

# Australian Army

## Land Warfare Doctrine

### LWD 7-6

## Adventurous Training

### 2018

This publication supersedes *Land Warfare Doctrine 7-6, Adventurous Training*, 2011.

Interim

# Australian Army

## Land Warfare Doctrine

### LWD 7-6

## Adventurous Training

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Issued by command of  
Chief of Army



ME Garraway, AM  
Colonel  
Commandant  
Army Recruit Training Centre

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## **Preface**

Australian Land Warfare Doctrine and Land Warfare Procedures publications are authorised land doctrine for the guidance of Australian Defence Force operations. Land Warfare Doctrine publications are authored at the philosophical and application level while Land Warfare Procedures publications are authored at the procedural level.

The content of this publication has been drawn from general lessons, principles and doctrine contained in other relevant publications, instructions and agreements. Every opportunity should be taken by users of this publication to examine its contents, applicability and currency. If deficiencies or errors are found, amendment action should be taken. Land Doctrine invites any assistance to improve this publication.

### **Aim**

The aim of this publication is to describe those principles and concepts which provide the basis for Army Adventurous Training including experiential learning.

### **Level**

This philosophical publication provides the theoretical information to give commanders an understanding of the benefits and outcomes achievable through adventurous training and military facilitation in an experiential learning context. It provides guidance to commanding officers, adventurous training leaders and others concerned with the design and approval of adventurous training and experiential learning activities.

This publication is consistent with the *Defence Learning Manual*.

### **Scope**

This publication contains information concerning all aspects of adventurous training command responsibilities, and key planning information for appropriate design and approval.

### **Images**

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## Summary of changes

Changes have been made to this publication and a familiarisation with all of the content is highly recommended. Significant changes from the most recent rewrite are listed in the following table.

<i>Summary of significant changes</i>
<b>Chapter 1 to Chapter 5</b>
Significant changes throughout entire publication – content re-familiarisation required

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# Chapter 1

## Adventurous training

### Introduction

The challenges of an evolving battlespace, and an increase in soldier responsibilities and diverse threat environments reinforces the need for resilient and adaptive Australian soldiers. Rapid transition into complex operational scenarios demands a high level of individual and collective fortitude to support mission success. Preparation of Australian soldiers to face these complex challenges is a core command responsibility which is reinforced by individual commitment and discipline.

Although commanders can access a range of tools for the development of individual or small group resilience, there are limited opportunities to provide tailored collective training events with sub-unit level resilience as the main activity objective. While challenging operational collective training provides a group resilience effect, it is often as a secondary outcome of the training event.

Adventurous training (AT) helps to prepare soldiers for battle by building their resilience to better survive and succeed on the battlefield.

AT programs, appropriately facilitated, are also capable of delivering post-traumatic event resilience training and rehabilitation training. AT has also been shown to assist individuals and teams to reset and recover following battlefield exposure, injury and illness in order to minimise their damaging effects. AT has been used by soldier recovery centres as part of military rehabilitation programs such as Battle Back and by external organisations such as Soldier On and Mates4Mates.

This publication provides guidance to COs, OCs and UATLs and others concerned with the design, planning and conduct of AT.

Technical AT skills and detail in relation to the specific planning requirements and responsibilities for the conduct of activities are not covered in this publication; a suite of publications has been produced for that purpose.

The philosophical contents of this publication are expanded upon in *LWP-G 7-6-1, Experiential Learning and Adventurous Training* to allow practical application.

### Aim

The aim of AT is to enhance the Australian soldier's ability to thrive in circumstances of complexity and adversity.

AT is a unique form of training designed to assist commanders to prepare their soldiers for battle. It is usually conducted in a non-tactical environment and simulates the psychological conditions participants may encounter in battle. Drawing on the theory of adventure-based learning, AT places participants in situations where they experience fear and consequence. Learning associated

with this experience is then transferred, through facilitation (both formal and informal), to the workplace.

As the name suggests, AT uses adventure as the medium for the development of individual and group qualities. The Adventurous Training Wing (ATW) trains and recertifies ADF personnel in the following adventure-based qualifications:

- unit adventurous training leader (UATL) – qualified to conduct an AT activity in a specific discipline
- adventurous training leader instructor (ATLI) – a UATL qualified to train and assess ADF personnel in the UATL qualifications.

AT is to be professionally assured through rigorous technical training and ongoing certification of AT practitioners (ie, UATLs) and instructors (ie, ATLIs) qualified in formal AT disciplines to ensure the appropriate engagement with risk and a facilitation in what are inherently dangerous environments and disciplines.

Each of these qualifications can be gained by the Defence recognition process, or through completing a course approved (exported) or conducted by ATW.

### **Disciplines**

The following disciplines are recognised by the ADF under approved doctrine:

- roping and climbing
- canyoning
- caving
- back-country skiing and alpine survival
- sea kayaking
- whitewater kayaking
- whitewater rafting.

Other countries defence forces may conduct facilitated AT in other disciplines. Given available resources and equipment, the ADF has focused on the above disciplines only. The natures of other activities may be considered by units as facilitated adventurous activities but are not recognised as AT doctrinally and are therefore not specifically covered by safety publications and will require specific detailed planning and risk management.

No military unit needs to know how to whitewater kayak and very few need to know how to climb; however, all units need training aimed at strengthening individual and team resilience and leadership across the physical, mental, cognitive, moral and spiritual domains to assist in the preparation for operations.

### **Adventurous training conduct**

The majority of AT is conducted at the unit or sub-unit level at the direction of the commander, and is designed for specific outcomes.

