



STORIES & INSIGHTS

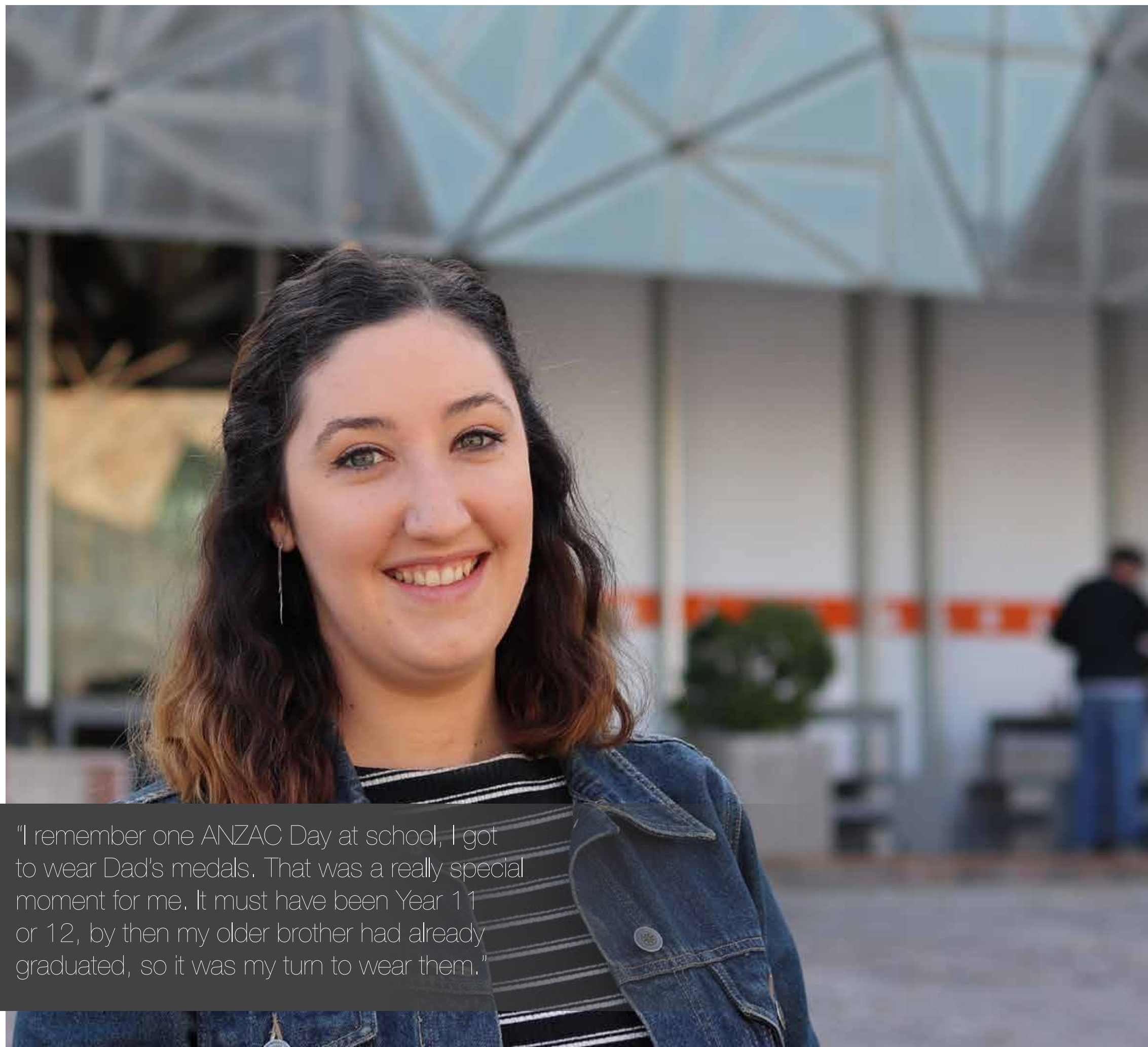
Melbourne Legacy's Young Veteran's Project 2018:
Transition insights from post-1991 veterans and their families



SHOUT OUT

Everyone has a story

**MARK SCHROFFEL
TRENT DYBALL
DECEMBER 2018**



"I remember one ANZAC Day at school, I got to wear Dad's medals. That was a really special moment for me. It must have been Year 11 or 12, by then my older brother had already graduated, so it was my turn to wear them."

FOREWORD

Justin Elwin

I am delighted to provide the foreword to the report produced from the ShoutOUT Project. This project would not have been possible without the generous financial support provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Our other partner has been the Victorian Branch of the Returned and Services League. The RSL remains an enduring partner in the delivery of services and support to veterans and their families, now and in the future.

I am pleased with both the content of the report and its bottom-up approach to the project. In the sector, we hear daily about the initiatives being suggested by former serving senior officers. Military covenants, discount cards, priority boarding on Virgin Flights and lapel pins are all well intended. This project tells your story and informs the public what you (the veteran, who more often than, not is a soldier or noncommissioned officer) need.

The suggested blueprint is a wonderful start point for the actions needed in 2019. Melbourne Legacy will start work on a Joint ESO Service Directory early in 2019. A draft has already been produced. The referral pathways among Melbourne Legacy, the RSL and Open Arms are now open and improving all the time. The Melbourne Legacy Service Model for next year will see some significant change. Veterans of post-1991 conflicts are going to be able to access a more comprehensive service model and support going forward.

Thank you to Mark, Trent and Greta for their professionalism and empathy towards the ex-service community and many of you who have been unheard until now.

Justin Elwin



Storytelling is what connects us to our humanity. It untangles our past to reveal the future.

ShoutOUT has provided a safe environment where veterans and their families have shared their closely guarded stories. While there is more to be done, these personal insights add a fresh perspective to the challenges they face, and will assist in developing better policies for future generations of veterans and their families.

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PREFACE

— Mark Schroffel

This report is the outcome of a special collaboration with the veteran community that commenced in February 2018. Focusing on collecting stories of members of the post-1991 veteran community, ShoutOUT was created as a grassroots campaign to establish a new perspective and offer insights to help ex-service organisations (ESOs) prioritise their efforts and close the gaps on the needs of post-1991 veterans and their families.

Representing the lived experiences of veterans and their families is essential to the ShoutOUT concept. The stories we collected were shared on our website and across social media, and supported our engagement with the veteran community. This allowed us to test our thinking with the people most invested in our findings.

Our understanding of the emerging needs of post-1991 veterans and their families has led us to the view that small initiatives can make a meaningful difference. The ShoutOUT Blueprint for 2019 represents our hopes for action and commitment among those organisations that have the power to make that difference.

Regardless of the path taken, gaps are destined to widen in the absence of improving cooperation among key stakeholders. Major ESOs have a key role in leading the initiatives to rebuild trust and provide much-needed pathways to support and self-reliance.

We are eternally grateful to the veterans and families who courageously shared their stories in the spirit of making a difference. Their perspectives are invaluable and the insights we gained will stand to serve the veteran community for many years to come.



"I didn't have a job to return to when I came back from my last deployment. I struggled for two years, barely getting by on casual employment and Army Reserve training days."

CHLOE'S STORY

I remember mum was crying when Bob turned up at our house for the first time, so he just let himself in and made her a cup of tea. My little sister and I were confused about what was going on, not only were we still grieving for Dad, we were also coping with the sudden move from Toowoomba to Albury - it was a very chaotic time.

Bob was our first link into Legacy. I remember him doing special things for us, like bringing us Christmas presents and celebrating our birthdays. He got me onto my first youth camp in Wollongong I went on camp every year for ten years after that. It was the camps that helped me the most. So much so that they inspired me to establish a career in social work, and I'm now in my dream job as a case manager in the community services team at Melbourne Legacy.

In my job, when I see a family with kids, I just want to get those kids involved in every activity possible. Financial assistance and other services can only go so far, but the benefits of the friendships and support kids get from one another can last a lifetime.



"Financial assistance and other services can only go so far, but the benefits of the friendships and support kids get from one another can last a lifetime."

OVERVIEW

The ShoutOUT campaign is the second in a series of initiatives sponsored by Melbourne Legacy through grants provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

Officially known as the Young Veterans' Project Phase 2 (YVP2), this iteration of the project was established to engage with the post-1991 veteran community living in Victoria. The goal was to gain a grassroots perspective of the issues and challenges that lie behind the data exposed in earlier studies.

