Advocacy Training & Development Programme Blueprint

Executive Summary

Following a number of reviews undertaken to date, including recent work by Brig. Rolfe AO (Ret'd.), a Working Party was formed from ESO, TIP and DVA nominations to progress the development and implementation of a veterans' advocacy training model. This Working Party formed a Technical Working Group to identify the issues in detail and provide a proposed approach, resulting in this blueprint detailing the development and implementation of an *Advocacy Training and Development Programme*. The Blueprint is recommended to the ESO Round Table for its endorsement.

The vision of the Advocacy Training & Development Programme 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.

Based on the significant work undertaken to date it has been agreed that the core of any proposed learning and development programme should be a Capability Framework. This framework would provide the required structure, content and feedback to develop a practitioner (advocate, pension officer and/or welfare officer) who is able to provide the best quality support to the veteran community.

The framework should be nationally consistent, in-line with adult learning principles and incorporate assessed competency and accreditation standards. It would also assess the practitioners, trainers and content of the programme to ensure its ongoing success, and would provide a clear training and development path from novice practitioner to senior accredited levels. This assessment of practitioners may also allow DVA to consider links between accredited advocates and claims processing priorities.

At all points in the review, the importance of providing the highest quality service to the veteran community has been identified as paramount.

Following on from this, and from the meetings of the Working Party and Technical Working Group, the Department has developed a blueprint of a structure which could provide the basis for the final detailed design work and subsequent implementation and management of the entire programme. This blueprint builds on the current training responsibilities undertaken by TIP, while requiring stronger involvement from the ESOs, DVA and Defence.

This proposed structure revolves around a three tiered system which brings together the ESO community, TIP, DVA and Defence as partners in managing and delivering a high quality learning and development programme for practitioners providing advice and assistance to the veteran community. While the current state TIP management structure and state based Training Consultative Groups (TCGs) are subsumed into the proposed structure it is expected that a number of current office-bearers would continue in similar roles.

The three proposed management groups are:

- *Strategic Governance Board*
  a national governance board with approximately seven members representing ESOs, the Capability Framework Management Group, DVA and Defence. It will provide strategic oversight, direction and governance.

- *Capability Framework Management Group*
  a national management body with approximately 11 members representing ESOs, Regional Administration Bodies, DVA and Defence. It will develop, implement and maintain the Capability Framework.
- *Regional Administration Bodies*
  Three Regional Administration Bodies, each of approximately 8 members, would be formed to carry out the day-to-day administration issues of delivering the framework (including trainer management) and ensuring that communities of practice are developed and maintained within their regions to support practitioners. Moving from the current six regional bodies to three may be staged over the full implementation period to ensure a smooth and effective transition.

These three groups will all have access to expert advice from a contracted registered training organisation (RTO) as required.

While this draft blueprint provides a detailed management and governance structure there would still be considerable work required to identify and implement national practitioner development and assessment pathways and training content. This would be the role of the Capability Framework Management Group with strategic direction from the Strategic Management Group and regional advice from the Regional Administration Bodies.

As part of the blueprint a draft timeline has been developed and high-level consideration of transitional issues provided.

To assist with the ultimate development of the capability framework content, the Department has also committed to making its staff technical training coursework available. An RTO has been contracted by the Department to provide expert assistance in identifying how to best use this coursework within an advocacy training structure.

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1 This Document

This document brings together, and builds on, the work to date of the Review of Veterans' Advocacy Training, the Veterans' Advocacy Training Working Party and the Technical Working Group to provide a blueprint for the development and implementation of the Advocacy Training & Development Programme (AT&DP).

This document is to be provided to the ESO Round Table for their endorsement.

2 Programme Name and Vision

The programme is named "Advocacy Training and Development Programme" and has the following vision:

> *"The vision of the Advocacy Training & Development Programme 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."*

3 Assumptions

Through the Review and the meetings to date, the Working Party and the Technical Working Party have agreed that the following assumptions are appropriate for designing an advocacy training programme:

- The programme must enforce and support a strong partnership between the ESO community, TIP, DVA and Defence;
- The programme will provide a nationally consistent 'capability framework' for practitioner development and support;
- The programme will be an efficient use of available resources, including the effective use of regional and on-line training resources; and
- The current framework for course delivery, in particular the work done by TIP to date to provide formal training to practitioners, could form the basis for expansion into the new programme.

4 Implementation

Following the agreement of the Technical Working Party to a new structure the full Working Party has endorsed this proposal. Endorsement by the ESO Round Table is now requested.

Departmental Secretary, and subsequently Ministerial, endorsement will then be requested and, should these be received, the management groups would be formed and begin developing the required programme and transition approach.

The parties should however begin consideration of nominees as part of ESO Round Table discussions regarding the proposed programme.

5 Tiers of Responsibility

The discussions have identified three tiers of responsibility which must be met by the training programme's structure. Each tier will have a documented role within the programme. These tiers, and their responsibilities, are detailed below.

The three tiers of responsibility are:

- Strategic governance and oversight of the programme;
- Capability framework management; and
- Regional administration of the delivery of formal training and practitioner support.