The AT spectrum can be extended to formation activities and association activities, allowing for higher level activities to target select groups or to provide individuals with opportunities for personal development.

Collective combat brigade resilience training should be designed for delivery to sub-units in the Reset phase of the force generation cycle.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> COMD FORCOMD Directive 17-18, Collective Resilience Training  
<https://objcdc1/id:X7790076/document/versions/published>

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## Chapter 2

# Adult learning concepts

*Good decisions come from experience, experience comes from bad decisions.<sup>1</sup>*

Experiential learning employs an adult learning approach that seeks to focus on solving a real world problem.

Adult learning is based upon six assumptions:

- *Need to know.* Why they need to learn something.
- *Foundation.* Cumulative experiences, based on prior errors and failures, are used as a start point for their learning.
- *Self-concept.* Adults need to be responsible for their decisions.
- *Readiness.* Engagement because they need to solve a real problem right now.
- *Orientation.* Adult learning is problem-centred and starts with a (realistic) problem.
- *Motivation.* Adults must have a reason to learn.

These points are expanded upon in *LWP-G 7-6-1, Experiential Learning and Adventurous Training*.

### Facilitating adult learning

The assumptions above shape how to best facilitate adult learning:

- Adult learning around problems necessitates mutual goal setting between the facilitator and the learner. This identifies the gaps to be addressed to assist learners achieve their goals.
- Adults learn best in an informal situation. By taking responsibility for the content and allowing group discussion and decision-making, ownership is given to the adult learner and acknowledges their experiences:
  - AT is generally conducted in a rank-neutral environment in order to remove normal workplace barriers, hierarchies and organisational structures which could constrain involvement and learning.
  - Regardless of workplace rank or status, participants share hardships and are therefore more inclined to communicate openly.
- Adults want guidance and options, not directions or instructions. They want information that will help them improve their situation through a method of their choice and do not want to be told what to do.

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<sup>1</sup> Generally attributed to Mark Twain.

- Identify participants' learning styles to tailor facilitation plans; the three primary learning styles are: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic.

## **Adventure in experiential learning**

### **Military facilitation**

Many aspects of normal Army activities have the potential to deliver meaningful experiential learning with the inclusion of an adventure component and an addition of a framework of instructor-led facilitation. This military facilitation construct is being developed for broad application across Army activities by trained facilitators.

### **Objectives of experiential learning**

The aim of an experiential learning activity must take primacy in dictating the way the activity is conducted if maximum benefit is to be achieved. The most commonly used approaches are as follows:

- *Knowledge and skills approach.* This approach is focused on imparting knowledge and achieving a mastery of technical skills. The aim of the activity, for example, may be to improve the climbing, shooting or navigation skills of the participants. Behavioural change and goal attainments are complementary.
- *Physical task or goal approach.* This approach is often employed with experienced participants on expeditions, but can also be applied to novices with more modest goals. The aim of an activity, for example, may be to reach the summit of a particular mountain or to sea kayak from one point to another. While emphasis is on goal attainment, technical skill will almost certainly be developed and behavioural change may be effected.
- *Psychological or behavioural change approach.* This approach is the primary aim of any Army unit AT activity. The development of technical skills is generally limited to those required to allow for the safe participation in the activity. Goal attainment is not of primary importance but still needs to be considered, as failure can have a powerful negative effect if not properly managed.

### **Adventure-based learning characteristics**

To enhance AT learning experiences the following characteristics should be considered in planning and execution:

- *The individual.* The individual needs to be physically and mentally challenged, pushing them outside their comfort zone. This internal state permits learning to occur and is referred to as disequilibrium.
- *Disequilibrium.* This is a state of internal conflict that provides motivation for an individual to make personal changes. It forces learning to occur and can be enhanced through the use of novel settings.

- *Novel setting.* Placing a person in a novel setting focuses them on the excitement and emotional nature of the experience. Consequently, people remember what they learn from the consequences of their actions and these factors aid transference to other contexts. The perceived risk and associated anxiety that often accompanies the activities help to break down individual barriers and impels participants into a state of readiness for learning, and trust and reliance on the group, especially in a cooperative environment.
- *Cooperative environment.* Groups which have shared goals and time for social interaction establish cooperation more quickly, especially when individuals and the group are continually presented with unique problem-solving situations.
- *Unique problem-solving situations.* New skills and problems are introduced to participants in a sequence of increasing difficulty. Learning opportunities are presented when group members draw on their mental, emotional and physical resources. The completion of such tasks leads to a feeling of accomplishment.
- *Feeling of accomplishment.* Success leads to the re-mapping of neural pathways and behavioural changes. The significance of these successes is drawn out through guided facilitation.

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## Chapter 3

# Experiential learning

The experiential learner gains knowledge, skills and insight through actively experiencing a situation and through a considered reflection upon that experience. This involves active participation in the hands-on learning and reflective phases, thereby excluding participation based solely on rote learning.

Experiential learning generates direct and indirect transference of skills and knowledge, as follows:

- Direct transference is in relation to the skills and knowledge development such as rope-craft, navigation or sea survival skills.
- Indirect transference is in relation to the individual developmental outcomes such as, – but not limited to – self-awareness, resilience, communication, courage, initiative, respect and teamwork.

