

Book 1

Introduction to Support Services and Advisors



“People helping People”

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Version control

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Welcome to the RSA - "People helping People"

Welcome

Welcome to the RSA, and thank you for giving up some of your personal time to carry on a great kiwi tradition; RSA Support Services – *'People helping People'*

As a Support Advisor you are a part of one of the oldest and largest voluntary support organisations in New Zealand. The RSA was founded in 1916 by wounded veterans returning from World War One. Its establishment recognised a need to support one another, to provide care for veterans and their families, as well as the families of those men and women who would never return. An early role was to honour the memory of those who paid the supreme sacrifice. Support and remembrance continues to be at the core role of the organisation.

Support is one of the core pillars of the RSA movement; reflected in the following RSA objective "to support the general welfare of service persons and former service persons, their families and dependents, and the former families and dependents of deceased service person or ex-service person."¹ Support Services plays a critical role in delivering the intent of the RSA support mission of "people helping People". As part of being a Support Advisor, you will need to know:

- who you report to
- who else in the organisation you need to have working relationships with
- what your specific duties and tasks are
- what procedures and policies (national and local) are relevant to your role
- what skills and qualifications you might be expected to have to perform effectively in your role.

This booklet has been revised to provide new Support Advisors and RSA executive members with an overview of Support Services and the role of Support Advisors to impart understanding in how the RSA provides support to our clients (all serving and ex-service members of the NZDF and their families).

¹ RNZRSA Manual

People have different motivations for volunteering to take on the position of a Support Advisor and the RNZRSA appreciates the time and energy required of the role. It is a personally rewarding position, as it directly helps veterans and their families - delivering tangible benefits to them.

Important Contacts

Reading this you might be the only Support Advisor in your RSA, however there are a number of people you can approach for help if you have any questions, whether about your role overall, or how you can best help on an individual client. Below is a table that can be populated with your important contacts locally, by district and nationally.

Role	Name	Phone numbers	Email
Local RSA Secretary			
Local RSA President			
District RSA President			
District Support Manager (DSM)			

When looking for local names and contact details of people, agencies and services some good places to start are:

- your local phone directories
- the online phone directories (www.whitepages.co.nz)
- the RSA's website (www.rsa.org.nz) - look in the 'About the RSA' and 'Find an RSA' sections.

Vision, Principles and Structure of the RSA



As part of the overall understanding of delivering Support Services you must have an understanding of the intent of what support services is trying to achieve (the vision), the principles it promotes in delivering support, and the structure that supports it.

Support Services 'Vision'

"In 2020, people who are affected by their service will promptly seek RSA assistance, confident that they will receive world class, timely, relevant and professionally delivered support services according to their need that will contribute to the best possible health and wellbeing outcome for themselves and/or their families and their dependents." ²

² Support Services Strategy 2017

RSA Support Services Principles³

These are the enduring principles that we use every day to guide our thoughts and actions, when planning and delivering support; all working to achieve our vision:

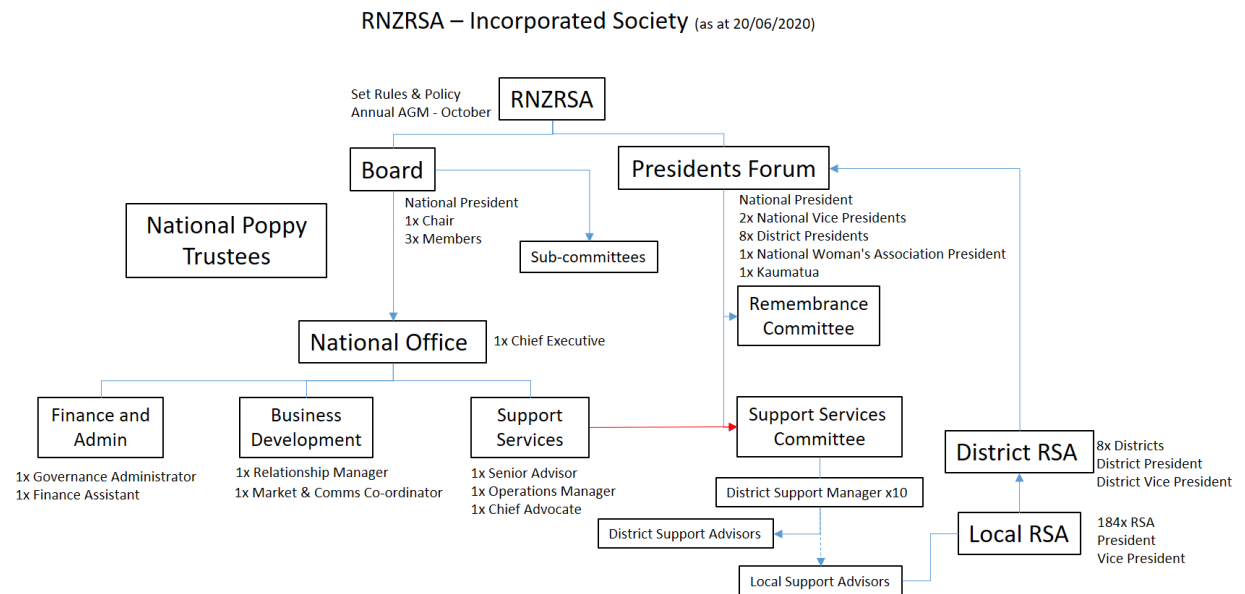
People at the centre	We put all eligible people at the heart of everything we do - providing both material and moral support with a benevolent approach that treats all concerned fairly and equitably.
Trusted providers	We protect the integrity of the RSA and the support services we provide by conducting ourselves in a professional manner at all times. We will provide timely, relevant and accurate advice and support.
Focus on core business	We focus on providing the best possible support to our people's health and wellbeing. We will support whatever is best for our people.
Teamwork	We work together as a connected support services network of like-minded people across the nation. We team up with each other and other non-RSA stakeholders to provide efficient and effective support services. We are not afraid to accept advice from others.
Support our Volunteers	We acknowledge the sacrifice made by our Volunteers and their families. We look after their welfare and needs also.
Financially trustworthy	We manage publically donated monies and grants prudently and responsibly to achieve the best support outcome.
Future focused	We understand the nature of our business and adapt rapidly to changing needs, never assuming that one solution helps everyone. We actively seek new knowledge and skills.