The insights developed by ShoutOUT build on those key papers including the Victorian Veteran's Council's Veterans Sector Study Report 2015, the Aspen Foundation's Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) Mapping Report published in May 2016, and Melbourne Legacy's Victorian Ex-Service Organisation Mapping Project published in February 2018.

The ShoutOUT project team has also conducted a review of academic literature to further inform the development of key insights and to validate the approach.

Built on the principles of Design Thinking (Kleahbahn and Utley, 2017), our key objective was to gain credible insights by engaging directly with members of the post-1991 veteran community.

Establishing a position of credibility and trust within the veteran community was crucial for project success. The ShoutOUT team achieved this by faithfully sharing their stories and fulfilling our promise to provide honest and unfiltered feedback to policymakers, ESOs, and government agencies.

This report is the completion of that very process, and our intention is to open a window into the lived-experiences of veterans and their families, to express their concerns and challenges and to add a human dimension to the wealth of data that has already been expertly collected and analysed over many years.

PART 1

ABOUT SHOUTOUT

OVERVIEW

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

Our life courses and wellbeing model combines the latest research on how life events overlap to impact wellbeing. This model provides policy makers and agencies with a fresh perspective from which to develop insights that lead to sustainable support programs and interventions.

The research background for our life courses model is discussed in Part 3 of this report.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this program was to establish a set of insights into the lives of the post-1991 veteran community to complements the demographic analysis of Phase 1 of Young Veterans Project.

A secondary outcome was the deployment of an integrated engagement plan that enhanced the reach of the project and created a channel for engaging the post-1991 cohort in future initiatives.

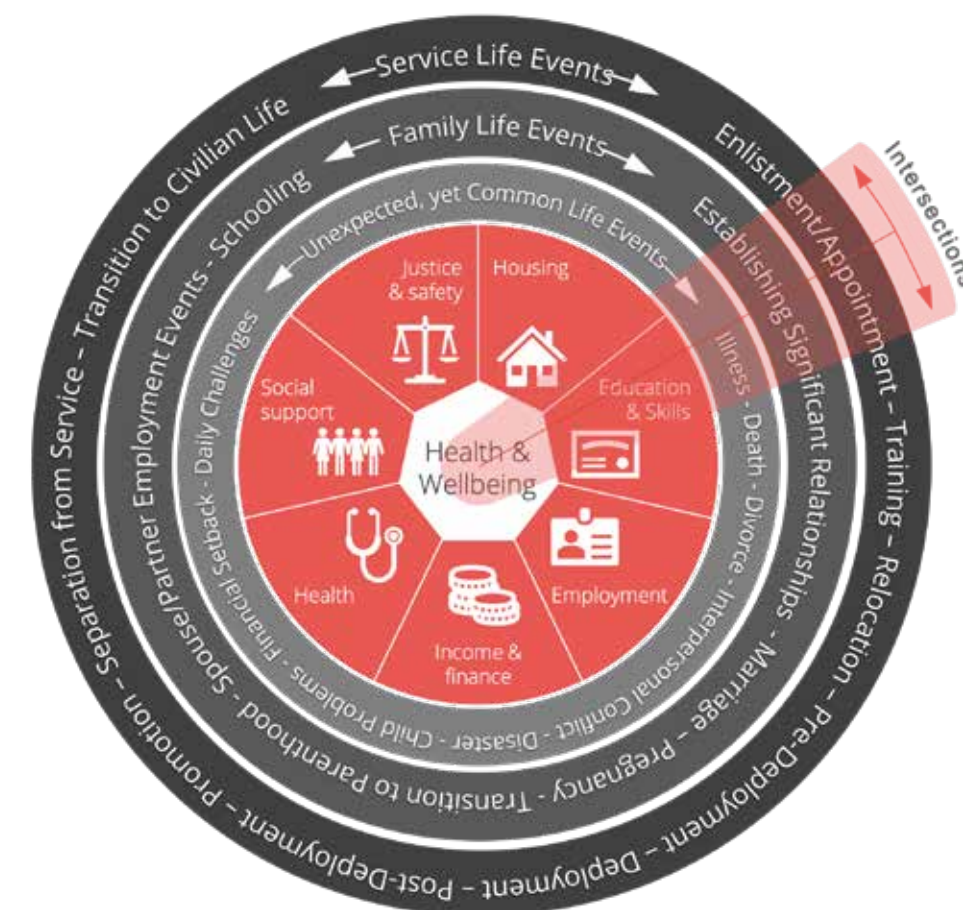


Figure 1: Life courses and wellbeing model for military families.

KEN'S STORY

It was great being back home to Melbourne and being close by for Mum and Dad as they approach their senior years. Getting out when I did, and where I did, felt like the perfect move. I had landed a great job and everything was humming along beautifully. Then one day, out of the blue, something happened. Now, I've dealt with stress before, especially on operations - but this was different. It was like running onto a slippery patch and I felt like the world was closing in on me.

My wife, kept all the brochures and fridge magnets from the Army resettlement seminars. She once got me to agree that she could make a call if she ever thought that I needed I help. I never imagined she would... and when she did, I was glad (even though I was holding onto the belief that I was somehow going to handle it on my own).

Thankfully, my family was nearby and I had a great support system. I got through that rough spot with encouragement from my wife and professional guidance from a veterans' counselling service. My advice to veterans is to listen to people close to you and be prepared to accept help when its offered, you might not realise you need it. Also, be prepared to make some solid life changes and have the courage to share your story in order to help others.



PART 2

INSIGHTS



INSIGHTS BY DESIGN

The Human Touch

Since its inception in the early 1990's, Design Thinking has become widely recognised by business leaders and policymakers a key tool for tackling significant human-centered problems (Drews 2009, Brown and Wyatt 2010).

With its emphasis on prototyping and double-loop learning, Design Thinking is a style of enquiry that champions close collaboration between the enquirer and the end-user (Dam and Siang, 2018).

Utlising highly engaging techniques such as storytelling, journey mapping, and social network analysis, the ShoutOUT team conducted a program of enquiry that penetrated well beneath the surface. The ambition was to activate the post-1991 veteran community and to extract the unnoticed and neglected truths of their experience.

Operating as a grassroots initiative, ShoutOUT has become an established voice in the post-1991 veteran community.

As active members of the veteran community, ShoutOUT observers have gathered highly contextualised information about the personal experiences of the post-1991 veterans, and how those experiences have impacted their lives to this day.

The insights and vignettes published at shoutout.org.au provide ex-service families, ex-service organisations and the public with accessible insights into the lives of people who have been impacted by their service, or the service of a family member.

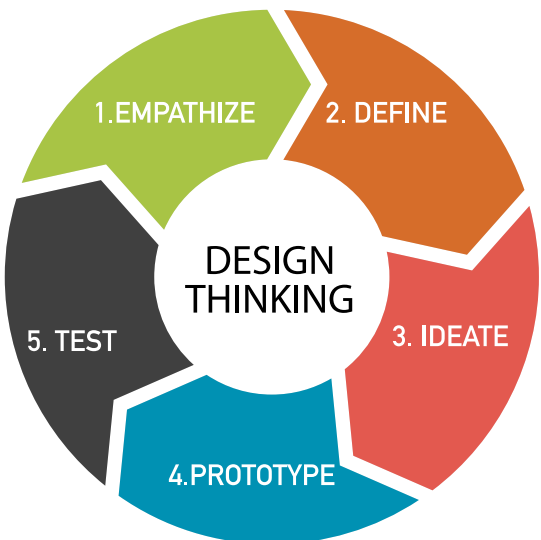


Figure 2: Design Thinking Cycle

“The transition to civilian life involves an adjustment to new social norms, especially in the workplace.”

JOURNEY MAPPING

Understanding transitions

Our analysis of veterans' transition experiences using Journey Mapping revealed some fascinating insights into how they deal with change and from where they draw support. While not an exhaustive study, our insights are well aligned to established theories of personal change and identity theory (Binks and Cambridge, 2018).

In particular our observation that veterans, and indeed their family members, often experience a delayed sense of loss and disconnection. The transition to civilian life involves an adjustment to new social norms, especially in the workplace.