5.1 Strategic Governance

This tier is responsible for the strategic direction, oversight and review of the quality and consistency of ESO advocacy services. This would include the following work:

- Set strategic directions for the Programme, including the capability framework;
- Set broad goals and requirements for transition to the new, system based programme;
- Communications, engagement and change culture;
- Ongoing quality assurance and efficiency.

5.2 Capability Framework Management

The national capability framework drives the definition, development, education and assessment of practitioners. This involves responsibility for considerably more than simply the delivery of training.

This Capability Framework Management tier is responsible for the development, transition to, and delivery of this national capability framework. These responsibilities include:

- Identification of national requirements, roles, responsibilities, development levels, professional development/improvement and competency/accreditation pathways for practitioners, including welfare officers;
- Development and application of a strategy to transition to the new capability framework;
- Development and maintenance of nationally consistent learning tools and ensuring their compliance with the identified strategic direction and adult-learning principles:
    - On-the-job training;
    - Mentoring;
    - Formal (e-learning/classroom) training[1]; and
- Train-the-trainer training;
- Scheduling and delivery of all training tools;
- Implementation and application of the assessment framework for trainers, practitioners and course content;
- Setting expectations and selection criteria for the nomination of trainee practitioners/advocates; and
- Ensure efficient use of resources.

5.3 Regional Administration

This tier is 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. In particular they are responsible for:

- Advising the capability framework management tier on both broad requirements, and requirements local to the region;
- Ensuring availability of necessary resources (trainers, venues etc.) within the region;
- Identifying areas of high demand for training and service delivery to support the best provision of services within their area;
- Developing and sustaining effective communities of practice for practitioners within the region; and
- Ensure efficient use of resources.

The Strategic and Capability Framework Management groups would be responsible for guaranteeing consistency of approach across the Regional Administration bodies.

[1] There may be significant efficiencies identified in the development and maintenance of this coursework through the work recently begun to examine how best to share Departmental training courses with the advocacy training programme.

5.4 Expert Training Advice - Registered Training Organisation

A Registered Training Organisation (RTO) will be contracted by the Department to provide expert, ad-hoc advice on training related matters. This organisation's expertise will be available to all levels of the programme. It will likely provide significant advice during the initial detailed design and development phase of the Capability Management Framework and will have similar input to the identification of appropriate assessment/accreditation processes.

6 Draft Structure

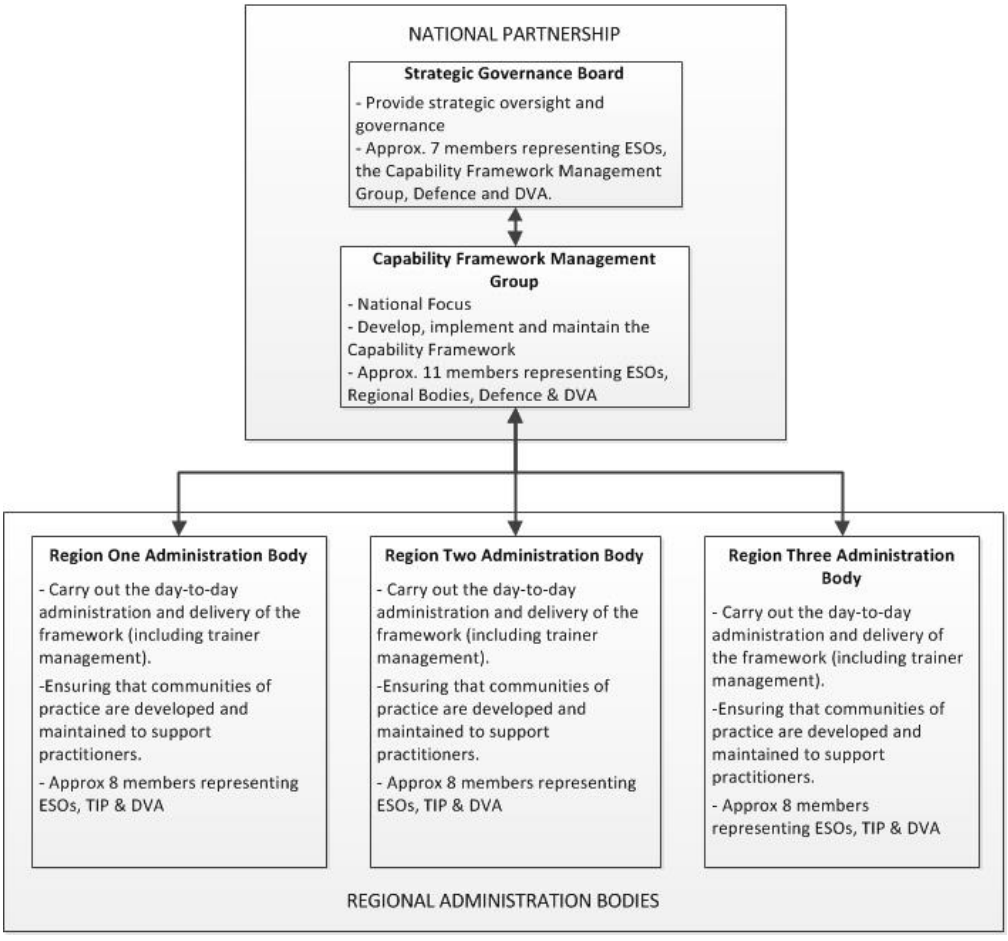
A table (Attachment A) has been prepared identifying how these responsibilities are being met in the current system and possible improvements that may be realised by implementing the proposed structure.