Our structure

While the RSA movement consists of independent Incorporated Societies, RSA Support Services is viewed as a single network that works collectively with each other across the country. Below is a picture of how the RSA is organized and the hierarchy of support services.

³ Support Services Strategy 2017

Your first point of call in any matter related to Support Services that you or your local Association cannot manage is your District Support Manager (DSM).



National Support Services

The National Support Services team performs tasks aim at the strategic level of organizational engagement. Key responsibilities include:

- Working with District Support Managers to provide consistent and updated training and support to our national network of Support Advisors through the Support Services Committee.
- Ensuring adequate advocacy and representation of all serving and ex-service members of the NZDF and their families views to Government (e.g. education of mental health workforce on military health matters, transition into civilian life etc.)
- Being the advocate for all serving and ex-service members of the NZDF and their families with cases that are required to appear before the Appeals Board
- Direct support to all serving and ex-service members of the NZDF and their families via processing of applications for grants from national trusts and funds

- ☑ Engaging in research and projects investigating treatments, rehabilitation, transition and risks to all serving and ex-service members of the NZDF and their families for their long term health and wellbeing.
- ☑ Delivering strategy, plans and business cases to the support services network
- ☑ Implementing national level agency and NGO engagement
- ☑ Being the point of contact for overseas residents

The role of the District Support Managers (DSM)

The District Support Managers are the link between the Local and District Support Advisors (LSA and DSA respectively) and RNZRSA Support Services. They help the LSA and DSA with:

- ☑ Coordination of training and delivery of support
- ☑ Advice on matters relating to government entitlements and support
- ☑ Advising of national level changes in process or information relevant to the Support Advisors
- ☑ Liaising with Veterans' Affairs (VA), the Veteran's Pensions Centre (MSD), and other relevant agencies and organisations connected with the welfare of veterans (for example, District Health Boards, Age Concern, Primary Health Organisations)
- ☑ Collating and checking applications for grant applications to national trusts
- ☑ Coordinating district level support for all serving and ex-service members of the NZDF and their families
- ☑ Coordinating and collating local and district individual activity reports and approving monthly claims to national office
- ☑ Maintaining a contact list of all LSAs and DSAs in their district

The role of the District Support Advisors (DSA)

The District Support Advisors report to their respective DSM and are not linked to any one RSA directly, but serve the District as a whole or a particular region of it. They help bridge the gap between LSA and DSM with:

- ☑ Delivery of training to LSA or associated stakeholders
- ☑ Advice on matters relating to government entitlements and support
- ☑ Liaise with other support and welfare agencies to deliver support or initiate beneficial processes or projects, such as WINZ, local GPs, lawn services, etc.
- ☑ Applying for grants from national trusts on behalf of clients
- ☑ Delivering district level support for serving and ex-service members of the NZDF and their families
- ☑ Co-ordinate with other RSA volunteers providing support services
- ☑ Communicate with the DSM to maintain situational awareness
- ☑ Keep records relevant to the role, including individual activity sheets