### Experiential learning cycle

Experiential learning is based on experience and a reflection on that experience to generate new learning. The cycle is ongoing. The steps in the cycle are as follows:

- *Experiencing.* This is the stage where the learner interacts with the subject matter (eg, a cliff face, a kayak, an obstacle course, a weapons range or other people). Here the learner gets the hands-on experience based around a stated problem situation. If the process stops after this stage, all learning is left to chance, and instructors will not have fulfilled their responsibilities for facilitating individual learning.
- *Reflecting.* Experience alone is insufficient to ensure that learning takes place. Reflection is essential to determine which of the methods employed in the problem situation worked best or should be abandoned as ineffective. For example, a directive approach to leadership may not be as effective as a more facilitative approach in an environment of real fear. Learners need to understand that getting it wrong is part of learning and it is best to get this experience in a training environment rather than an operational one. Reflection may initially be individually based but should be followed up through a facilitated group process whereby sense is made of an experience through discussion.
- *Generalising.* The learner takes the collective outcomes of the reflection phase to consider what improvements they need to make. Generalising allows learning to be transferred to dimensions beyond those of the current learning environment (eg, to deployed operations or the workplace).
- *Applying.* The learner seeks to actively plan and apply the improvements that were determined necessary in the generalisation phase. This

application necessarily involves experimentation, trial and error in order to reinforce and integrate positive behaviours, knowledge and perceptions and transfer them to other contexts. In AT, learners may share through the debriefing process an individual commitment for improvement so that their teammates can assist with enforcing accountability.

The learner, on completion of the cycle, applies their learning to new experiences.

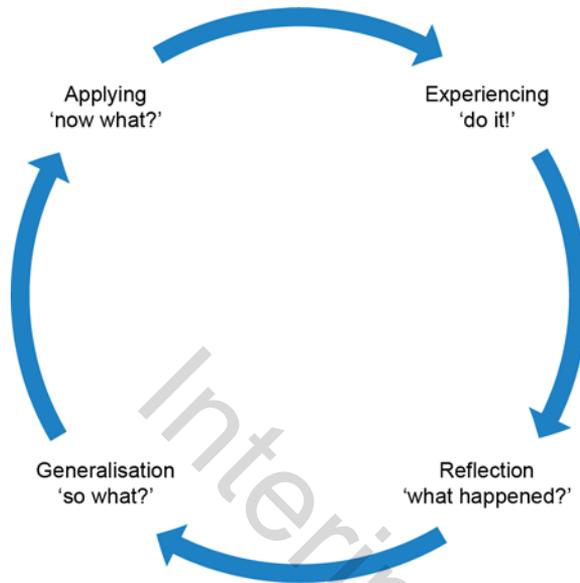


Figure 3–1: Experiential learning cycle

A major challenge for educators who use experiential learning lies in the completion of the latter phases of the cycle. Good planning is required to allow sufficient time for each step to occur. Reflection is a crucial part of the experiential learning process and positive learning outcomes are assured when they are facilitated rather than left to the individual learner for self-reflection.

A skilled facilitator, asking the right questions and guiding reflective conversation before, during and after an experience, can help open a gateway to powerful new thinking and learning.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Battlefield links to adventurous training**

#### **Background**

##### **Sailor survival**

During World War II it was observed that survivors of many shipping incidents were often the older, more experienced sailors rather than the younger and fitter sailors. It was determined that life experience had developed the minds of the older sailors to an extent where they were tougher in the face of peril.

##### **Outward Bound**

This observed phenomenon was the catalyst for a training school called Outward Bound (a nautical term for a ship's departure from the certainties of harbour). Outward Bound was a joint effort between British shipping magnate Sir Lawrence Holt and progressive German educator Kurt Hahn, and was established in 1941. The training was developed to provide young sailors with the experiences and skills necessary to survive at sea.

Hahn emphasised that Outward Bound was about training the mind through the body. Hahn strove to provide youth with challenging experiences in a supportive educational format so that each person would develop inner strength, character and resolve. The educational medium was often physical, but the desired effect was very much psychological and social.

Outward Bound, the first modern adventure education program, attracted an interesting variety of philosophers, researchers and innovative educators. This led to considerable development of the Outward Bound philosophy and theory, much of which has formed an important foundation for the field of adventure education and outdoor education. The Outward Bound philosophy and theory has spawned a wide variety of educational experiments. Outward Bound remains an important pillar in the development of modern-day outdoor education.

##### **Adventurous training in the Australian Defence Force**

In 1988 LTCOL Robin Letts submitted a study to Army regarding the feasibility of establishing a school within the Australian Army based on philosophies similar to those of Outward Bound. The Army Adventurous Training Centre was established in 1989 and has been developing to this day. The Army Adventurous Training Centre became ATW and is located at the Army Recruit Training Centre (ARTC), Kapooka.

As of 2013 ATW, in conjunction with UATLs and a number of internal and external organisations supporting soldier rehabilitation, has conducted AT for wounded, injured and ill soldiers. In conjunction with ADF, civilian psychologists and medical professionals, data captured from AT activities continues to be

analysed to determine the effectiveness of AT in supporting rehabilitation. Initial reports indicate that the delivery of facilitated AT provides enhanced outcomes across all major resilience components.

## **Battlefield features**

Realistic training is required for Army to succeed in winning the land battle, for which the following are enduring features:

- *Friction.* Friction makes even the simplest task difficult to achieve and reflects the complications that inevitably arise as a result of conflict. Friction is caused through:
  - enemy action
  - adverse weather
  - complex terrain
  - poor coordination
  - poor communication
  - insufficient or inaccurate information
  - human error.
- *Danger.* Danger is always present in conflict and results in fear. Fear can dramatically degrade the efficiency and effectiveness of soldiers and units. Realistic training and strong leadership can reduce the negative effects of fear.
- *Uncertainty.* Uncertainty, often referred to as the 'fog of war', characterises the atmosphere in which information to make decisions may be very constrained. Confronted by a wide range of disparate and often contradictory choices, an individual must exercise their judgment in order to accept, balance and manage risk.