The Journey Maps below provide an overview of the typical experiences. While each veterans experiences are unique, side-by-side comparisons reveal common patterns and similarities. As a communication tool, journey mapping has its limits, however we've found it to be invaluable part of our engagement suite for exploring the nuances of people's experiences and eliciting details of their emotional journey and what they did to cope with the change.

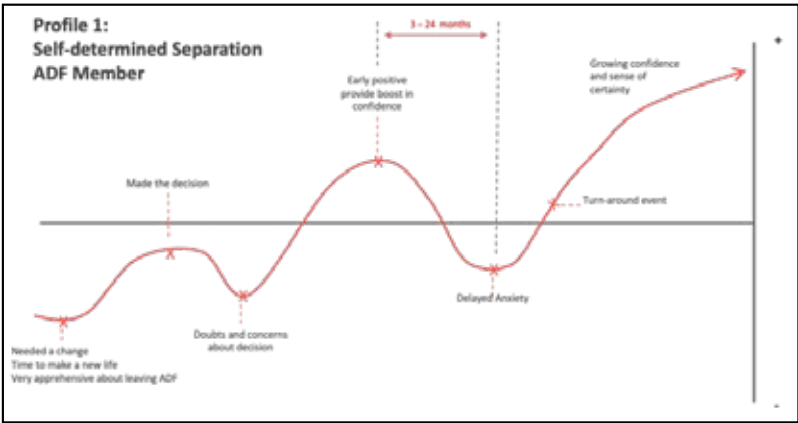


Figure 3: Journey Map Profile 1

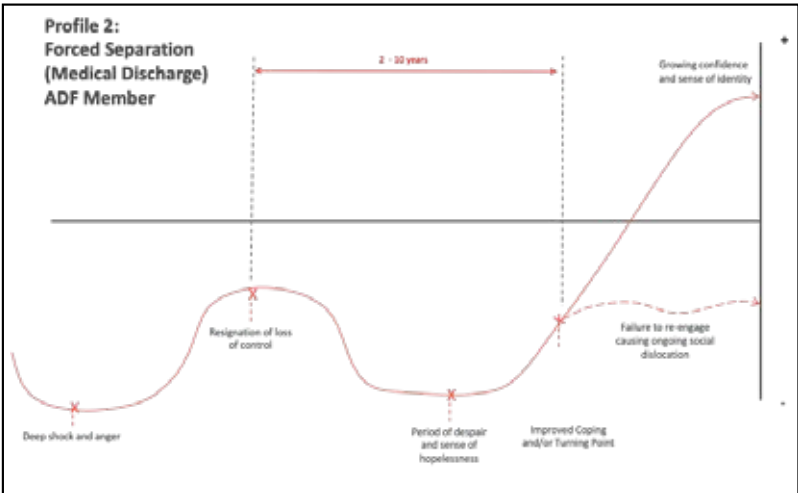


Figure 4: Journey Map Profile 2

TOM'S STORY

I was fourteen when Dad died. I can't imagine what it would have been like without the help and compassion from everyone who gathered to support us. I've kept in touch with many of them. I'm very close to one family in particular, so much so that I feel like I've been adopted into a second family.

My father was a ship's diver in the Navy. He loved diving and I have fond memories of our dives together and the places we went. I still use some of his old gear. My most treasured possession is Dad's diving watch. I wear it when I go diving. It's my way of taking something of his along with me while doing something he used to enjoy.

Legacy has become a big part of my life, and my mentor Geoff is always there for me. I'm now starting to help out by working as volunteer with the youth and disability program. It's so incredibly rewarding, I just love being part of it. I've talked with kids younger than me who've gone through much more. I think sometimes the best person to talk to is someone who's already experienced what you're going through. So in a way, it's now my turn to be there for somebody else.





KEY INSIGHTS

The outcomes from ShoutOUT are expressed as set of insights gained through a high level of engagement with veterans and family members of the post-1991 cohort. These insights are an expression the lived-experiences of veterans and their families and are the foundation of our blueprint for 2019.

1. Former non-commissioned officers are key influencers

Outside the family, former service colleagues and non-commissioned officers were identified as the people veterans related with best and trusted the most.

2. Families are bearing the hidden burdens of service-life

Families told us that they don't know where to go for support and advice. Families receiving support said that they only accessed services after a crisis.

Veterans told us that family support was crucial to dealing with the challenges of transition. Family breakdown was highlighted as one of the tragic consequences of a trouble-prone transition.

3. Younger veterans are losing faith in ESOs and are going online for information and support

Veterans tell us that some ESOs don't adequately cater for the needs of their younger members. They also expressed concerns about the motives of some ESOs and whether the money they raise is being properly used.

Our evidence is that veterans and families prefer turning to online forums and friends for support rather than making contact with an ESO.

4. The transtion to civilian life is a complex process that takes time

Insight highlights the need to ensure that veterans are adequately prepared and supported throughout the process. As time passes it's likely veterans will lose touch with the support network. A plan for ongoing engagement is important in addressing this issue.

5. The post-1991 cohort is social media savvy

The post-1991 cohort is social media-savvy and makes use of online platforms to maintain service connections and to engage with veteran-related interest groups. Facebook is used extensively, hosting dozens of groups reflecting the diversity of the cohort's service experience and interests.

6. ADF Reserve transitions have been overlooked

The ADF reserve personnel experience a complex range of post-deployment transition issues. A key concern for some was the difficulty they experienced in re-establishing civilian employment after extended periods of overseas full-time service.

“Lifelong friendships built on loyalty and trust are hallmarks of the military experience.”



ShoutOUT's social engagement footprint of more than 650 followers throughout Australia

CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE

Looking after our own

Joining the Australian Defence Force is a life-altering experience.

Military service demands a level of teamwork and commitment required of few other vocations. Lifelong friendships built on loyalty and trust are hallmarks of the military experience.

This study confirms that ex-service personnel routinely turn to the people they know and trust from their time in the service.

We also discovered that former non-commissioned officers continue to play a central role in fostering connections and establishing informal support networks.

While this may not be a great revelation to many ex-serving personnel, it was interesting for us to observe that this sentiment is transferred to family members who have little direct experience of military life (such as children born after their parent had left the service).

This insight has implications on how policymakers and agencies choose to engage with the post-1991 cohort.

Though we need to learn more, the value of relatable representatives has been long accepted as a fundamental requirement of any stakeholder engagement effort. Given the tightly bound nature of the ex-service community, relatable representatives are essential to any outreach work that needs to be undertaken.

Families are bearing the hidden burdens of service life.

Families play a vital role in supporting veterans when they transition. However the family members we spoke to felt their role in the transition process was overlooked and undervalued. These are the people most committed to facilitating a smooth transition, but currently feel frustrated by how difficult it is to access relevant resources and information.

We have also gleaned insights from the children of veteran's who told us about the difficulties of a childhood disrupted by service life. Interrupted schooling and differences among State education systems have been highlighted. The impact of social disruption on school-aged children is a major challenge, especially if the transition involves an interstate relocation.

While efforts are underway to improve post-transition support for ex-ADF members, much more needs to be done to connect family members with the information and resources they need for their role in the process.

The family members we spoke to were unclear about the support available to them, saying that they only accessed support as a result of a crisis referral.





SERVICING THE NEED

A call for better governance and cooperation

According to the Aspen Foundation (2016) of the 3,500 charities registered in Australia that support veterans and their families, around 500 of them nominate veterans as their exclusive beneficiary.

When combined, these organisations have been reported to control an annual spend of around \$19-billion (Aspen Foundation, 2016).

While there is much activity and presumably plenty of choice for services and support, veterans have shared with us their concerns that there may be too many charities, and that some are perceived to be failing on delivering on their promise to help and support veterans and their families.

It's clear to us that some of the smaller ex-services charities are struggling for viability and relevance. Unfortunately, this and a small number of high-profile failures in probity and governance, have a negative impact on veteran and public perception that can be difficult to overcome.

Fortunately, this situation is counterbalanced by the large stable ex-services charities that over the last 100-years or so have established brands that enjoy the unshakable loyalty and trust of the community.

Job placement initiatives are highly regarded amongst recently transitioned veterans. Some small yet very effective initiatives have emerged that harness the trust and comradery within the veteran community to help veterans win employment.