The Role of a Local Support Advisor

Support Services is focused on providing support to veterans and their families. The Local Support Advisors play a critical role in living our support motto "People Helping People". As part of being a Local Support Advisor, you will:

- ☑ Advise people about services and entitlements they may be eligible for.
- ☑ Assist with the filing out of application forms and gathering supporting evidence to do with assistance, funding and government entitlements
- ☑ Assess the support needs of veterans, ex-service people, and their families
- ☑ Liaise with other support and welfare agencies to deliver support to a client, such as WINZ, local GPs, lawn services, etc.
- ☑ Advocate for veterans, ex-service and currently serving people and their families
- ☑ Keep records relevant to the role, including individual activity sheets
- ☑ Report on Support Services activities to your local RSA and DSM.

Where to get advice in the Support Advisor role

Advice will come from your District Support Manager in terms of your role and the support to service and ex-service people - they are experienced and can offer advice and solutions to any questions. Reference material is also available in basecamp and if required the DSM may refer you on to national office depending on the nature of your issue.

To get to basecamp the website is: www.rsa.org.nz/Basecamp. It requires a logon and password to access it.

An Overview of Support

RSA offers assistance to the service and ex-service community in a number of ways, with membership of an RSA club or association **not** necessary to access our advice and services.

Advice and advocacy

Support Advisors assist service and ex-service people maintain



their physical and mental performance and resilience, to enhance their quality of life by advocating on their behalf with government agencies and NGO health providers and facilitators.

Veterans' entitlements

Service and ex-service people may be entitled to pensions, entitlements and allowances from the New Zealand Government. As Support Advisors, we offer help at every stage of an application process to ensure that people receive the entitlements for which they, or their dependents, are eligible.

Veterans Support Act 2014 (VSA14)

The main Act that pensions, entitlements and allowances is governed by is the Veterans Support Act 2014 (VSA14). The VSA14 is further divided into scheme 1 and scheme 2, with scheme one dealing with veterans before 1 April 1974 and scheme two after that date. The main differences between the schemes is the depth of entitlements available and that scheme two involves ACC. A working knowledge of the Act is needed to work effectively as a Support Advisor.

Financial Support

Our Support Services aim to ensure that no ex-serviceperson suffers undue hardship. The Poppy Trust funds collected on Poppy Appeal week alleviate financial, medical and education hardship for service, ex-service and their dependents.



Explaining your role

When building rapport with people or explaining your role as a Support Advisor you can talk about:

- the RSA is all about – “People helping people”
- how long you’ve been involved in the RSA, and what got you into it in the first place
- how, as an RSA Support Advisor, you’re part of a greater network of welfare support (at local, district and national level)
- the help you can offer them in terms of accessing information about pensions and other allowances and help with applying for these, as well as practical help with day-to-day things like transport to medical appointments, and advocating for people with other organisations and agencies when necessary
- that all conversations and information shared with you is treated with

utmost confidentiality

- that you operate within RNZRSA's Code of Ethics and Privacy Act.
- that they have certain rights under the Health and Disability Service Consumers' Code of Rights, and what these are
- that if they ever have any concerns or issues, RNZRSA has a complaints process that will make sure their concerns are heard and taken seriously.

Handling a complaint from someone using RSA's support services

Try and resolve the complaint yourself first – listen to what the person has to say, explore with them what they would like to see done, and see if you can find a satisfactory solution. If you can't find a solution, escalate the issue up to your DSM.

Support to Commonwealth and Allied Service and ex-service personnel

Ex-serving members of commonwealth and allied countries are entitled to support from the RSA. They should be referred on to their appropriate veteran association or government agency depending if they need advocacy support or government services. Most western countries have a Ministry of Veterans Affairs equivalent which can be found online. The Royal Ex-commonwealth League (RCEL) is also available to help those who have served in the commonwealth forces, and is linked to other UK based charities to help former British service people in need in New Zealand. If you are unsure about Ex-serving members of commonwealth and allied countries entitlements or eligibility contact your DSA if you need help in determining what is required when dealing with commonwealth or allied ex-service personnel.

Recording Individual Activity

Recording individual activity is a means of quantifying all the work that goes into being a Support Advisor. Filling out the activity sheets or forms shows the time that Support Advisors dedicate to their role, distances travelled to meet clients or stakeholders, and the type of good works support advisors do. The records of activity are retained at the local level, which acts as a summary of the Support Advisors work interactions and is sent to DSM who reports back to RNZRSA Support Services to add to the national database.