Building on the current training responsibilities within the TIP structure, and the improvements from which the system may benefit, a three tier structure is proposed.

It is expected that this structure would provide a nationally consistent and efficient approach to developing and implementing a high quality learning and development programme; a programme which should lead to the provision of quality practitioners able to provide the best quality advice and support to current and former members of the ADF community and their dependants.

The proposed three tier structure would replace the current Training Consultative Group (TCG) and State TIP and National Management groups. While these groups would be subsumed by the new structure, it is expected that a number of the individuals from these groups are likely to be the inaugural members of the proposed tiers. This proposed structure is illustrated below:

Draft Advocacy Training and Development Programme Management Structure



6.1 Strategic Governance Board

The Strategic Governance Board would be a national group acting as the independent governance body responsible for strategic direction, oversight and review of the quality and consistency of ESO advocacy services.

It should also ensure the required transition strategy and communications are in-place to drive the required cultural change to a system based approach across the current ESO, advocacy and training programmes to meet these objectives.

Its authority could be derived from the ESO Round Table, however while it should contribute to the consultative process of the ESO Round Table, its decisions should be made independently of the ESO Round Table.

6.1.1 Strategic Direction and Oversight

The strategic goals and outcomes identified are expected to include:

- A nationally consistent programme;
- Compliance with all adult-learning requirements;
- Overall training goals and key content messages;
- The broad requirements, roles, responsibilities, development levels and pathways for practitioners;
- Broad certification/ competence assessment expectations for trainers, practitioners and course content;
- A focus on ensuring that the best use of the skills and commitment of the veteran community is made through the selection of the right people for training and the ongoing development of these people through high quality on-the-job training (OJT) and mentoring;
- Broad goals and quality assurance measures for transition to the new programme; and
- An efficient use of resources across the programme.

There are a number of strategic training goals and key-content messages that have been identified for consideration during the consultation. These would all likely improve the effectiveness of the programme and include, but are not limited to:

- A focus on inclusion of younger veterans;
- A focus on rehabilitation support;
- Improved utilisation of e-learning tools;
- Improved utilisation of Departmental on-line tools such as the ESO Portal and My Account;
- Negotiation with DVA regarding the leverage of the BEST Grants Programme to ensure compliance with goals such as OJT, mentoring and competence assessment of trained practitioners;
- Work with DVA to investigate the links between accredited advocates and claims processing priorities; and
- ESO assurance that all relevant insurance scheme requirements comply with framework accreditation requirements.

The Strategic Management Group should also be responsible for providing overall quality assurance of the training programme itself, effectively resulting in an internal certification process. This certification process may only be a temporary requirement depending on the long-term preferred approach to formal Vocational Education & Training (VET) certification for the programme.

6.1.2 Membership

Membership of this group should be kept small to ensure responsive and timely decision making. The members should also be nominated on the basis of their capacity and skills, rather than their particular organisational affiliation, and those individuals should have the authority to act on behalf of the broader ESO community.

Membership could consist of:

- Three ESO representatives. These would likely be nominated by the ESO Round Table;
- Two representatives of the Capability management Framework, likely the Chair and the National Training Manager;
- One senior Defence representative; and
- One senior DVA representative.

Membership terms should be a mix of two and three year terms to ensure that all members do not leave at the same time and members should be allowed to be re-appointed if appropriate. The Board could appoint a Chair or co-Chairs.

The Strategic Governance Board should also have access to expert advice from a Registered Training Organisation contracted through DVA.

6.1.3 Reporting and Communication

The Strategic Governance Board should ensure that the broad ESO community, including practitioners, has the required understanding of the programme to support it in achieving its aims.

This would be achieved through financial reporting to DVA and likely bi-annual contribution to the ESO Round Table consultative process.

Communication of strategic messages to trainers, practitioners and the broader ESO community should be provided to the Regional Committees for dissemination.

The Strategic Governance Board is also responsible for ensuring that the programme's other tiers have the necessary understanding of, and support for, the programme's strategic direction.

6.2 Capability Framework Management Group

The Capability Framework Management group would be a national group, directly responsible for all aspects of the capability framework. The capability framework drives the definition, development, education and assessment of practitioners.

It would ensure that the programme's strategic goals, as provided by the Strategic Management Group, are effectively and efficiently achieved and would represent the ESO community, trainers and DVA.

Its membership would ensure broad coverage of training, operational and regional matters and would have access to registered training organisation (RTO) expertise for all discussions regarding training development, delivery and assessment.