Many veterans have told us that these grassroots job-finding initiatives deliver life-changing outcomes and bring veterans into a community of people focused on building positive futures.

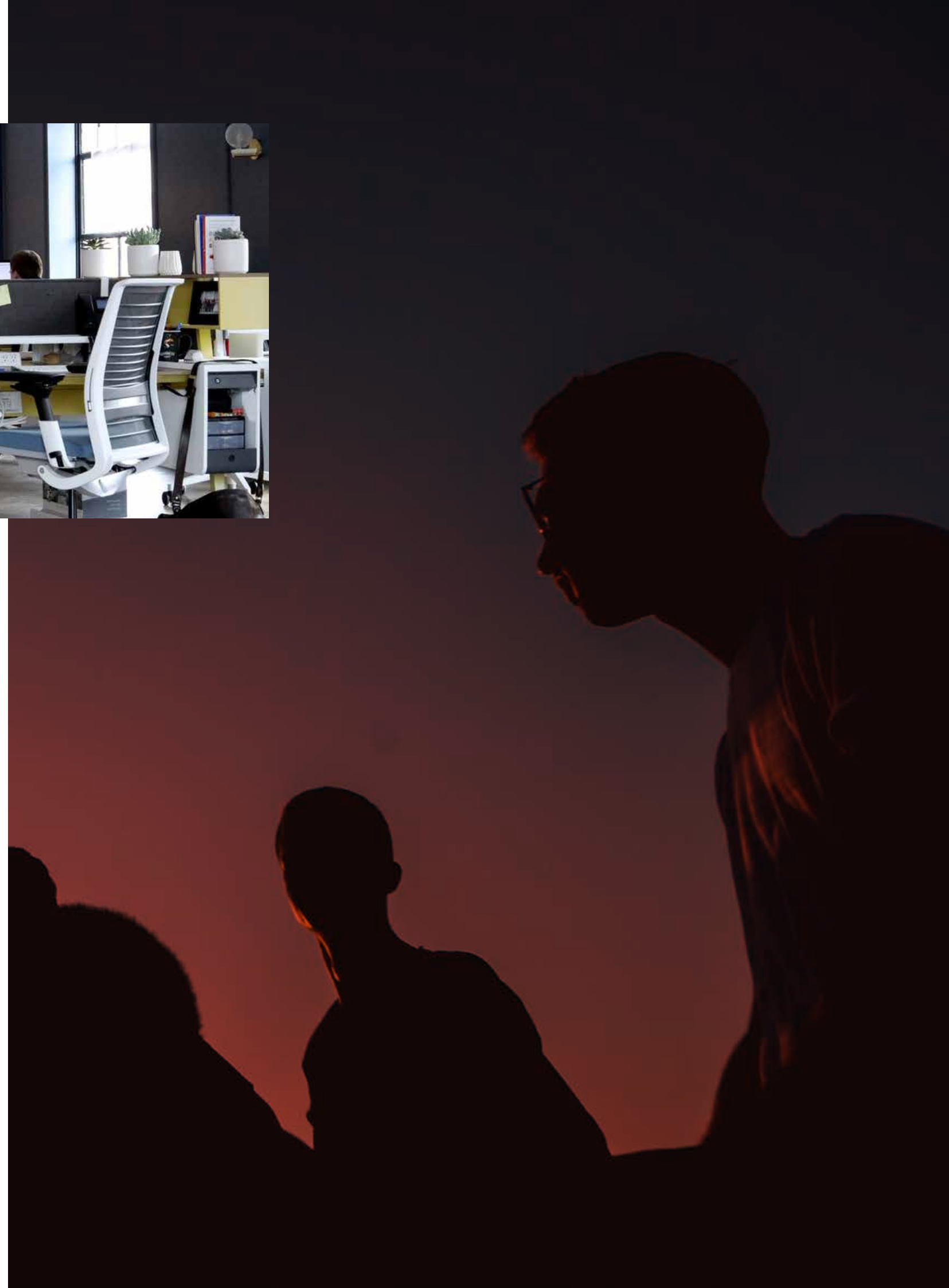
“Jobs not Pensions”

The problem with small grassroots initiatives are that they can be difficult to sustain and often don't have access to the resources and expertise they need to sustain growth.

This is where governance becomes a key ingredient for an organisations ability to evolve and deliver value over the long-term.

Directors and office-bearers of ex-services charities are almost exclusively drawn from the ex-service community. This a wonderful testament to their commitment and interest providing support to the veteran community, however, the one issue that we've highlighted in our insights is that many of them have little training or experience in either corporate or not-for-profit governance.

Our insight here is that governance has become a key issue for ex-services organisations. We see an opportunity for the better-established ex-services charities to facilitate voluntary accreditation program that creates an opportunity for emerging charities to lift their standards and help them deliver on their promises and maintain the public's confidence in their operations.



"...there is an opportunity to use social media as a key engagement channel for post-1991 veterans and their families."

SOCIAL MEDIA

And other keys to engagement

The post-1991 cohort is social media-savvy and makes use of online platforms to maintain service connections and to host veteran-related interest groups. Facebook is used extensively, hosting dozens of groups reflecting the diversity of the cohort's service experience and interests.

Many Facebook groups are 'closed groups' where members are vetted by group organisers. One such group is the DVA Entitlements closed group which has over 22,000 members. This group operates as an informal support group where members post questions and support each other with information and practical advice on dealing with DVA and its review boards.

Aligned with our other observations, former non-commissioned officers play a prominent role in leading the various online communities. Online community leaders are highly influential in leading discussion and organising events. In some cases, they coordinate activism to rally support for a cause. For example, the Veteran Chalk Challenge group (over 1000 members) is championing veteran suicide prevention, and the Australian Mefloquine and Tafenoquine Veterans group (nearly 1,000 members) is campaigning for a Royal Commission on the ADF's anti-malarial drug trials.

The broader community is also highly engaged with ADF-related topics. The chart below summarises the results of a Facebook audience analysis conducted for ShoutOUT in March 2018 of Victorian-based users who engage in ADF-related topics.

Clearly, there is an opportunity to use social media as a key engagement channel for post-1991 veterans and their families.

This channel needs to be approached with caution, however, as there are invisible barriers to credibility and trust that cannot be breached without grass-roots support. The viability and process of using this style of engagement requires further investigation.

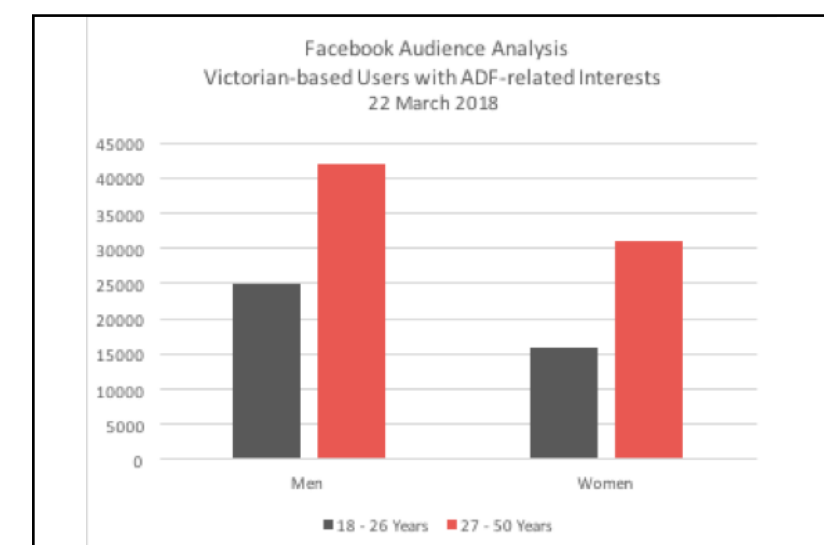


Figure 5: Facebook Audience Analysis

ESO DISRUPTED

The new front door for
advocacy and support —

In our analysis of veteran activity on social media, in one instance we counted over 240 people engaged in conversations on a forum within 72-hour period.

When you consider the 1,000+ likes and emoticons, plus all the passive readers whose engagement goes unrecorded, one can begin to appreciate the reach that can be achieved through social media.

The adjacent diagram is a representation of the network of conversations and interactions between members of the forum we observed for 72 hours.