The national database combines the activity information of all support advisors and can calculate the data into a dollar value. This is to show the work and time that support advisors put into their role to the RSA Board, the Presidents forum, VANZ, NZDF and to the Minister of Veteran Affairs. The activity data is a means of showing the relevancy of the RSA and gives recognition to the amount of effort that our volunteers commit to being support advisors. This recognition of relevancy is reflected in the government grant, which in turn helps the RSA develop and maintain a professional support function to returned and service people and their families. The data also informs where future development or recognition is needed. For example, some districts have a wide geographical area that is reflected in the data the Support Advisors submit for how far they have to travel between events or clients. This may necessitate a need to in the future to look at the structure or resources for that district.

Definition of the headings in recording individual activity

The main point of recording activity is to capture the type of activity, time taken and distances travelled by Support Advisors in their daily work. However, there is a need to capture diverse information to help inform our activities and strategies internally and to the wider public. Each heading is explained in the "Individual Activity Sheet Definitions" document and are fairly self-explanatory but a couple of entries that are required for national level needs only are detailed below for further explanation.

Veteran Support Act 2014 Schemes

The reason this is captured is to understand the different clients in very broad terms that we engage with when dealing with ex-service or service members. This is to understand how many older veterans (scheme 1) who are seen as our traditional clients and decreasing in number verses the younger generation (scheme 2) who are increasing in number and are the heirs to the RSA legacy. This crudely measures how relevant we are to our younger veteran cohort, and if our message is getting out to the new generation of service people. This is important as if we are not engaging with the new generation it raises questions as to our approach to modern service people, our messaging and ultimately the existence of the RSA. So when recording an activity involving a Vietnam or earlier conflict veteran or service person a 1 is put into the column to show a scheme 1 who is pre April 1974 service. A 2 is for scheme 2 for veterans or service people whose service starts is after April 1974. If you are dealing with someone who hasn't served (for example family member of a veteran) or an organisation then just put N/A for not applicable.

Initial Referral

The initial referral is used to gauge again how relevant are we in getting our message out there to the ex-service community, both young and old, as well as other government agencies in seeking or referring clients to our services. For example, if it is mostly RSA initiated then it can be seen as us being pro-active in identifying and helping people or organisations, but may indicate that people are not self-referring or other NGOs or agencies are the first go to for people and not the RSA. This raises questions of our relevancy and how we can get the RSA out into the wider community.

Overall recording activity is important as it gives an understanding of the support needs and environment we face. It informs government about the relevancy of the RSA organisation and internal strategies as to how we engage with the veteran community. It behooves all support advisors to make sure that their activity is recorded and sent on to be collated and added to the national database, as it effects the future of the RSA and veteran community.

Stakeholder Agencies

Acting as Advocate for a client

As part of the role you may need to act as an advocate or liaison for your client with an agency. Some basics you should be aware of in this role is:

- Listen carefully to what they are telling you – find out what has happened, which agency is involved and what the client has already done.
- Check for a specific complaints process of the relevant agency.
- In reference to health and disability there is a Nationwide Health & Disability Advocacy Service, which can be contacted on 0800 555 050.
- If appropriate, and the client gives permission, make direct contact with the relevant agency and initiate the conversation or complaints process on their behalf. Often it's a case of getting the right person on the phone and discussing the situation to get a full understanding of both sides of the issue.
- Keep in touch with them regularly if the resolution process is a lengthy one – they are likely to need (and appreciate) your ongoing support.

When helping a client access services:

- Build rapport - don't leap straight in. Take your time to earn the persons trust and understand the issue and what they want to happen.
- a proper and full assessment of someone's entitlements cannot be made unless the relevant agency/organisation has full and accurate information
- for the allocation to be done accurately, agencies and organisations must have the correct information
- the application forms and statutory declarations are legal documents that you sign to confirm the information is full, accurate and truthful
- Entitlements can be revoked if they are based on incomplete, inaccurate or untruthful information.

A Support Advisor needs to be familiar with other relevant support agencies, and refer veterans, ex-service people and their families to those services as appropriate. Below are the main ones that the Support Services engage with.



Agency name	Veterans' Affairs New Zealand (VANZ) Te Tira Ahu Ika A Whiro
Key purpose	<p>VANZ is an operational unit within the New Zealand Defence Force. VA is headed by a General Manager, a statutory position responsible for the administration of the Veterans Support Act 2014.</p> <p>The work of VA covers four main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of policy advice on, and administration of, a wide range of issues relating to veterans' entitlements, care and recognition (including a case management service) • The coordination of commemorative activities • The management of the government's relationship with veterans and their representative organisations • The provision of ex-service memorials and maintenance of 183 Services Cemeteries throughout New Zealand. <p>Note: Scheme 1 Veterans come under VANZ</p>
Physical contact details	Veterans' Affairs PO Box 5146 Wellington 6145
Phone	0800 483 8372 (0800 4 VETERAN)
Fax	(04) 495 2080
Email	veterans@nzdf.mil.nz
Website	www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz



Te Kaporeihana Āwhina Hunga Whara

Agency name	Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) - Te Kaporeihana Āwhina Hunga Whara
Key purpose	Is responsible for administering the country's universal no-fault accidental injury scheme. The scheme provides financial compensation and support to citizens, residents, and temporary visitors who have suffered personal injuries. Note: Scheme 2 Service and ex-service people come under ACC.
Physical contact details	ACC PO Box 242 Wellington 6140
Phone	0800 101 966 (Claims) 0800 222 070 (Providers) 04 816 7400 (General enquires)
Email	information@acc.govt.nz
Website	http://www.acc.co.nz



Agency name	Veteran's Pension Centre, Work and Income, Ministry of Social Development – Te Hiranga Tangata
Key purpose	Administration of the Veteran's Pension, and any associated extra help such as Disability Allowance and Accommodation Supplement. Note: Work and Income NZ also administers requests for Community Services Cards, High Health User Cards, and SuperGold Cards.
Physical contact details	Veteran's Pension Centre PO Box 5515, Lambton Quay Wellington 6145
Phone	0800 650 656
Fax	0800 999 996
Email	veteranspension@msd.govt.nz
Website	http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/contact-us/war-veterans-contacts.html



Agency name	Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC)
Key purpose	HNZC works in a community of government, charitable and private sector organisations providing social housing and housing support throughout New Zealand. Basically, they provide subsidised rental homes to people who have no other housing options.
Physical contact details	<i>Look online for your local HNZC details and write them in here</i>
Phone	0800 801 601
Fax	0800 201 202
Email	<i>Look online for your local HNZC details and write them in here</i>
Website	www.hnzc.org.nz



Agency name	Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
Key purpose	Providing knowledge and information about people's rights and obligations in New Zealand.
Physical contact details	<i>Look online for your local CAB details and write them in here</i>
Phone	0800 367 222
Fax	<i>Look online for your local CAB details and write them in here</i>
Email	<i>Look online for your local CAB details and write them in here</i>
Website	www.cab.org.nz



Te Ope Whakaora

Agency name	The Salvation Army – Te Ope Whakaora
Key purpose	<p>Provides accommodation and care for senior people in the community, through their residential care chaplaincy, independent living units and community based care.</p> <p>The Salvation Army runs a Friendship Programme, offering companionship, and practical support such as food, clothing and budgeting advice.</p> <p>They also provide specialist support around addiction treatment.</p>
Physical contact details	<p>Territorial Headquarters</p> <p>PO Box 6015, Marion Square</p> <p>Wellington 6141</p>
Phone	(04) 384 5649
Fax	(04) 802 6259
Email	web_master@nzf.salvationarmy.org
Website	www.salvationarmy.org.nz



Agency name	<p>Age Concern</p> <p>He Manaakitanga Kaumātua Aotearoa</p>
Key purpose	To serve the needs of older people by offering nationally contracted services, education, resources and to advocate nationally and internationally on policy and issues relevant to older people and ageing.
Physical contact details	Level 4, West Block, Education House 178 Willis Street, Wellington
Phone	(04) 801 9338
Fax	(04) 801 9336
Email	national.office@ageconcern.org.nz
Website	www.ageconcern.org.nz



Agency name	Mental Health Crisis Team (CATT)
Key purpose	<p>A crisis assessment and treatment team (CATT) provides immediate help during a mental health crisis.</p> <p>CATT responds to urgent requests to help people in mental health crisis 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A mental health crisis can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a psychotic episode • self-harm • feeling suicidal, and • feeling out of control.
Physical contact details	Various regional DHB locations (see Website)
Phone	111 or by DHB (see Website)
Website	http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/mental-health-services/crisis-assessment-teams



Agency name	No Duff
Key purpose	Provide immediate support to veterans in need. To work with partner agencies to provide longer term care if required.
Physical contact details	They have various volunteers throughout New Zealand and overseas.
Phone	022 307 1557
Facebook	Facebook.com/No-Duff-NZ-Veteran-support-NGO
Email	Noduff.ngo@gmail.com
Website	https://www.noduff.org/

Conducting yourself ethically

As an RSA Support Advisor, you have a responsibility to maintain a high standard of ethics in order to:

- Safeguard your own integrity
- Protect the interests of veterans, ex-service people and their families.



The guiding document for support services business practices is the RNZRSA Code of Ethics. There is a copy of this document in the appendices of this booklet.

Support Advisors need to read, understand and sign off on the code of ethics and send the signed original to their District Support Manager to sign off. The DSM will send a copy of the completed signed document to RNZRSA Support Services to register them on the Support Advisor Register as having completed it.