## **Linkage of adventurous training to the battlefield**

AT seeks to emulate those battlefield characteristics which contribute to making warfighting difficult and challenging in order to provide realistic and meaningful training. This includes a real and identifiable challenge to overcome, which fulfils the role of the enemy. For example, the river that is being paddled should provide obstacles and dangers as would an enemy. Without ever-present fear and consequence, the analogy between war and AT breaks down.

The following two observations link the battlefield, leadership, quick-thinking abilities, AT and risk management and emphasise the value of AT.

*Underwater the noise is deafening and the white froth and bubbles disorienting. My heart is beating in my throat as panic begins to creep from the back of the brain to the front. My lungs are screaming for air and every inch of me wants to*

*try and reach for the grab loop and tear the deck off my kayak so I can try and wrench myself out. I have to calm myself, I had been told most kayakers die from either being pinned in their kayak or by coming out and drowning in their attempt to swim. I sculled my paddle to the surface and torqued my hips so my face was above the water for a second before glimpsing the cover man and then being pummelled violently back underwater with my mind racing.*

*I focus again on the drills, sculling up and with a hip flick I right the whole kayak. I see the cover man looking down at me. The force of water smashes the kayak end over end, driving me back under, this time with a mouth full of water. I could feel the panic starting to set in. My run had not gone to plan, tens of thousands of litres of rushing water tumbled and bucked me in a deadly washing machine.*

*I right the kayak again. Now I can see the UATL is signalling to throw me a rope. This is a difficult situation because in order to grab the rope I would have to get rid of my paddle, which, is the only thing that has allowed me to get my head to the surface and breathe. I nod, just as the boat bucks under and I am thrown over again into the chaos of the churning white water. I feel the rope and let go of my paddle, grabbing it with both hands. The rope is pulled taut and the noise and violence subside as the boat moves down the rapid. I desperately reach for the grab loop; my lungs burning with lactic acid as they scream for air.*

*Four years later on operations with SASR I found myself in a serious gunfight that had very quickly gone from something we thought we could manage, to us being pinned down from an elevated and concealed position with our options to flank and move limited. As with before there were moments where I felt like panic had started moving from the back of my brain to the front. The fact I had been in a similar situation undoubtedly helped me control the fear and panic, and focus on the tasks that needed doing. The situation required harnessing our collective efforts to kill the enemy, to focus on their own jobs as part of a collective team, to follow the leader's calm and clear instructions.*

*The situation mirrored all the physiological characteristics of the kayaking event; increased heart rate, respiration, adrenalin, a sharpening of the senses and focusing of the tasks at hand.<sup>1</sup>*

*What the Falklands campaign has so clearly and successfully highlighted, is the value of very hard fitness training, the high standard of junior leadership and quick thinking professionalism shown by the soldier. This is one of the tremendous new strengths of the British Army, aided by*

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<sup>1</sup> TPR O, SASR.

*the deliberate fostering of special adventurous training; risk taking skills have been deliberately provided and financed and this has paid excellent dividends.<sup>2</sup>*

## Description of adventurous training

AT is an approach to training that seeks to prepare soldiers for battle by developing in them the soldierly qualities they will need to survive and succeed on the battlefield. As the name suggests, it uses adventure as the medium for this development.

AT is primarily designed to produce psychological change rather than to impart technical skills, and to this extent the discipline itself is largely irrelevant. Far more important is ensuring that lessons learned during the adventurous experience are transferred to the workplace. Correctly designed, AT fulfils the following two roles:

- an adventurous activity
- a mechanism to transfer the adventurous experience to the workplace or battlefield context.

**Risk.** AT requires participants to experience and overcome their fear of injury and/or death. Without risk, activities lose their value and interest. The higher the skill level of participants, the greater the need to increase the level of difficulty and therefore (usually) the level of associated real risk. There must never be unjustified risk in any activity. Risk is managed through standard Army processes in the form of military risk management (MRM).

**Stimulating.** AT stimulates participants, and the resultant satisfaction of personal growth and experience can increase motivation and retention.

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<sup>2</sup> London Daily Telegraph, 22 June 1982.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Planning considerations**

#### **Selecting the objectives**

When designing an activity, it is important that commanders and activity leaders select the objectives of the activity by determining the unit's collective and individual training and development needs. This requirement may in part be determined by the commander's assessments and an examination of post-exercise reports, soldier and officer evaluation reports, and training directives.

The aim should always be to develop the individual and group qualities required in battle; however, the objectives will determine the specific requirements of an AT activity.

The officers scheduling and conducting the activity should consider the activity objective and when it is best for individuals and the group to achieve it. Leadership and teamwork may best be conducted at the start of a posting cycle. Resilience and many other individual qualities may be targeted at any time. De-confliction of unit training schedules and early allocation of the conduct period and planning officer will ensure the best possible outcomes.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of indicative qualities that may be targeted:

- leadership
- resilience
- physical and moral courage
- self-confidence
- self-reliance
- self-esteem
- initiative
- self-discipline
- determination
- mental robustness
- adaptability
- trust and camaraderie
- teamwork.