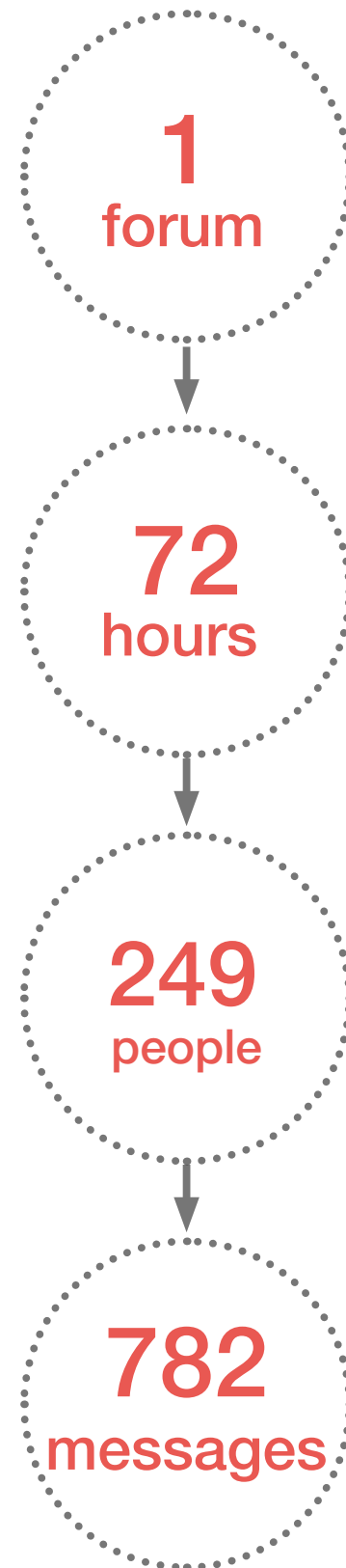
Each node represents an individual, with the connecting lines representing one or more interactions between individuals. The size of the node is a visual cue on how influential a person is in the group.

This network graph clearly represents the engagement achieved by a single well-focused forum.

In this case, we counted over 240 people actively engaged in two-way conversations within a 72-hour timeframe. The conversation varied from people seeking recommendations for a local accountant, to advice on how to fill out Government forms.

In comparison, the online engagement of the larger ESOs did not fair very well at all when compared with these numbers.

As unofficial and unsanctioned that it may be, the fact is that social media has become a new front door for ESO referrals and intakes. Many of the conversation we looked at directed enquiries to particular advocates or support agencies, all unofficial and “under the radar” and without any accreditation or quality control.



Network Engagement & Conversations

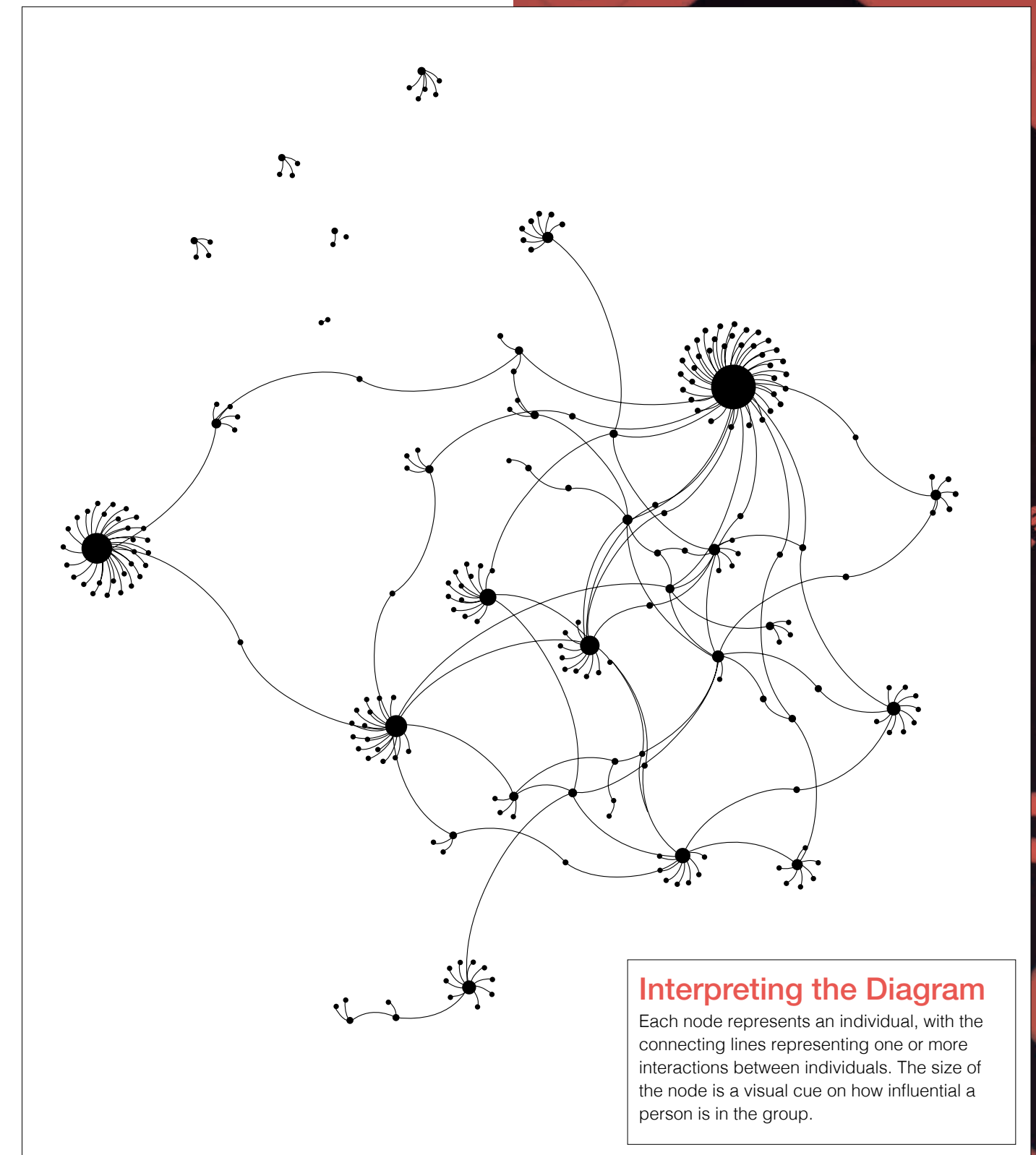


Figure 6: GEPHI output from network analysis of veteran hosted online forum page 23-24 July 2018.

SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

Below is a representative selection of the 139 comments left by veteran's and their family members in response to our Veterans' Benefits and Services Survey. The full set of responses can be viewed at www.shoutout.org.au.

Q. Is there anything that you would like to share with us about your experienc with ex-services organisations?

I feel embarrassed and unworthy of assistance. It's hard enough dealing with [Government agency] that I don't want to engage with other services.

The system(s) seem confused and confusing. It has improved but a lot more streamlining, particularly in dealing with Govt Depts must be possible.

What turns me off ESOs is that a lot of ex-ADF people that attend them don't seem to transition well and carry their rank and attitudes into civilian life so this (as a female ex logistician) can be very confronting and can make you feel unwelcome/unworthy.

Generational renewal in Ex Service organisations is critical to engaging veterans of working and young family age.

My experience has generally been good and I have been welcomed into [ESO] clubs and events on commemorative occasions. But I have not committed to getting involved in an ex service organisation because I am still busy with a demanding work life and see the political and very autocratic nature of ex service organization management and leadership. It is almost like most of them are run by either by authoritarian dictatorships or a politbureau organization of like minded group think that is threatened by change or innovation.

Complete lack of information and eligibility. Seems to be geared towards veterans older than 65.