6.2.1 Capability Framework

This group would have direct oversight of all aspects of the capability framework, including:

- Identification of requirements, roles, responsibilities, development levels and competency/accreditation pathways for practitioners and trainers;
- Development and maintenance of nationally consistent learning tools and ensuring their compliance with the identified strategic direction and adult-learning principles. These tools include:
  - On-the-job training;
  - Mentoring;
  - Formal (e-learning/classroom) training; and
  - Train-the-trainer training;
- Scheduling and delivery of all training tools;
- Development, implementation and application of a certification/competence assessment framework for trainers and course content;

- Development and implementation of a practitioner pathway that provides 'recognition-of-prior-learning' for the base levels and formal accreditation at the higher levels.
- Setting and monitoring of expectations and selection criteria in regards to ESO nomination of trainee practitioners/advocates;
- Development and application of a transition strategy to move from the current learning and development framework to the new capability framework; and
- The efficient use of resources in undertaking these tasks.

6.2.2 Membership

The Capability Framework Management Group could build on the representative approach of the current TIP National Management Group but with the membership aligned to the proposed three tier structure.

It would likely meet at least quarterly for the initial programme implementation period with this to be reviewed once the programme has matured. Membership would likely include the following for a membership of 11:

- each of the three Regional Management Group Chairs;
- a National Training Manager: analogous to the current TIP National Chair and elected by the Capability Framework Management Group to a two to three year term;
- four or five senior ESO practitioners, possibly nominated by ESOs through the Strategic Governance Board and/or ESO Round Table;
- one DVA representatives at Director or Assistant Director level; and
- one Defence representative.

Membership terms should be a mix of two and three year terms to ensure that all members do not leave at the same time and members should be allowed to be re-appointed if appropriate. A Chair, or possibly Co-Chairs, would be elected from the Group's membership.

The Capability Framework Management Group should also have access to expert advice from a Registered Training Organisation contracted through DVA.

6.2.3 Reporting and Communication

The Capability Framework Management Group Chair(s) would sit on the Strategic Management Group and be responsible for reporting to and from that Group, in particular ensuring that:

- the Strategic Management Group has the necessary capability framework information to make informed strategic decisions; and
- the strategic direction is understood and reflected in the capability framework.

It would also be responsible for providing reporting and forecasting data to support decision making at the strategic, capability framework and regional management levels and ensuring clear and regular communication to the Regional Administration Bodies so that it has the detailed capability framework information required to administer the framework at a regional level.

6.3 Regional Administration Bodies

Three regional administration bodies would focus on the day-to-day delivery of training and local administrative requirements in their region and developing and supporting 'communities of practice' to provide a regional support network for their practitioners and trainers.

They would also provide regional input to the development and delivery of the nationally consistent training programme through representation on the Capability Management Framework group. This input would include the identification and prioritisation of areas with high demand for training and service delivery within their area and the identification of any other broad training issues which may have regional and/or national significance.

These three regional bodies would effectively take on the roles of the current state based TIP Management and Training Consultative Groups. This rationalisation of regions will be made possible through the efficiencies gained from:

- moving to a national training platform;
- an improved focus on selecting high quality trainees leading to a likely reduction in number, but increase in quality and long-term commitment from practitioners; and
- provision of improved access to, and incorporation of, e-learning.

The Strategic and Capability Framework Management groups would be responsible for guaranteeing consistency of approach across the Regional Administration Bodies.

6.3.1 Day-to-Day Management Roles

Day-to-day management would include the following tasks for their region:

- the provision of input and advice to the Capability Framework Management Group regarding particular local scheduling requirements;
- the day-to-day management, organisation and scheduling of trainers, venues and resources; and
- the efficient use of resources in undertaking these tasks.

This work would have significant similarities to the day-to-day management duties of the current TIP state-based management groups but over a larger region. While the current learning and development framework and strategic planning duties would be pushed to the national Capability Framework and Strategic Governance groups, the regional administration bodies would be expected to provide input through representation on the Capability Framework Management Group.

6.3.2 Communities of Practice Requirements

Communities of Practice would focus on building strong, supportive networks for practitioners, engaging and developing volunteerism, identifying future practitioner and trainer and fostering the development of the broader practitioner community.

The committee would also ensure a clear and regular communication channel from all levels of the programme to its ESOs, practitioners and trainers.

There is currently no formal, and only very limited informal, work done in this area across the TIP/ESO community. Providing a central body with responsibility for this would likely have significant flow-on effects for improving support for volunteerism and for practitioners from ESOs of all sizes in regards to support networks to assist them in better carrying out their core work in supporting the current and former ADF members and their dependants.

6.3.3 Administrative Requirements

Administrative Requirements would include the following tasks:

- the day-to-day management, organisation and scheduling of trainers for their region;
- the booking, arranging and paying for training venues, travel and other resources for their region; and
- provision of administrative assistance to the Capability Framework and Strategic Management groups.

The current administrative workload is generally undertaken on a state-by-state basis by contracted administrative officers. The funding for these contracted officers (~$320,000 in total for 2014-15) comes from TIP's funding allocation for course support and provision. All workload, administrative and contract management duties for them are the responsibility of the local state TIP management.