## **Duration**

The activity must be long enough to realistically achieve the aim yet not so long that participants are no longer challenged and are not learning from the activity. In general, many worthwhile activities can be conducted in a day or two; however, short duration activities can often be limiting. It takes time to change attitudes that may have been developed over long periods, and it takes time for qualities such as trust and courage to be developed. An activity duration of no fewer than three days is the accepted requirement for the retention of lessons learned through AT.

## **The principles of adventurous training**

The principles of AT are:

- uses Army-specified technical disciplines and qualified or authorised AT practitioners to develop the individual and group qualities required in battle
- emphasises the management of perceived risk
- uses the full experiential learning cycle
- exposes participants to challenge in an environment of fear, stress and consequence
- is underpinned by facilitation to support the ADF to optimise human performance, resilience and leadership
- is conducted in an unfamiliar and novel environment.

## **Planning and design considerations**

Designing an activity is perhaps the most critical phase in the planning process. The design will set the parameters for the way an activity will be conducted and managed. Imagination, creativity and improvisation are necessary and can turn an idea into reality. Considerable obstacles can present themselves in this phase, such as resource limitations, training area availability and instructional support. However, these obstacles also present opportunities, and overcoming them will go a long way to ensuring that the selected activity presents a physical and mental challenge to the organiser as well as the participants. Skill objectives must never be confused with the objectives of an activity and are in fact quite irrelevant, although the participants will not feel this.

## Appointments and responsibilities for adventurous training

### Responsibilities

**Training adviser.** The training adviser for AT is COMD ARTC. COMD ARTC is responsible for the provision of the safety policy for the conduct of AT within the Army.

**Technical authority.** The technical authority for AT is the OC ATW, ARTC. ATW is the subject matter expert organisation and authorised training establishment for AT.

**Approving authority.** The approving authority undertakes the duties of the officer authorising the activity as per MRM and, in so doing, agrees to or determines the broad objectives for the activity and the appetite for risk. The commander's guidance should be sought or confirmed at the earliest stage of activity planning. Approval should be based on being satisfied that the activity is efficient, effective and compliant with all Defence values, policies and relevant legislation, especially with regard to safety. Therefore, the approving authority should be at a level of command commensurate with the composition of the participants and the resources required. The lowest level of approval for AT is unit commanding officer and, in most instances, will be at unit, brigade or formation level.

The approving authority does not need to be an AT subject matter expert, but must have justifiable confidence that the OIC has designed the activity to achieve its stated aim, and has planned the activity so that risks are adequately identified and managed and that it is conducted in accordance with ADF policies and procedures.

**Officer-in-Charge.** The OIC undertakes the duties of the responsible officer as per MRM and is responsible to the approving authority for developing and managing the exercise environment to ensure that the exercise objectives are achieved in a realistic, safe, environmentally responsible and cost-effective manner. The OIC is the officer responsible for the overall conduct of the exercise. The OIC will develop and issue the AT exercise proposal and the detailed exercise instructions. Although not essential, it is highly recommended that the OIC attend all or part of the activity to confirm the adequacy of planning arrangements and that the activity is achieving its stated aims.

The OIC does not have to be an AT subject matter expert, although a UATL qualification is highly desirable. The OIC is assisted by UATLs in planning and conducting the exercise.

**Activity commander.** The activity commander undertakes the duties of the officer conducting the activity as per MRM and is responsible for the overall conduct of the activity. One person may be appointed as activity commander and OIC if they are suitably qualified, however separate appointments is preferable. The activity commander ensures that the activity is being run as planned, that the assisting UATLs comply with prescribed processes and

procedures, and where modifications are required – due to weather, conditions, safety, participant ability, or any other justifiable reason – such changes are implemented as appropriate. The activity commander's decision to modify an activity for safety reasons cannot be overridden by the OIC or any other instructors or participants.

The activity commander must be a UATL qualified in the relevant discipline and should be appointed on the basis of relevant experience rather than rank.

**Unit adventurous training leader.** A UATL is an ADF member who holds a current, formal qualification granted by the ATW in a specific discipline. These personnel are qualified to lead participants and plan, run, facilitate and assist in AT activities without supervision and within their discipline qualification in accordance with the respective AT technical publications.

**Adventurous training leader instructor.** ATLI is a formal qualification granted by the ATW to personnel who are qualified as a trade testing officer to train and assess ADF personnel in the UATL qualifications. For the execution of an AT activity, they hold the same status as a UATL, although they often have higher levels of experience. An ATLI qualification may be used as an experience discriminator for advanced AT activities.

**Group leader.** A group leader is a UATL who has been appointed supervisory responsibilities over a group or sub-activity due to the number of participants, complexity of the activity, group separation and/or the level of supervision required by the specific activity. Unless otherwise specified, the group leader has the authority of the activity commander to modify an activity where the group is separated from the activity commander and it is not practical for the activity commander to determine the situation being confronted by that group.

**Authorised adventurous training leader.** After consultation and concurrence with OC ATW, the approving authority can authorise to act in the role of UATL for a specified AT activity a person who does not hold a UATL qualification but does have either commensurate civilian qualifications and/or extensive discipline experience. Such persons may include ADF members, non-military Defence members or civilians. Civilian instructors are often experts in the hard skills and have difficulty in relating the experiences of AT to the battlefield. Civilian instructors may also have difficulty understanding the culture of the military and may not develop as a part of the group. Nevertheless, they often have particular skill sets that may add value to the activity and provide an element of diversity to the group. They may be used if cost effective. Facilitation will generally be managed by trained UATLs or military facilitators.