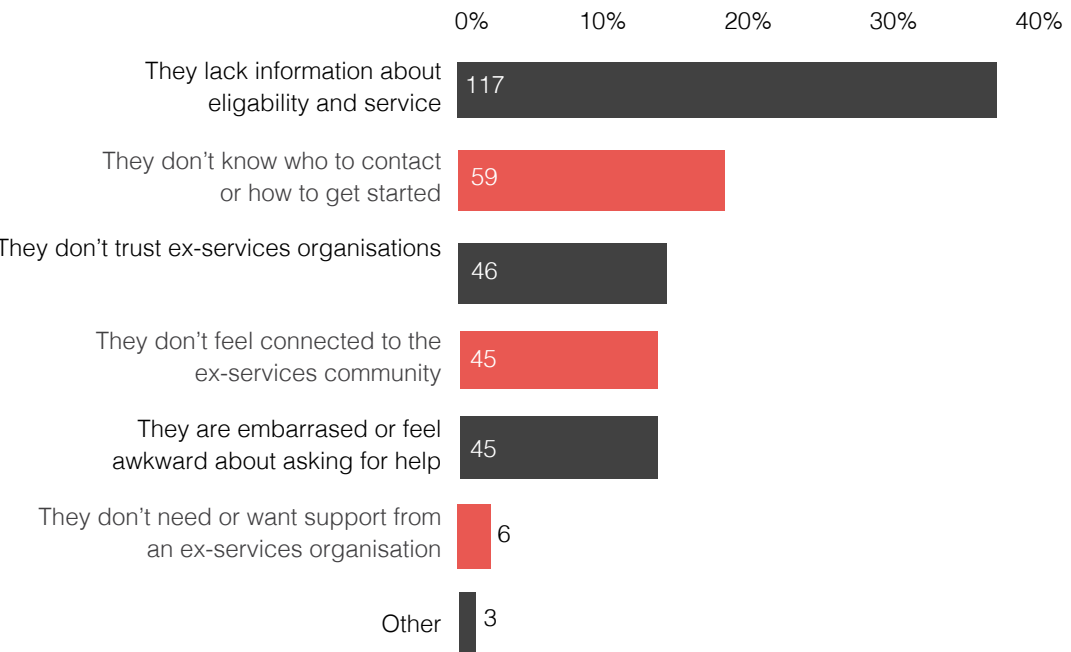
There is far to many ESO's currently operating. Many Vets, including myself believe the ESO's all want their fingers in the pie. 3-4 would do far more better than the current amount. To much backstabbing, in-fighting and watered down services.

It took 40 years to have our service recognised, and we were always looked down upon. So I said Upyazall..and got on with my life.

VETERANS' BENEFITS & SERVICES SURVEY



Q. From the following choices, what do you think is the main barrier preventing veterans and thier families from taking advantage of the services and benefits offered by ex-services organisations.



14k
Reserve
personnel have
deployed since
1999

***“A key issue
is the rapid
transition from
civilian life into
full-time military
service and then
back again.”***

ADF RESERVE TRANSITIONS

The Hidden Costs

The 2016 Defence White Paper acknowledges that the ADF is increasingly drawing on the skills and experience of reservists to deliver Defence capability.

According to the White Paper around 14,000 members of the ADF reserve personnel have been deployed on operations within Australia and overseas since 1999, representing approximately 18 percent of all ADF personnel deployed.

The ADF reserve personnel we spoke to describe a complex range of post-deployment transition issues. A key concern for some was the difficulty they experienced in re-establishing civilian employment after extended periods of full-time service overseas.

While the Defence Reserves (Service) Protection Act 2001 provides certain protections in relation to civilian employment, younger reservists, especially those just completing further study or in the early stages of their civilian careers, are often only employed in casual or short-term contract positions. This means that, when accepting a full-time service contract for a deployment, they don't have a protected job to come back to.

Orme and Kehoe (2011) highlighted the unique challenges encountered by reservists and their families when they deploy on overseas operational duty. A key issue is the rapid transition from civilian life into the full-time military service and then back again.

Unlike their permanent force counterparts, reservists accommodate military service as a part-time vocation that needs to be carefully integrated into their civilian lives. The varying combinations of military-civilian careers amongst reservists create unique sets of challenges for each reservist navigating the transition between their civilian and military employment, and vice-versa.

While there is significant coverage of the issues faced by permanent forces veterans in transition, it's difficult to find any serious efforts to deal with the complex circumstances of the growing number of reservists who deploy and subsequently transition into civilian life with little time re-adjust to being home, let alone their change in employment (Orme and Kehoe 2011, Shaefer, Swick et al. 2016).

JUSTIN'S STORY

My father was a career soldier and I'm the fifth generation from my family to have served in the Australian Army. I joined the Army Reserve when I was nineteen, and since then I've been on four operational deployments. My last trip was a three month peacekeeping deployment to Timor-Leste where I joined an infantry platoon made up of experienced Army Reserve soldiers. Our platoon served right alongside, and did the same job, as the career soldiers that were deployed with us.

The completion of a long mission can be a great relief, but I usually have mixed feelings about coming home. I didn't have a job to return to when I came back from my last deployment. I struggled for two years, barely getting by on casual employment and Army Reserve training days. Thankfully things turned around job-wise, and I'm now working as a pensions officer with Melbourne Legacy.

I think some people have the notion that we reservists simply slide back into civvy street and pick up on where we left-off. The reality is that it can be a real struggle, and the transition can be much more difficult than what you might imagine.



Leadership Imperative for Collaboration

Our charter is focussed on establishing insights to provide a basis for ESOs and Government agencies to plan and prioritise their efforts and close the gap on the needs of post-1991 veterans and their families.

While we are not in position of authority for the setting of priorities and enforcing objectives, our call for change is offered in the form of a blueprint that consolidates our analysis. The blueprint presented herein is part of our obligation to those who shared the high and lows of their lives for the sake of this report.

The overwhelming feedback from post-1991 veterans and their families is that they are confused about the service offerings that are available to them, and crucially how to access these services. The situation is exacerbated by a steady erosion of trust in ex-service organisations as expressed by many veterans. Our survey results speak volumes of how veterans' feel about their relationships with ESOs and Government agencies.

We know that a colossal effort is already underway to close the gap, but trust is difficult to win at the best of times. Our view is that small meaningful initiatives can make a big difference, such as creating an online referral service where the veteran cohort can get advice and support from trusted and capable agencies collaborating to ensure sustainable and quality outcomes.

Regardless of the path taken, the gaps will remain wide open without close co-operation between the key stakeholders. Major ESOs have a crucial role in reinforcing trust and providing much needed pathways to support and self-reliance.

The ShoutOUT Blueprint for 2019 can be summed up by these three imperatives:

- 1. Collaboration:**
Major ESOs to establish a charter of collaboration that addresses the engagement and support needs of post 1991 veterans and their families.
- 2. Engagement:**
Collaborating ESOs construct a directory of verified services and supported by referral protocols and joint support agreements.
- 3. Service Delivery:**
Collaborating ESOs to strengthen public confidence by reporting on their social impact in relation to organisational efficiency, service delivery and governance.

The overwhelming feedback from post-1991 veterans and their families is that they are confused about the service offerings that are available to them, and crucially how to access these services. The situation is exacerbated by a steady erosion of trust in ex-service organisations as expressed by many veterans. Our survey results speak volumes of how veterans' feel about their relationships with ESOs and Government agencies.

BLUEPRINT 2019

The Leadership Imperative for Collaboration

1. COLLABORATION:

Major ESOs to establish a charter of collaboration that addresses the engagement and support needs of post 1991 veterans and their families.

2. ENGAGEMENT:

Collaborating ESOs to construct a directory of verified services and supported by referral protocols and joint support agreements.

Recommended Blueprint and Initiatives for 2019

The ShoutOUT team has identified a number of initiatives that would be important in supporting our blueprint.

Project #1:
Joint ESO Service Directory

Project #4:
Establish Life-journeys
Service Model

Project #2:
ESO Referral Service

Project #5:
ADF Reserve Support
Needs Study

Project #3:
Online Advice and Self-service

Project #6:
Social Impact Reporting
for ESOs



SHOUT OUT

Everyone has a story

3. SERVICE DELIVERY

Collaborating ESOs strengthen public confidence by reporting on their social impact in relation to organisational efficiency, service delivery and governance.



PART 3

RELATED STUDIES & METHODS

A review of papers and models that informed our methodology and insights

RELATED STUDIES

Veteran transition issues and the effects of operational service have emerged as policy challenges for governments Worldwide.