Further administrative support is provided through DVA staff located, in the main, in Adelaide, Sydney and Canberra. The duties of these staff particularly revolve around the booking and paying

of all travel and accommodation for TIP training and management conferences and payment of all TIP accounts.

Due to significant differences in the number of courses, and resultant workloads, across the current, state-based, administrative system, there are significantly varying administrative workloads across the states. The reduction to three regional management areas would lead to more consistent workload balancing across the three regions.

Also, due to the current administrative arrangements there is significant double handling of work between the TIP managed administrative officers and DVA staff. This double-handling is further exacerbated by some states running most, if not all courses out of DVA offices and some state TIP officers working out of DVA premises.

Under the revised proposal each region would be supported by a full-time administration officer contracted directly to DVA.

Centralising much of the contract and workload management of these administrative officers to DVA would reduce the double handling of work and simplify the provision of administrative support across the entire programme. The proposed contracting arrangement for these officers may also allow them to have direct access to DVA's payment and travel systems, further improving the efficiency of the administration.

These administrative staff could also be tasked with providing necessary support to the Capability Framework and Strategic Management groups.

6.3.4 Regional Structural Requirements

Noting the participant and course figures for the previous 2 calendar years it is apparent that there are significant workload differences across the current state aligned regions. Attempting to balance these into reasonably equitable regions should lead to a more efficient use of the available resources and more consistent delivery of the national programme.

Further efficiencies of this regional approach will likely be realised through an improved focus on selecting high quality trainees, and improved access to, and incorporation of e-learning.

While providing support across regions may prove challenging, there are current examples of the provision of this support outside what would be considered 'local' regions. For example the TIP National Consistency project is, in the main, run from Victoria. Courses have also been run in the Philippines with all support being provided from Victorian TIP. Currently DVA provides its administrative support for TIP Qld, Vic and NSW with staff in Adelaide, Canberra and Sydney.

As part of the considerations for transitioning to this model it is likely that an immediate identification of, and move to, three regions would impose unnecessary practical complications to an already significant change. It is therefore likely that initially 6 regions, broadly analogous to the state-based regions of the current state-based TIP management and Consultative Group structure could be used. While the number of regions would not immediately reflect the final structure, the management group structure and responsibilities for each of these regions could be modified immediately to reflect that structure.

It should also be noted that once the programme is implemented it may be worth reviewing the regional breakups to ensure that they are still appropriate. A nationally consistent approach to course scheduling and participant selection may result in altered regional participation rates: for example Queensland's participant figures may be higher than comparable figures in other states due to their ensuring that almost all TIP participants undertake both welfare courses, an approach not replicated in other states. There may also be call to review the regions based on broader strategic issues. For example closer ties to Defence may make it appropriate to increase the focus on the provision of support for current and ex-serving members, in particular indigenous members, of the three Regional Force Surveillance Units: The Pilbara Regiment, North West Mobile Force

(NORFORCE) and 51st Battalion, Far North Queensland Regiment. This may lead to the logical inclusion of the northern reaches of Western Australia into the Northern Region with Queensland and the Northern Territory.

An increased focus on ESOs providing high quality, committed trainees may also affect the regional participation rates.

6.3.5 Membership

Each Regional Committee could consist of three or four ESO representatives who are active practitioners (nominated by the local ESO community), two or three trainer representatives and one to two DVA representatives. Each Regional Committee would elect a Chair who would also sit on the Capability Framework Management group.

Membership terms should be a mix of two and three year terms to ensure that all members do not leave at the same time and members should be allowed to be re-appointed if appropriate.

6.3.6 Reporting and Communication

A representative from each Regional Administration Body, likely the Chair, would sit on the Capability Framework Management Group and be responsible for reporting to and from that Group. In particular this Group is responsible for ensuring that the Capability Framework Management Group has the necessary regional information to make informed decisions on course timetabling, regional matters etc.

The Committee is also responsible for maintaining a communication network with its trainers, regional practitioners and ESOs to ensure the regional practitioners are fully informed and consulted regarding their local community of practice and to allow the distribution of ad-hoc and other communications regarding the programme and any other training and development issues of importance.

7 Competence Assessment/ Accreditation

A significant consideration throughout the process to date has been the competence assessment/ accreditation of components of the advocacy training framework. This will be managed through the capability framework which will be designed with significant assistance from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

There are three components where some form of assessment and/or accreditation is required. A proposed approach to each of these is detailed below.

7.1 Practitioner Assessment and Ongoing Development

Much of the work to-date has noted that the current training programme does not assess the competence level of practitioners as they progress through their training and development. This makes it difficult for the practitioner, their parent ESO and the veteran they are assisting to identify the practitioner's abilities and areas for improvement. It also limits the effectiveness and opportunity for the practitioner's professional maintenance and development needs to be identified and met.

As part of the design of the capability framework, developmental paths for practitioners will be identified. This will likely identify four levels of practitioner varying from a Level 1 practitioner who is just beginning in helping people to complete and lodge claims through to experienced, highly trained Level 4 Advocates who are able to, and do, represent clients at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. These four levels are, in many ways, analogous to the current advocacy and pension officer structure.