The reputation of Support Services and individual Support Advisors relies on the perception of people who have interacted with them. An ethically and diligent approach to the role of support ensures the good reputation of the RSA endures, guaranteeing the future support of service, ex-service and their families.

To ensure your personnel integrity as a Support Advisor:

- Consult original sources of information before giving it out to clients – to make sure it is current and complete.
- Read emails and material sent by the DSM and National Support Services to make

sure you have higher level situational awareness of direction, policy and intent.

- Check VANZ, ACC and Work and Income NZ websites regularly in terms of changes that may affect advice for clients.
- Don't quote from memory, always check current information, Acts, Regulations and policies.
- When in doubt explain to your client that you'll need to find out or talk with someone else to get that answer, and tell them when you're likely to be able to get back to them with more information. Talk with your DSM to get help with the area you're unsure about.

When agreeing in discussion on action or advocating:

- Keep a record of the discussion – date, who was present, what was agreed. If it's not possible to write these things down during the conversation, make sure you record them as soon after as possible, while events are fresh in your mind – the key thing is to keep an accurate record so if there's any disagreement afterwards you have something concrete to go back to.
- If possible, get confirmation from the relevant person or a witness that your record of events is true and accurate.
- When you're not dealing with instructions from the person directly, always check that whoever is giving the instructions has the authority to do so, ie. have they got an Medical or Financial Power of Attorney – you should sight and take a copy of this.

When processing or filling out applications:

- Keep a separate file for each application.
- Make a checklist of documentation that needs to go with each different application, and check things off as you are about to send them. **Note:** some applications come with such a checklist as part of their instructions for completion.
- Keep copies of all documents sent with an application, in case something gets mislaid.

When acting in the official capacity of a Support Advisor:

- Introduce yourself and explain the capacity you're working in for the RSA
- Dress tidily and appropriately for the situation
- Use language appropriate for the people you're communicating with
- Try to find some common ground.
- "Sell" yourself, then "sell" the organisation (RSA) and then "sell" the service.

To be an effective Support Advisor you need to:

- To know and keep in regular contact with your local veterans, ex-service people and their families and understand about their needs, concerns, and experiences
- Communicate openly and honestly with Veterans' Affairs New Zealand, your DSA and other NGOs and agencies (remember an individual's right to privacy however)
- Comply promptly with official requests for information by clients that involves their private information as they have a right to know and see all information held on them by a third party (based on expressed consent)
- Identify and encourage your local RSA members to support welfare initiatives such as home and hospital visits
- Keep accurate records of welfare activities in your local RSA, providing reports as necessary, so that as an organisation we have a sound picture of what's happening and to enhance the professional reputation of the RSA movement
- Be proactive regarding welfare and support issues – where you see something within RSA that could be changed to help us do things better, share your ideas with your DSM.

The Privacy Act Principles

The Privacy act governs the use, dissemination and holding of your client's personal information, which you will collect as part of your role as a support advisor. Below is the crux of each of the principles within the act.⁴

- **Principle 1: Purpose of collection of personal information.** An agency may only collect personal information where it is needed to perform a function or activity of the agency, i.e. to provide support to our clients.
- **Principle 2: Source of personal information.** The agency must collect the information directly from the person concerned. There are exceptions: for example, where the person agrees otherwise, or where the information is publicly available. This is where the Permission to Act form allows us to gather information from other agencies as long as it aligns with Principle 1.
- **Principle 3: Collection of information from subject.** The agency must take all reasonable efforts to ensure the person is aware that the information is being collected, what it will be used for, the recipients of the information, whether the supply of the information is voluntary or mandatory, the consequences of not providing the information and the person's rights of access to and correction of the information. For us this is explained to a client as to what we need to progress an application to a trust or to an agency like Veterans Affairs.
- **Principle 4: Manner of collection of personal information.** Personal information must not be collected in an unlawful, unfair or intrusive fashion. Support Advisors collect it from the client themselves or by agency enquiry.
- **Principle 5: Storage and security of personal information.** The agency must ensure the information is protected against loss, misuse, or unauthorised disclosure. This means hard copy files are protected under lock and key in a cabinet, files are not left unattended in shared spaces and electronic documents on computers are password protected.