## Initiation of adventurous training activities

AT complements other forms of training by exposing participants to situations of fear, uncertainty and consequence, and it teaches them to operate effectively under these stresses. AT activities can be initiated by one of the following:

- *The unit.* It is most appropriate for AT to be initiated by the unit commander and incorporated into the unit's training calendar to complement other training activities. From a commander's perspective, the purpose of conducting AT must be clearly linked to preparing soldiers for effective military operations. An example is the conduct of an AT activity to develop leadership and communication immediately prior to the conduct of a junior leadership training program.
- *An individual.* AT proposals initiated by junior officers and NCOs should be encouraged, as it develops the desirable qualities of initiative, planning, coordination and responsibility. Irrespective of the purpose behind them, activities initiated by unit personnel motivated by a desire for adventure and exploration require encouragement and support, as it is in such endeavours that their drive, energy and enthusiasm provide opportunities for others.
- *Associations.* Associations exist within the Army that deliver both AT and adventure-based activities for their members. The most notable of these are the Army Alpine Association and the Army White Water Association. Associations prepare their own activity programs and publish/advertise these programs widely. Association-based AT is generally conducted for the benefit of members and to develop deeper levels of experience and expertise, often in more remote areas and at higher skill levels, than is often available from unit AT. Units reap the benefits of having their members attend association-based activities and there is scope for associations to run advanced AT activities on behalf of units, or to run exported UATL courses on behalf of ATW.
- *Advocates.* Army is witnessing growth in AT for a range of non-traditional purposes and participant groups. Consequently the sources of initiation are also expanding, including:
  - Post-deployment decompression (not recreation) AT to aid adjustment back into the workplace and to reassert individual and group strengths that may have been eroded on deployment.
  - Post-deployment AT delivered to wounded, injured and ill soldiers in order to assist the psychological aspects of their recovery. Organisations such as Soldier On or Mates4Mates, or Army soldier recovery centres initiate AT for this purpose.
  - AT for developing resilience and providing a positive experience in vulnerable communities, for example the running of a multi-day

facilitated roping AT activity for Somali youth at the joint request of the Somali community, Victoria University and Victorian Police.

- AT designed specifically for senior officers such as activities run by FORCOMD for all brigade commanders.

## Risk

Risk management for AT is the same as for other military activities. *Army Standing Instruction, Military Risk Management* is the source document for risk management procedures.

For an activity to best achieve the aim of AT, it should seek to involve high perceived risk but low real risk. AT exercises should be designed and conducted with real risk as low as reasonably practicable, but with a high perceived risk for the participants in order to gain the most benefit. The fundamental principle of risk management used worldwide is to keep the risk as low as reasonably practicable. It is also the fundamental principle in MRM. Real risk is the actual risk that exists given all controls put in place (eg, safety equipment and supervision). The perceived risk will differ between individuals. It is a personal and subjective assessment of the real risk present in the activity. Real risk will differ according to a number of factors, such as the skill and experience of the participants, the equipment used, and the familiarity with the environment and the training area. For activities such as unit AT with unskilled participants, real risk will be generally low. Real risk can be categorised as follows:

- *Acceptable risk.* An acceptable risk is one where the level of risk is justified by the benefits gained from taking the risk. This determination is based on an assessment that the risk-taker is suitably competent to perform the task with a realistic expectation of success. In a situation of acceptable risk, luck plays little part in determining the outcome.
- *Unacceptable risk.* An unacceptable risk is one where the level of risk is not justified by the benefits gained from taking the risk. This determination is based on an assessment that the risk-taker is not suitably competent to perform the task with a realistic expectation of success. In a situation of unacceptable risk, luck plays a major part in determining the outcome.

If a risk was acceptable, failure would normally be considered to be a result of bad luck. If a risk was unacceptable, success would normally be considered to be a result of good luck. Any activity where the success is based on having only good luck should be considered an unacceptable risk. Determining the type and acceptability of risk is a major component of decision-making.

From the risk assessment a comprehensive health support plan is to be developed in accordance with normal practice.

## Resources

Allocation of appropriate resources and troops to task are required by appropriate commanders and financial delegates with sufficient time to enable appropriate bookings and planning. AT is cheap, yet can deliver extraordinary outcomes.

Where effective AT is conducted using three to five days' expedition style activities to maximise benefit, cost is generally low with soldiers paid field allowance rather than incidentals. Fresh rations may also be used to enhance the activity and are at a lower cost than combat rations.

In accordance with *COMD FORCOMD Directive 210-15, The Resilience Plan*<sup>1</sup> AT must be planned for in every unit's training, activity and resource plan.

Resources required to be allocated will generally include:

- some cash funding for national park camping or access, participant and UATL movements, and consumables not available through supply chain management
- rations – taking into consideration planned outcomes, cost and availability
- fuel and associated vehicle allocations
- Army Reserve training salaries, which may be used to access local Reserve UATLs to maximise local knowledge and minimise movement costs and Regular Army non-platform support requests
- ammunition – in cases where TSN 1152 Signal Distress Day Night are to be used (eg, sea kayaking), these must be ordered with appropriate lead times, noting that if there is no Army Capability Management System planned usage, they may be ordered at any time and returned upon completion of the activity
- AT equipment, which needs to be identified and booked early via the local AT pools
- general stores and medical supplies.

The Peter Stuckey Mitchell Trust Fund is established exclusively for the provision of funds to support AT activities in Defence. To apply to fund an activity, OICs should refer to *ATI 9-1/14, The Peter Stuckey Mitchell Trust Fund Awards*.