The assessment requirements and processes would, by necessity, differ at each level with the requirements being simpler for lower levels (competence assessment) and more rigorous and

prescriptive at senior levels (accreditation). This is especially important to minimise the risk of the assessment process being too onerous and off putting for volunteer pensions officers who want to provide simple, base-level support to the veteran community. Those practitioners undertaking high level, senior advocate work would be expected to gain appropriate accreditation due to the complexity of the work they undertake.

There are many ways to undertake this graduated assessment process. It is expected that the assessment of many current practitioners, especially at lower levels, would involve significant recognition of their current skills and knowledge through "recognition of prior learning" (RPL), on the job assessment and introductory on-line training. This, in combination with the on-the-job training and mentoring processes implemented through the capability framework could lead to an assessment of these practitioners as competent.

As a practitioner progresses through the levels, the assessment processes would become more involved to ensure that practitioners are fully competent in the wide knowledge base and range of skills required to undertake appeals work, possibly across multiple Acts and involving appearing before senior appeals bodies. These processes could involve higher level on-line and face-to-face training, work journals, practical exercises, peer assessments and tests of knowledge depending on the level.

This could be implemented efficiently through a two phase process with 'Phase 1 – Practitioner Competence Assessment' providing the competence assessment for level 1 and 2 practitioners and 'Phase 2 – Senior Practitioner Accreditation' providing the formal accreditation processes for level 3 and 4 senior advocates.

Significant flexibility would also be built into the assessment methods to allow different approaches to identifying and ensuring a practitioner's competence.

This is summarised in the below table:

Level	**Stage of development/ Work undertaken**	**Type of Assessment**	**Level of Assessment**
1 – Introductory Claims Officer	Initial training, completion of primary claims under supervision.	Introductory on-line training, recognition of prior learning (RPL), on the job assessment and assessment and mentoring	Competence Assessment
2 – Claims Officer	Lodgement of primary claims across the three Acts. Support for low-level appeals work under supervision.	On-line and face-to-face training, RPL, on the job assessment and mentoring, work journals and practical assessments	Competence Assessment
3 - Advocate	Lodgement of appeals up to VRB (or equivalent) level.	All above measures with peer assessment and tests.	Accreditation
4 – AAT Advocate	Lodgement of appeals to, and appearance before the AAT.	All assessment measures including formal tests of knowledge.	Accreditation

The practitioners themselves would have significant control over what work they wanted to undertake through choosing how far along this development path they wish to progress. Flexibility regarding the Act that the practitioner wishes to provide advice in could also be included.

The Capability Management Framework will also identify a maintenance and professional improvement programme for practitioner's to ensure they continue to develop and demonstrate the

required skills and competencies. As a significant part of this improvement programme will be managed through a practitioner's on-the-job training and mentoring the programme will need to ensure that the necessary training and support is available for those who provide on-the-job training and mentoring to their colleagues. There will also be a need for the Department to provide appropriate feedback on claims quality to inform a practitioner's professional development.

This accreditation will allow DVA to investigate the links between accredited advocates and claims processing priorities.

A separate progression path, based on the same principles would be developed for welfare practitioners. This path would likely share some components with the non-welfare practitioner path, but provide separate, specific material directly related to the different work undertaken, and development required, by welfare practitioners.

7.2 Trainer Assessment

To ensure that trainers are able to provide the best training available it is likely that they would also be expected to undertake an assessment/ accreditation program. Again, RPL and on the job assessment would play a significant role in this.

An RTO would likely be expected to undertake much of the course and programme development, trainer assessment and development and train the trainer work. There would however still be a significant amount of this work undertaken by advocacy training trainers. These senior trainers could be expected to have formal trainer accreditation in-line with the Vocational Education and Training (VET) process, likely at the Cert. IV level.

7.3 Course Content Assessment

To ensure that the course content is of the highest, most effective quality it should also undergo an assessment process as part of its development. This may, or may not take the form of formal accreditation of the program in-line with VET requirements.

Regardless of that decision, all stages of the course development process should ensure that the coursework is, at the least, accreditation ready. This would necessitate involvement from an RTO through the development process.

The decision to accredit would be the responsibility of the Strategic Management Group and would be taken once the program had reached a level of maturity to allow an informed decision.

8 Implementation

A detailed transition and implementation plan for the draft model will need to be developed. To provide information to allow discussion on this, a proposed timeline is provided below. This includes suggested milestones for the implementation phase as this phase will include the design, development and roll-out of a number of pieces of work.

An ambitious timeline has been proposed to take best advantage of the positive attitude to change among stakeholders throughout this process.