A number of studies in the Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom (Varney 2006, Westwood, McLean et al. 2010, Orme and Kehoe 2011, Robertson and Brott 2014, Nguyenvoges 2015, Zoli, Maury et al. 2015, Maiocco and Smith 2016, Shaefer, Swick et al. 2016, Roseberry 2017, Zogas 2017, Hart 2018, Binks and Cambridge 2018) set out core themes around veteran transition from military to civilian life; however, Zogas (2017) highlights that veteran transition studies consistently fail to identify specific people, organisations or policies who may be the cause of intersecting problems. To address some of these gaps, ShoutOUT adopted Crosier and Handford's (2012) approach in using Journey Mapping as a research tool for service transformation.

Journey Mapping was initially used to add a chronological perspective to participant reflections on their transition experiences (Howard 2014), however, the research team found that the mapping process triggered the deeper exploration of events and the meaning behind the emotional journey being expressed by the interviewees.

Binks and Cambridge's (2018) study of veterans in the United Kingdom is particularly influential in the exploration of how transitions experiences affect the individuals self-concepts and sense of identity. This informed the initial direction and structure of the YVP2 interviews and the mapping process.

The Journey Mapping technique applied by the ShoutOUT team is based on the investigative framework developed at the Hasso Plattner Institute at Stanford University (Klehbahn and Utley, 2017).

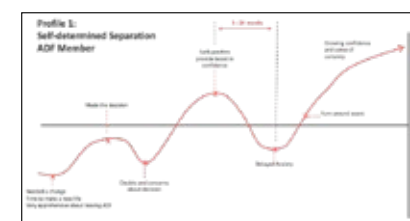
The essence of this approach was to gain new insight into the lives of post-1991 veterans and their families through the narrative of their lived experiences expressed as an emotional journey that highlights key turning points and intersections of the transition process.

Other studies of interest included Orme and Kehoe (2011) who highlight the unique challenges encountered by reservists and their families when they deploy on overseas operational duty.

A key issue being the rapid transition from civilian life into the full-time military service and then back again. A review of the available literature reveals that whilst there is significant coverage of the issues faced by permanent forces veterans in transition, there is very little literature that deals with the complex circumstances of the growing number of reserve forces personnel (Orme and Kehoe 2011, Shaefer, Swick et al. 2016).

Our overall investigative method is grounded in a research approach known as Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) which is used by qualitative researchers to investigate the impacts of unusual experience and events (Smith and Osborn 2004, Howard 2014).

As an interpretative analysis, it is hoped that the findings of this project will add a new perspective on what might be done to better support the wide variety of needs of post-1991 veterans and their families.



"I've talked with kids younger than me who've gone through much more. I think sometimes the best person to talk to is someone who's already experienced what you're going through."

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

Introducing the life course and wellbeing model for military families

Wellbeing is central to Segal, Lane and Fisher's (2015) Life Course Model for Military Family Events. Drawing on the concepts of life course theory, their model suggests that the unique combinations of life events at different points in time produce a call on a person's resources to maintain the different components of wellbeing.

According to this model, wellbeing is enhanced by building resilience through the timely provision of support and resources. This model demonstrates how life events may intersect to trigger significant personal challenges.

Our version of Segal, Lane and Fisher's (2015) model replaces the central construct for wellbeing with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's (2017) seven factors for wellbeing. We also simplify the representation of common life courses in the outer rings of the model. The point of the model is not to create an exact representation of the interaction of life's twists and turns, but so show how the confluence of life courses might impact wellbeing.

This new perspective provides policy makers and agencies with the insights to help design better support programs and interventions, that not only provide short-term relief, but that also ensure veterans and their families have the support and resources they need to be effective agents in maintaining their own wellbeing.

The ShoutOUT campaign is grounded in life-course theory and our interpretative analysis of the stories told to us by veterans and their families. Over the course of the last nine months, we've been guided by these theories and have used Design Thinking as a genesis to gain a new perspective.

There's more to be done, and we hope that our readers will be inspired to add a fresh perspective to challenges they face in developing better policies and improving services for veterans and their families.

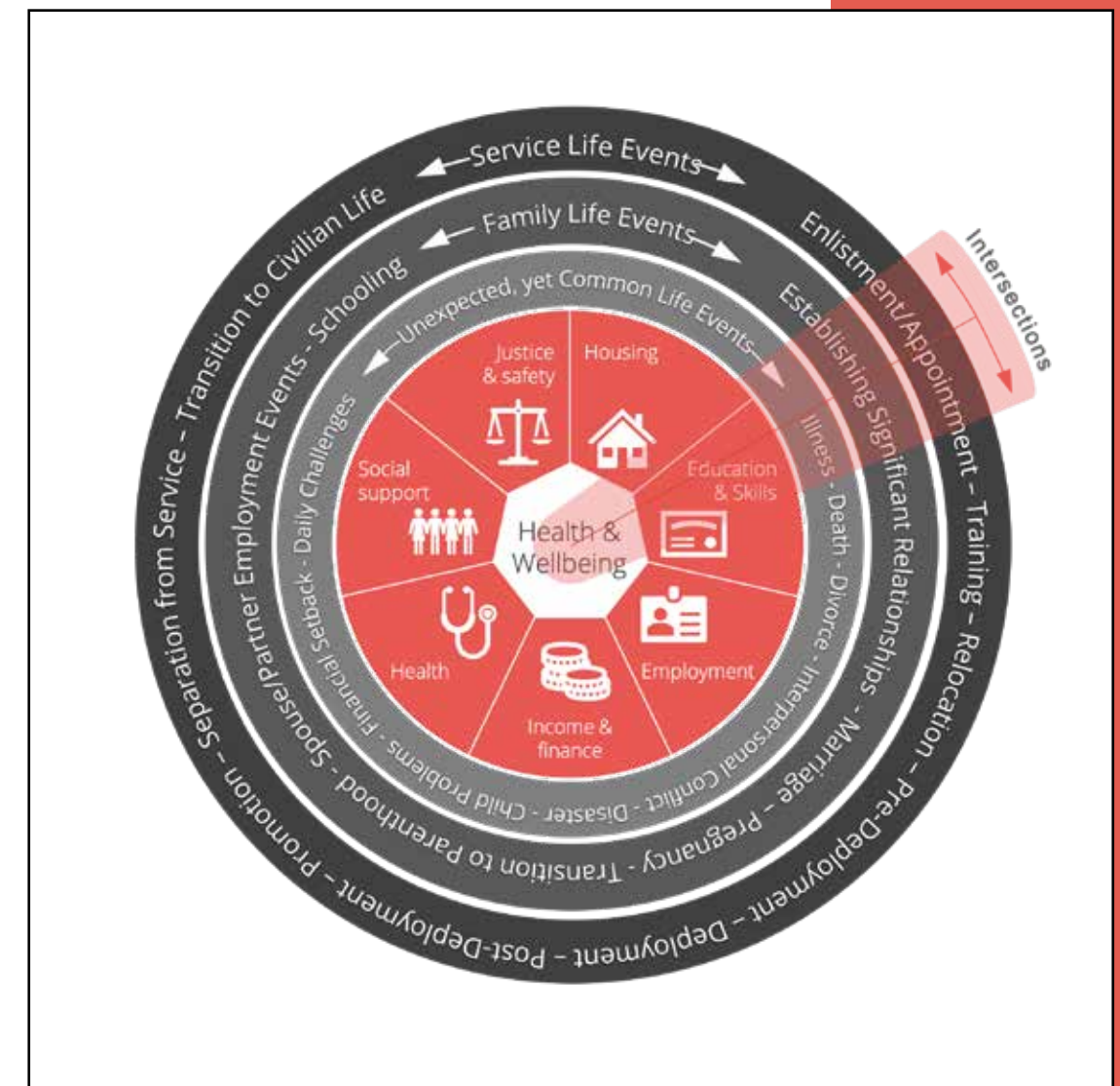


Figure 7: Life courses and wellbeing model for military families.

THE VICTORIAN CONTEXT

The context for this report is same that established by YVP1 (the Victorian Ex-Service Organisation Mapping Project published in Feb 2018) that provides an in-depth analysis of veteran demographics and service availability in Victoria.

As this report was published less than twelve months ago, we have assessed that there have been no significant events to warrant an update in contextual review. We've also confirmed that there has been no new data made available that would fundamentally alter our understanding of the situation for ESOs and veterans in Victoria.

