

**REVIEW OF DVA FUNDED ESO ADVOCACY AND WELFARE SERVICES**  
**VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA**  
**DRAFT SUBMISSION**  
**by Ken Foster NVP October 2009**

**BUILDING EXCELLENCE IN SUPPORT AND TRAINING (B.E.S.T.)**

Funding should be formally proportioned between funding paid advocates and administrative assistants and support of the volunteer pension, advocacy and welfare service providers, recommended proportions would be 60% to paid services and 40% to volunteer.

All paid service providers should have the level of training confirmed and be registered at state level with DVA.

All volunteer service providers should be TIP trained, accredited by the funding recipient and registered at state level with DVA.

Reporting should include statistics of each individual paid and volunteer service provider summarised to each funding recipient.

While the concept of ESO's sharing resources and working in partnership is commendable the administration of standalone centres can make the concept unworkable from the accountability point of view, it is more appropriate that a single legal entity remains responsible for accounting for funding. The ability for any ESO to provide services to all members of the ex service community is well established and should remain a requirement of funding.

A major difficulty for volunteer ESO service providers is the current requirement for audit costs to be at the expense of the recipient, if government require audit report to confirm expenditure the cost of that audit should be funded by government.

Where funding is designed to commence on 1 July each year the funding should be available on that date, the practice of delaying announcement of funding places service providers in a position where they may not be able to commit funds to meet the shortfall in anticipation of receiving a grant.

The question of duplication of ESO advocacy and welfare service in individual locations needs careful consideration, for example, in Sydney, Legacy and RSL are both major service providers and could be classed as being in close proximity to each other?

If a central register of advocates and welfare officers is to be established the model used in NSW to register and identify Justice of the Peace by the Attorney Generals Department could be a model

Grants in Aid should be separate from BEST funding as the goals and criteria are different.

### **TRAINING AND INFORMATION PROGRAM (T.I.P.)**

Training of volunteers should be based on a national curriculum and managed at state level.

Pre course correspondence training should be provided, with the alternative of face to face training and correspondence / external training available.

Refresher training should be primarily external / correspondence type evaluation.

### **VETERANS AND COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMS**

These grants should remain separate from B.E.S.T. funding as the objectives and outcomes are entirely different.