8.1 Suggested Timeline

Stage	Summary	Timeframe
WP finalises consideration and forwards proposal to ESO Round Table.	The WP will finalise its consideration of the proposal and forward it to ESO Round Table for endorsement.	Mid-August 2015
ESO Round Table endorsement	The ESO Round Table considers and endorses the proposal.	27 August (scheduled meeting)
ESO Round Table nominates three Strategic Governance Board Members	ESO Round Table nominates its three Strategic Governance Board representatives.	27 August (scheduled meeting)
DVA/ Ministerial Endorsement	Secretary DVA and Minister review and endorse the approach	September 2015
Nominations for Positions Requested	Nominations are called for individuals to fill the remaining positions in the advocacy training management structure	October 2015 – December 2015
Appointments made	Successful applicants are selected and notified	January 2016
Initial Strategic and Operational settings identified	The Strategic and Operational bodies take-up their role and identify the directions, goals and requirements for the development of the Advocacy Training Programme's capability framework and other required structures	January 2016 to March 2016
Implementation of Programme	The development of, and transition to the identified capability framework and training programme occurs.	March 2016 to 30 June 2017
	Milestone 1 – Finalise capability framework	May 2016
	Milestone 2 – Provision of initial content in-line with this framework. The content development will be assisted by current course content and by work already begun to examine how best to utilise the Department's staff technical training packages for advocacy training.	June 2016
	Milestone 3 – Assessment of first practitioners under the 'Phase 1 - Practitioner Competence Assessment' process	August 2016
	Milestone 4 – Assessment of first senior practitioners under the 'Phase 2 – Senior Practitioner Accreditation' process	November 2016
	Milestone 5 – All initial content has been developed and is being delivered in-line with the capability framework.	April 2017
Transition to business-as-usual	A high quality, nationally consistent, accredited learning and development programme has been implemented. It is subject to ongoing review and development through formal, agreed procedures.	Ongoing

8.2 Appointment of Representatives

8.2.1 Strategic Governance Board

The three ESO representatives on this Board will need to be nominated by the ESO Round Table at its meeting of 27 August. These nominations will then be raised to the Minister for formal appointment to the new structure.

They will be joined by the nominated DVA and Defence representatives.

The two members of this group to be appointed by the Capability Management Framework Group will join the Board once that group has been formed.

8.2.2 Capability Management Framework Group and Regional Administration

In early October, following final endorsement, the members of the Capability Management Framework and Regional Administration groups will be identified.

While the identification and appointment process will be subject to discussion by the initial members of the Strategic Governance Board it is expected that a number of positions in these bodies will be filled from current TIP management group members, ESO members of the various Training Consultative Groups and representatives nominated by the ESO Round Table.

It is not expected that members of these groups would be appointed by either the Minister or the Commissions.

8.3 Transition Arrangements

Noting the above timetable there are two distinct periods where different arrangements will be in place.

The first period concerns the filling of the positions identified in the advocacy training management structure. The second period follows the filling of that structure during the development of, and transition to, the new learning framework.

Throughout the first period it is expected that the current TIP arrangements will continue. This will however require work from the Working Group, TIP and ESO Round Table members to ensure that the current TIP personnel are kept fully informed and involved in the transition to ensure that they continue to provide their services.

Once the new management structure is in-place they will identify how to best utilise these TIP training resources within their structure to continue course delivery up until the new training programme is fully implemented. It is expected that many of the office-bearers in the current structure will wish to continue in roles in the new structure. This will provide a level of continuity which will ease the transition.

This transition will also likely be assisted due to work which has already begun on examining how best to utilise the Department's staff technical training packages for advocacy training. A registered training organisation, Australian Forensic Services, has recently been engaged to undertake this work.

In parallel to this transition the Strategic Governance Board, along with the other management bodies, will need to plan and implement the move, from the initial six, to the agreed three regional bodies. This process will require the identification of the preferred regions and its introduction may be staged over the period through to mid-2017. For example, regions training significantly lower practitioner numbers, such as those currently administering Tasmania and Western Australia, may be amalgamated first.

8.4 Communications Arrangements

A detailed communications plan will be developed around the following key factors. Communication will need to be undertaken in several stages to reflect the implementation and transition processes of this work.

8.4.1 Target audiences

- Veteran advocates, pensions and welfare officers;
- Training volunteers;
- Ex-service organisations;
- Current and former Australian Defence Force members and their dependants;
- ESO Round Table and Advocacy Training Working Party members;
- DVA executive;
- Minister for Veterans' Affairs; and
- Media, including specialist Defence and veteran publications.

8.4.2 Communication objectives

- To reinforce the value of current volunteers to the future of the framework;
- To inform the community of current and former ADF members and their dependants of work being undertaken to improve the quality of veterans' advocacy training;
- To promote the outcomes flowing from the Review;
- To emphasise the importance of this community having access to expert, professionally trained and accredited advocacy.
- To advise of timeline and transition processes for the implementation of the Advocacy Training and Development Programme;
- To raise awareness and understanding of these transition and implementation processes;
- To maximise existing and new volunteer participation in both training and advocacy practitioners' roles; and
- To acknowledge the valued contribution of the TIP community to date.

8.4.3 Communication approach

To date the review has made little information on its progress public. It will be important that any messaging explain the origins of the project and why the process has taken some time.

As the Review process focused heavily on stakeholder engagement with those affected, external communication activities are recommended to promote the outcomes of the process and ensure understanding of, and engagement in, the transition process required to achieve those outcomes.