### Adventurous training equipment

Adventurous training equipment (ATE) is booked via the borrowing unit supplying a military integrated logistics information system supply customer account, to be noted on the SQ011-1 Loan Voucher General Purpose during the booking process (failure to provide will result in the loan request being rejected).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://drms-vbs2/id:X5587890/document/versions/published>

Regional loan pools are not authorised to distribute AT holdings to other loan pool stores in order to assist with stock deficiencies.

ATW is the only authorised AT loan pool for loaning/borrowing of ATW equipment to other loan pools for activities which have a stock deficiency.

UATLs must inspect ATE at point of issue and post-clean up on return to ensure it is safe and functions correctly.

Certain ATE is regarded as safety critical. Replacement of all ATE is undertaken by using standard SD16 Loss or Damage Report processes by the borrowing unit prior to the equipment being returned under SQ011-1 Loan Voucher General Purpose arrangements. AT pools will process requests for central replacement. ATE is only to be supplied through the Defence logistics system to ensure it is to appropriate specifications, fit-for-purpose and safe. The local purchase of replacement equipment is expressly forbidden.

## **Other considerations**

### **Site selection**

The main consideration in relation to the selection of an exercise location is the requirement to safely achieve the aim and objectives of the exercise. The aim of AT is often best achieved by removing participants from a familiar environment and placing them in a situation that provides a sense of remoteness and danger. Bookings are required to be made via the training area safety and management information system.

### **Wilderness expeditions**

As a general rule, activities that have either an expedition or mini-expedition focus can be far more effective in developing those individual and group qualities required in battle. This occurs because during an expedition greater demands are placed on the requirement to maintain team cohesion in periods of adversity and participants are often totally removed for a long period from outside support networks; thus they must rely on each other for support.

### **Reconnaissance**

Once an exercise area has been selected, consideration should be given, as part of formal planning, to undertake a reconnaissance to confirm activity, administrative and safety arrangements. Reconnaissance activities need to be properly resourced as they are carried out to reduce risks and ensure that the activity runs smoothly.

## Participants

Participants are generally divided into the following two categories:

- *Novice.* A novice is a participant who has insufficient knowledge or experience to perform a skill without close supervision.
- *Experienced.* Experienced personnel are those who are assessed by the OIC as having sufficient knowledge or experience to perform a skill without further instruction.

These categories determine the level of supervision required and the degree of difficulty of the activity in which participants may engage. Additional breakdown of skills required for activities of different levels to match the degree of difficulty for each skill are detailed in the relevant AT publication.

### Eligibility to participate in adventurous training

All members of the ADF are eligible to participate in AT, commensurate with their level of training, physical fitness and expertise. The selection of participants is determined by unit or individual developmental needs. Participants with medical restrictions may participate within their approved restrictions.

Members of the Australian Cadet Corps may also participate in Army AT activities. However, their participation is to be limited to those activities that allow direct supervision by a group leader. This includes abseiling, top rope climbing, caving, canyoning, back-country skiing and snow survival activities. Cadets are not to participate in whitewater activities, sea kayaking or lead climbing. Approving authorities should give consideration to the age, physical ability and maturity of cadets; the level of supervision available; and the safety requirements when determining activity limitations.

Civilian employees of the Department of Defence can participate in Army AT activities by invitation, provided all Australian Public Service administration requirements are adhered to. Civilian members participating in arduous activities should receive medical clearance to indicate fitness to participate. This clearance can be in the form of a medical officer's assessment. Physical fitness tests can be devised to suit the activity requirements.

International exchanges and civilian (including ex-serving wounded, injured and ill) involvement is possible. Approval is subject to other relevant Defence policies and requires the design of a suitable activity to match participant abilities and to challenge.

### Group size

The activity aims, objectives and environmental considerations will determine the size of a group. However, the minimum group size for any AT activity should be four. In the event of an accident, this allows one person to remain with a casualty and two personnel to go for help.

There may be limited instances where the number of participants is fewer than four. When this is the case, appropriate consideration should be taken in the MRM process and such outcomes are clearly identified to the approving authority.

## **Effectiveness of adventurous training**

It is difficult to assess whether an AT activity has been effective. Heightened morale is not necessarily an indicator of success. Commanders, UATLs and those conducting AT activities must remain vigilant if they are to ensure that each activity remains focused on its aim without degenerating into a skills exercise or a recreational activity.

Data capture tools such as the experiential resilience education exercise (commonly known as EREE) participant workbook (ATW) or RESET workbook (1 Psych) can assist in determining benefits.

Copies of all AT instructions, generalised data capture as to the effectiveness of the AT and post-activity reports are to be submitted to ATW electronically.

### **Participation considerations**

AT is designed to prepare soldiers for battle. Participation in AT is therefore compulsory for Defence members, with the exception of the following personnel:

- those with medical restrictions precluding participation
- members of the Australian Cadet Corps
- members who are assessed by the conducting UATL as patently failing to cope to the extent that they may suffer trauma.

Often it is the soldiers who are most reluctant to participate who benefit most from the experience. A UATL will not use compulsion or force to secure participation. Rather, coaching a participant to overcome their fears and reluctance through their own willpower is the best outcome.

When an AT activity involves a financial cost to soldiers participation must not be compulsory.

### **Adventurous training versus recreational activities**

Some unit activities presented as AT are far from adventurous and have little to do with developing the qualities required in battle. This is often because the activity is designed incorrectly or is simply a recreational activity disguised as AT so that it can be justified. If a commander believes that the unit merits the opportunity to relax after a long, hard year, they should recognise such training for what it is. If a recreational activity is described as AT, it violates *ATI 5-3/10, Army Adventurous Training* and misleads participants about the true meaning of AT. Many of the misconceptions about AT in the Army today have been caused by this misuse of terminology.

