiality and open communication - values that are central to the ethos of professionalism. These values oblige all ATDP Members, candidates and military advocates to create and maintain robust one-on-one and collective relationships. This in turn, requires that diversity be valued.

The power in diversity is its capacity to question preconceptions, to open minds to emergent issues, to precipitate new thinking, and to lead change. To implement these values, ATDP values all inputs equally – be they welcome or not, from volunteer or
employee, from worker or from leader. The objective is the best possible outcomes, not the preconceptions of any one person or group.

To capitalise on its diversity, the profession of military advocacy obliges:

- critical governance and management practices
- active moral and ethical responsibility
- participation that ensures equity and justice
- relationships grounded in mutual respect
- concern about the morale and wellbeing of fellow Members
- valuing differences of opinion and focus

8.4 Policy

ATDP commits to:

- fostering a professional culture grounded in the ethos and values at s8.3;
- nurturing collaborative relationships between Australian Public Service Officers, ATDP volunteers and VSC/ESO/YVO volunteers and employees;
- long-term business development through frank and open dialogue between all Members and stakeholders; and
- actively engaging all Members in the making of decisions that will affect them.

This policy requires, not only strict compliance with the law, but it also guides actions even if the law is more lenient or where there is no applicable law at all.

8.5 Participants’ Responsibilities

This is a CFMG policy (like others in Libraries 3-4). It is focused on Members of the CFMG-RIG, and CoP Mentors and Members when acting under the auspices of ATDP.

The CFMG Chair and National Training Manager are therefore responsible for ensuring it is implemented.

The SGB and Secretariat must, however, champion the policy if it is to find effect across the profession of military advocacy. The CFMG-RIG therefore invites the SGB to join it in leading implementation.

Full effect across the profession will necessitate critical engagement by all Members. Monitoring implementation is one of the wider functions within the quality assurance system.

Annex A. Volunteering Australia: National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

1 Critically reflexive practice requires examination of:
- personal assumptions, decisions, actions, interactions, and
- assumptions underpinning organisational policies and practices and the intended and potentially unintended impact.