Sponsorship and Governance

This study was sponsored by Melbourne Legacy with grant funds provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Returned Services League of Victoria (RSL Victoria) supported the project by providing access to organisational resources, personnel, introductions, and endorsements. Strategic oversight and direction were provided by the Melbourne Legacy Board and managed by Melbourne Legacy Chief Executive Officer in his capacity as Executive Sponsor for the project.

LIMITATIONS

Wherever possible, the insights contained within this report are based on the first-hand experiences of the people interviewed and our direct observations of the veteran community.

Due to the qualitative nature of our investigation, there are natural limits to the extent that our data can be interpreted and evaluated. By adopting an approach grounded in research and faithfully representing the very words and actions taken by our subjects, we are able to provide a clear connection between our insights and our reference data.

GORDON'S STORY

The eight or so years after I was medically discharged are a bit of blur, my mind was like Swiss cheese - I can't tell you what I was thinking or feeling during much of that time. It must have been getting bad, then one day Shona ordered me out of the house to find a hobby. That's when I discovered my passion for art and photography - I've been captivated by it ever since.

Looking back, I think I drifted all that time because I lost my identity. I was a soldier all my life, and then suddenly I felt like I was no-one. Leaving the service was so hard because I loved it so much. Now, I love the arts and I've managed to find a place in the world as a photographer.

I've just completed project as the lead photographer for the book The Victoria Cross: Australia Remembers. So much love and dedication has gone into the project by everyone involved. We're currently touring Australia to promote the book and raise money for incapacitated veterans. It's been an incredible experience. Photography has given me a real sense of purpose. I always thought of myself as a soldier first and foremost. Now I'm a photographer first, soldier second.



"I drifted all that time because I lost my identity. I was a soldier all my life, and then suddenly I felt like I was no-one."

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The ShoutOUT brand was developed so that the project team could approach the veteran community with a fresh perspective, unencumbered by the constraints of pre-conceived attitudes towards existing organisations.

ShoutOUT was presented to the public as an autonomous initiative sponsored by Melbourne Legacy with the sole agenda of establishing grassroots insights from the stories of post-1991 veterans and their families.

Storytelling is at the heart of the ShoutOUT engagement program. This unique approach proved invaluable as it highlighted the capacity of stories to tap into a previously untouched and rich source of data for analysis and interpretation.

Unlike surveys and previously used research methods, the substance of stories can be explored time and time again. Allowing them to be mined for new and nuanced insights according to questions to which remained unanswered.

Our call-to-action was built around the opportunity for participants to help and inspire others by telling their stories.

The outcomes from ShoutOUT are expressed as a set of insights gained through a high level of engagement with members of the post-1991 cohort.

These insights provide a foundation for further investigations and actions to better understand the lived-experiences of veterans and their families. While more study is needed to confirm our findings, the insights offered in this report are based on verifiable evidence. Evidence that has already been made public and open to scrutiny, not only by the project sponsors but perhaps more importantly, by the original contributors.

The elements of the ShoutOUT integrated engagement campaign are outlined in Figure 1.

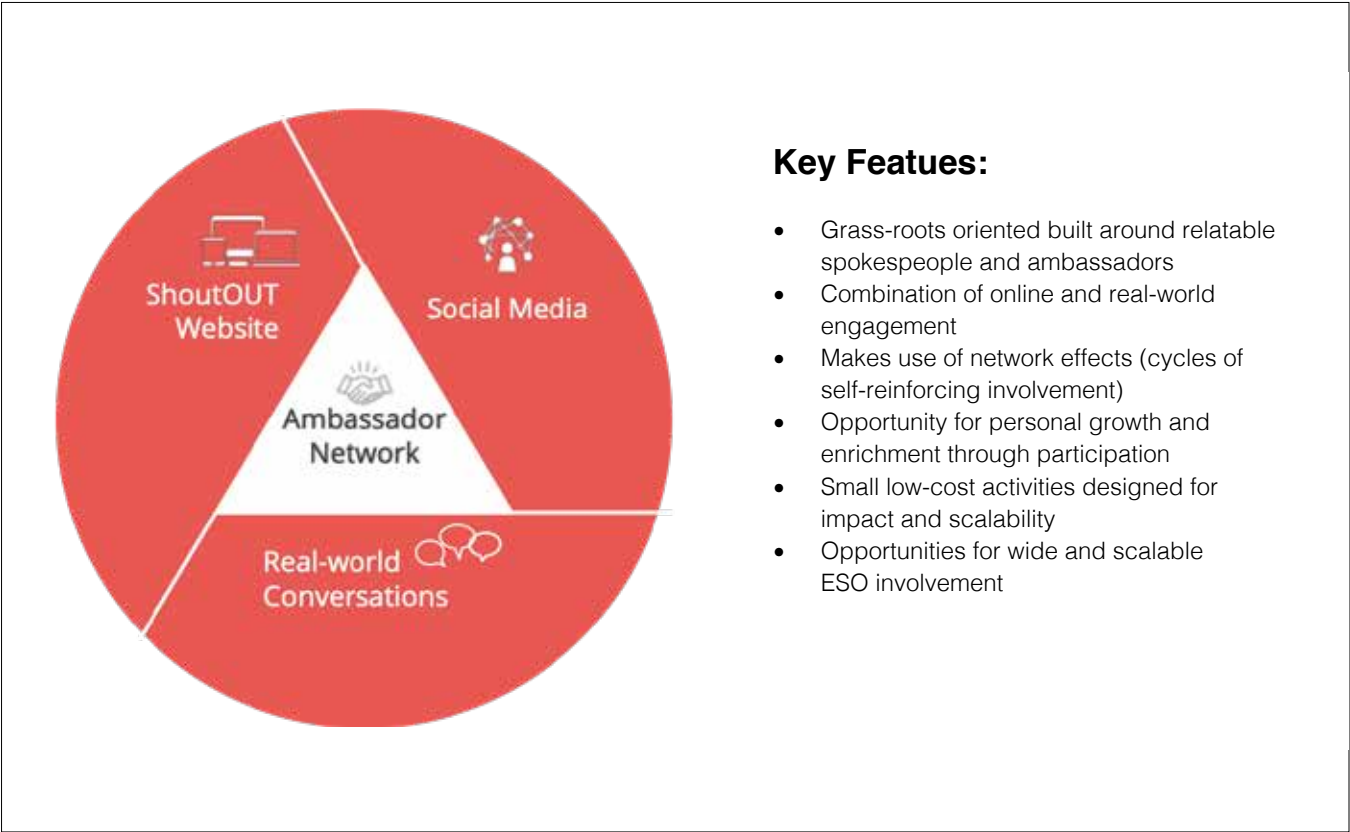


Figure 8: Shoutout Intergrated campaign elements.



PART 4

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PART 5

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We owe our gratitude to the many people in organisations such as Melbourne Legacy, RSL Victoria, TPI Victoria, and the many informal groups and subsets who lent their voices in support of ShoutOUT's mission for genuine insights from people living the experience.

We are particularly grateful to the veterans and families who bravely shared their stories in the spirit of making a difference. Their perspectives are invaluable and the insights that we have gleaned from them will serve the veteran community for many years to come.

It's been a tremendous privilege to have enjoyed the sponsorship and support provided by Justin Elwin and his dedicated team at Melbourne Legacy.

THE SHOUTOUT TEAM

The ShoutOUT program was delivered under contract by Schroffel Renwick Beeson with support from our partners at Norman Connell Advertising. The team members were:

Mark Schroffel

Team Leader and Lead Author.

Mark is the Director of Strategy and Innovation at SRB and former Army Officer (retiring from service in 1997). Mark holds masters qualifications in business and has studied innovation and design thinking at Stanford University.

Trent Dyball

Social Media Advisor and Co-author.

Trent is the Managing Director at Norman Connell Advertising. He holds a Bachelor of Business in marketing and is responsible for driving strategy and engagement across diverse range of industries and target demographics.

Greta Schroffel

Media Coordinator and Photographer.

Greta is a project officer with SRB. Greta managed the development of the ShoutOUT website and the implementation of the social media strategy. As the family member of a veteran, she injected a unique perspective into project outcomes.

Brian Renwick

Project Quality Assurance.

Brian is Director of Finance Strategy and Operations at SRB. Brian is a Chartered Accountant with masters qualifications in business. Brian provided quality assurance for the project.

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SHOUTOUT 2018



STORIES & INSIGHTS

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