### **Enjoyment in adventurous training**

Despite its mental and physical challenges, AT can be enjoyable, but this must never be its primary objective. Conversely, AT should not be an exercise in misery and can be made enjoyable without compromising its objectives, which will provide a much more stimulating environment for participants. Beware of confusing 'having a good time', which is short-term and superficial, with the enjoyment of meeting a challenge and achieving hard-won goals, which is enduring.

### **Limitations of adventurous training**

While AT has many advantages, it also has the following limitations:

- high supervisor-to-participant ratio is required
- specialist equipment is needed for most activities
- activities may be constrained by adverse weather
- training areas may not be readily available
- there may be legal, personnel or risk considerations which cannot be mitigated sufficiently or acceptably.

### **Primary benefits of adventurous training**

The primary benefits of AT include:

- *Individual development.* AT promotes individual growth by developing those qualities which will help overcome the difficulties posed by dangerous and unfamiliar environments. It may reinvigorate soldiers whose peacetime duties are mundane and devoid of challenge. In some cases, technical skills and knowledge acquired during AT may also be useful in the workplace.
- *Team development.* AT enhances teams by teaching the fundamentals of teamwork and developing mutual respect and trust. The demanding nature of AT forces participants to cooperate and it breaks down the barriers to team development.

### **Secondary benefits of adventurous training**

While the main focus of AT should always be on individual and group development, AT can also have the following additional benefits:

- it provides adventure for many soldiers who want and need to be challenged
- it aids in recruitment and retention.

## Conclusion

Experiential learning through adventure-based activities can be extremely effective. It treats participants as mature, intelligent and motivated learners in a flexible organisational construct and provides an opportunity for them to experiment according to their learning style. A skilled facilitator and the correct application of the experiential learning cycle can deliver transformational change and ensure transference of learning to the workplace.

AT, as a particularly rigorous form of experiential learning, has the ability to subject the participant to the types of fear and stress encountered in battle in a way that is not possible in many other forms of training.

Defence policy strongly supports the use of AT as a complement to normal field and barracks training. Understanding and the employment of the policies and doctrine underpinning AT will help to ensure that the many potential benefits of the training are realised through the conduct of high quality activities.

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## Endmatter

### Associated publications

This publication should be read in conjunction with the other publications and documents, in particular:

- *Army Standing Instruction, Military Risk Management*
- *Army Training Instruction 5-3/10, Army Adventurous Training*
- *Army Training Instruction 9-1/14, The Peter Stuckey Mitchell Trust Fund Awards*
- *Block Scale 19/07, Army Adventurous Training Equipment*
- *Commander Forces Command Directive 17-18, Collective Resilience Training*
- *Commander Forces Command Directive 210-15, The Resilience Plan*
- *Defence Learning Manual*
- *Land Warfare Doctrine 0-2, Leadership*
- *Land Warfare Procedures - General 7-6-1, Experiential Learning and Adventurous Training*
- *Land Warfare Procedures - General 7-6-2, Adventurous Training – Roping*
- *Land Warfare Procedures - General 7-6-3, Adventurous Training – Backcountry Skiing and Alpine Survival*
- *Land Warfare Procedures - General 7-6-4, Adventurous Training – Whitewater Rafting and Kayaking*
- *Land Warfare Procedures - General 7-6-5, Adventurous Training – Sea Kayaking.*

### Doctrine online

This and other doctrine publications are available via the Doctrine Online website located at: [drnet.defence.gov.au/ARMY/Doctrine-Online/Pages/Home.aspx](http://drnet.defence.gov.au/ARMY/Doctrine-Online/Pages/Home.aspx). Paper copies may be out of date. Doctrine Online is the authoritative source for current doctrine. Users are to ensure currency of all doctrine publications against the Doctrine Online library.

### Gender

This publication has been prepared with gender-neutral language.

**Illustrations**

Figure 3–1: Experiential learning cycle ..... 20

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## Abbreviations

The principal source for Australian Defence Force abbreviations is the Australian Defence Glossary located at <http://adg.eas.defence.mil.au/adgms>. Abbreviations contained within this publication are in accordance with the business rules, guidelines and conventions for the Australian Defence Glossary at the time of its release. The following abbreviations are used throughout this publication; however, commonly used terms have been presented in their abbreviated format throughout the publication and have not been included in this list.

<b>ARTC</b>	Army Recruit Training Centre
<b>AT</b>	adventurous training
<b>ATE</b>	adventurous training equipment
<b>ATLI</b>	adventurous training leader instructor
<b>ATW</b>	Adventurous Training Wing
<b>MRM</b>	military risk management
<b>UATL</b>	unit adventurous training leader

## Amendment certificate

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Land Doctrine, Army Knowledge Centre is responsible for the management of this publication. The sponsor of the publication is Commandant Army Recruit Training Centre. The doctrine contained herein was approved on 12 December 2018.

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Proposals for amendments or additions to the text of this publication should be made through normal channels to the sponsor. To facilitate this go to the Doctrine Online intranet website and select the 'Feedback' icon.

It is certified that the amendments promulgated in the undermentioned amendment lists have been made in this publication.

<i>Amendment list</i>		<i>Produced by</i>	<i>Publication amended by</i>	<i>Date amended</i>
<i>Number</i>	<i>Date of endorsement</i>			
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				