Attachment A - Areas of responsibility and Possible Improvements

The following table takes the responsibilities detailed above and examines how the current system could be improved to best meet these.

New Tier - Responsibility	Current Situation	Possible Improvement
Strategic Oversight Responsibility		
Set strategic directions for the Programme	National and State TIP management with state-by-state TCG input. TCG process varies across states but generally involves limited, state-specific DVA and ESO Community input.	Representation of all key stakeholders could be required at a national, strategic management level. This management partnership would focus on all areas of the development of advocacy and set a national, consistent strategic direction.
Set strategic direction for the capability framework	National and State TIP management controls formal training policy with limited input from DVA. There is some state-based TCG input, but TCG process varies significantly across states and generally involves limited, state-specific DVA and ESO Community input.	A capability framework would be developed.
Communications, engagement and change culture	Communication between all stakeholders is ad-hoc. There is no consistent communications mechanism nationally or at state level.	Formal, clear communication paths between the members of the partnership could be developed. These would ensure consistent and co-ordinated messaging both between partnership members, practitioners and the community of current and former ADF members and their dependants.
Ongoing monitoring and review – Quality assurance	No current, agreed, consistent, national approach. Minimal involvement from DVA and the ESO community.	Verification of the quality and consistency of the training programme and its alignment with adult-learning and best-practice principles.

New Tier - Responsibility	Current Situation	Possible Improvement
Ensure all decisions made regarding resource use consider efficiency.	Limited strategic oversight of resource availability or use.	A national, consistent process for all stakeholders to co-ordinate the most resource efficient method of delivering the required learning and development to help reduce duplication of effort and inefficient expenditure.
Capability Framework Management Responsibilities		
Identification of national requirements, roles, responsibilities, development levels and pathways for advocates and practitioners	National TIP management with limited input from DVA. State-by-state TIP input. Minimal input from ESO Community.	A high quality, nationally consistent capability framework could be developed and implemented. The quality of this framework could benefit from the assistance of independent expertise in adult-learning and best-practice education principles during its developing. The framework would focus on all aspects of training, rather than just classroom delivery and would be developed with significant input from all stakeholders.
Development and maintenance of all learning tools and ensuring their compliance with national consistency and adult-learning principles: • On-the-job training; • Mentoring; • Formal (classroom type) training; and • Train-the-trainer training.	National TIP management with state-by-state TIP input and limited input from DVA. Minimal input from ESO Community. ESO community is responsible for OJT and mentoring.	As above. Rigorous, nationally consistent, structures could be put in-place to ensure timely and accurate updating of course content following DVA legislative or policy changes or other changes in the advocacy community. OJT and mentoring could become formal, consistently undertaken components of the capability framework.

New Tier - Responsibility	Current Situation	Possible Improvement
Scheduling and delivery of all training tools	State TIP management with state-by-state TCG input. National TIP management provides national consistency course training. There are often last-minute changes to course schedules.	All stakeholders, including ESOs, DVA and Defence would have appropriate input into the development of course management and delivery. Course schedules could be developed with consistent, national priorities.
Implementation and application of the certification/competence assessment framework for trainers, practitioners and course content	TIP state/national responsible for trainers. ESOs are responsible for the accreditation of their practitioners, generally for insurance purposes. This accreditation process is inconsistent.	A national, consistent, process for ensuring quality outcomes within the programme could be implemented. This could include a structure to allow identification of trained, competent practitioners.
Setting of expectations and selection criteria in regards to the nomination of trainee practitioners/advocates.	Individual ESOs nominate attendees.	National, consistent processes and expectations around this could be developed and implemented. This could maximise the chance of trainees providing ongoing, high quality support to current and former ADF members and their dependants.
Ensure efficient use of resources.	State and national TIP management identify budgets within allocated funding limits. Many expenditure decisions are made on a state-by-state basis resulting in significant cost-structure variations across states.	A more consistent, national cost structure could be developed and applied consistently across the programme. This could apply 'economies of scale' benefits to costs in states with small participant numbers.

New Tier - Responsibility	Current Situation	Possible Improvement
Regional Administration Responsibilities		
Advising the capability framework management tier on requirements local to the region.	State-by-state TCG input. TCG process varies significantly across states but generally involves limited, state-specific DVA and ESO Community input.	A consistent approach to local content and priorities across all regions and consistent input from current practitioners, to help ensure quality outcomes.
Ensuring availability of necessary resources (trainers, venues etc.) within the region.	State based TIP structure. DVA administrative assistance.	A more consistent, national approach would provide likely opportunities for improved efficiency in resource usage.
Developing and sustaining effective communities of practice for practitioners within the region.	No current recognised networks. Some local, informal ESO based communities.	A national, consistent process for a co-ordinated approach to developing and supporting practitioners.
Ensure efficient use of resources.	State and national TIP management identify budgets within allocated funding limits. Significant state-based decision making in regards to expenditure.	The provision of national, consistent, results-based funding to the framework to ensure an efficient use of resources.