⁴ From Consumer Magazine. https://www.consumer.org.nz/articles/privacy-law?qclid=EAiaIQobChMI6vf7a_W5AIV14RwCh0rIQ03EAAAYASAAEgIH3vD_BwE&qclsrc=aw.ds

- **Principle 6: Access to personal information.** Where the information can be readily retrieved, the individual is entitled to confirmation of whether the information is held, and to have access to it. There are exceptions, for example, where disclosure would prevent detection of a criminal offence, or would involve a breach of someone else's privacy. For support advisors acting as an agent for the person they can apply direct to their advisor for questions on their information.
- **Principle 7: Correction of personal information.** Individuals may request correction of information held. Where this is not agreed to by the agency, the individual may request that the information is tagged with a statement that the correction was sought and was refused.
- **Principle 8: Accuracy of personal information to be checked before use.** The agency must not use the information without taking reasonable steps to ensure it is accurate, up-to-date, complete, relevant and not misleading. Be aware to ask for the most recent documents but since the majority of our information is sourced directly from the client or another agency this shouldn't be an issue.
- **Principle 9: Agency not to keep personal information for longer than necessary.** The agency must not keep the information for any longer than it is needed for the purposes for which it was collected. As a rule of thumb, based on health related support, records can be kept for up to 10 years from last health related interaction.
- **Principle 10: Limits on use of personal information.** Information collected for one purpose must not be used for any other purpose. There are exceptions: for example, where the agency reasonably believes the individual has authorised the further use, or that the information was from a publicly available publication.
- **Principle 11: Limits on disclosure of personal information.** The information must not be disclosed except in certain situations. These include where the disclosure is directly related to the purpose for which the information was collected, where the source of the information is a publicly available publication, and where the disclosure is authorised by the individual concerned. The permission to act from is authorisation from the client to be able to do this, again under the intent of Principle 1.

- **Principle 12: Unique identifiers.** An agency must not assign a unique identifier to an individual unless doing so is necessary for the agency to carry out its functions efficiently. Where doing so is necessary, agencies must not use a unique identifier that has been assigned to that individual by another agency (the only exception is for certain taxation purposes).

For the confidentiality of personnel and organizational information:

- All Support Advisors complete the Privacy 101 online learning module at <https://elearning.privacy.org.nz/> and send the certificate of completion to the DSM.
- Be aware that permission must be obtained from an individual to talk about their situation or issue to any third person or party (use the Permission to Act document on basecamp)
- On having permission to disclose information about a client's issue only involve people or agencies on a need to know basis.
- Secure any hard copy documentation of an individual's private information in a locked cabinet when they are not in use.
- Always double-check before leaving a site (eg. a place where you have met a client) that you have all your records with you.

For details of the Privacy Act 1993 see;

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0028/latest/DLM296639.html>

Protecting the consumer rights

Our Code of Ethics is a key document guiding our practice as Support Advisors. But there's a piece of central legislation which also places certain expectations on all providers of welfare services – the Health and Disability Service Consumers' Code of Rights, which became law in New Zealand in 1996.

It's important you know about this Code of Rights for two reasons:

- all the veterans you are in touch with and provide support to will be users of health and/or disability services – as their advocate, it's important you can explain their rights to them, and help them make a complaint through the appropriate channel if they are worried about or unhappy with the service they have had
- you may also be a consumer of these services at some point in your life (if you haven't already been so)

While, as a Support Advisor you are not strictly speaking considered to be a 'provider' of services under the Health and Disability Commissioners Act 1994, the rights covered in this Code are very much in line with RNZRSA's view of how we should be acting, as is expressed in our own Code of Ethics.

The Health and Disability Service Consumers' Code of Rights

The Health and Disability Service Consumers' Code of Rights guarantees certain things to users of all health and disability services, whether they pay for those services or not. They also provide a free, independent and confidential service to help people resolve issues with or complaints about a health and disability service provider, called the Nationwide Health & Disability Advocacy Service.

An excellent brochure outlining the Health and Disability Service Consumers' Code of Rights is available from National Health & Disability Advocacy Services website:
<http://advocacy.hdc.org.nz/about-us/advocacy-leaflet-having-a-problem-with-a-health-or-disability-service>

Being culturally responsive

The way RSA works with veterans should be culturally responsive to all parties.

Military Culture

The vast majority of clients will be serving or ex-serving military personnel or their spouses, so an understanding of military culture is essential. This culture incorporates unity, a sense of purpose and direction, and values that drives service people to complete tasks towards a common goal.

Being task orientated means service people tend to be direct, blunt and to the point in their communications. They appreciate and trust those that respond in the same manner and who talk in terms of tangible and achievable objectives and goals.

Service people value their self-reliance, being reluctant to come across as needing help, and have a tendency to down play injuries or issues. To fully engage they need to trust the person they are talking to, either by mutual experience (talking with another ex-service person) or by having confidence in the person they are talking to.

Having the spouse present may be of advantage as they can clarify issues affecting the client, where the client is reluctant or minimizes issues or injuries.

The Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi – a reminder

The articles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi place duties on the Crown and its agencies in relation to Māori. While the RSA, as a Non-Governmental Organisation, does not have such duties and responsibilities to the Treaty, we still need to conduct our business by:

- ☑ forming partnerships with Māori
- ☑ recognising and providing for Māori interests
- ☑ being responsive to Māori needs
- ☑ ensuring equality of opportunity for Māori.

Check out a simple summary of the Treaty of Waitangi/ Te Tiriti o Waitangi:
www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/treaty/the-treaty-in-brief

Other ethnic groups

When working with veterans from Pacific Island cultures and other ethnic groups it is important to recognise and give appropriate priority to their interests, and be responsive to their needs and concerns by establishing interactive and collaborative relationships with them. In some cases, this may involve establishing relationships with key people from within the veteran's community.

Cultural identification

The culture with which a veteran identifies, and the extent to which a veteran is familiar with (or disconnected from) their culture is important to ensure that interviews are conducted in a culturally appropriate manner to reduce the risk of alienating a veteran by matching the veteran's level of cultural awareness and understanding.

Factors to be aware of

Cultural awareness should aim for clear outcomes. Be aware of, and sensitive to, the following areas:

- Meeting, greeting and developing a rapport with veterans
- Using sensitive ways to ask veterans about their ethnicity and cultural identity
- Having an awareness of your own skill level (and limits) in working with veterans across cultures
- Finding ways to identify and establish close relationships with key people in the local community who are Māori, Pasifika people, and from other ethnic groups, so you can ask for advice as needed.

How to be culturally responsive:

- Don't make assumptions – just because I know something about the customs and practices that a particular cultural group might place importance on, every person is an individual.

- Acknowledge the beliefs and practices of people who differ from me.
- Appreciate what's important to me. Explore with others what is important to them. These may be different, but that doesn't mean I can't provide support to those people – I just need to keep an open mind and be flexible in my approach to this support work.
- Acknowledge the power relationship between me (as the provider of a service, a representative of the RSA, and a holder of relevant information) and the clients who I am supporting.
- You could approach a local elder/kuia/kaumata, local Māori wardens, or the local Māori Women's League and ask them for advice on the best way to make connections with the local iwi and hapū.
- Keep an eye/ear out for news and events relating to different cultural groups within your community – head along and talk to people and make connections.

Requests for service records and medals

While it's not related directly to support services, you will find you often get requests from veterans or their families for information on how they can get service records and/or medals.

Requesting NZDF service records

The NZDF Archives Section of the New Zealand Defence Force is located at Trentham Camp, Upper Hutt. The Archives Section maintains and holds personal files for discharged Navy, Army and Air Force personnel who have served with the New Zealand Armed Forces since 1921 to the present day.

NZDF Archives

Email: personnel.archives@nzdf.mil.nz

Personnel Enquiries

Tel: (04) 527 5280

Trentham Military Camp

Fax: (04) 527 5275

Private Bag 905

Upper Hutt 5140

New Zealand

The three pieces of legislation that govern access to personnel information held by NZDF Archives are:

- The Official Information Act 1982
- The Privacy Act 1993
- The Health Information Privacy Code 1994

Go to the homepage of the New Zealand Defence Force website: www.nzdf.mil.nz

Click on the link to 'Personnel records' in the top navigation bar.

Then click the link to 'NZDF Archives' in the left hand navigation bar.

Almost all of the files of those who served in the South African War and the First World War have been transferred to Archives New Zealand in Wellington. Many of these files have been digitised and are easily available as downloads from the Archives New Zealand website. It's possible to make those veterans' records publicly available in this way, as none of them are still alive.

Go to the Archives New Zealand website for more information about these files:

www.archway.archives.govt.nz

Type the required name into the search box and click the search button.

Information on Medals

You're not expected to know everything about medals, but it's helpful to know what sort of information is available on the NZDF medals website, so you can direct veterans and their families to it as needed. Other useful information on this website you may want to access or refer people to includes:

- A guide to the correct order of wear for medals in New Zealand
- Information about the wearing of medals by family members and civilians
- How to apply for miniatures, and the rules around these
- How to nominate others for medals

- ☑ A full index of information about and images of New Zealand medals and ribbons.

Who awards and distributes medals?

The award and distribution of medals is the responsibility of the New Zealand Defence Force. Veterans who have not claimed their medals, or who have lost or had their medals stolen, need to apply to the New Zealand Defence Force. Families can also make applications for medals awarded to a deceased family member who was a veteran.

How are medals applied for?

Medals can be applied from the NZDF medals site via an application form

Take a look at the medals section of the New Zealand Defence Force website:
<http://medals.nzdf.mil.nz/info/forms.html#forms>



What about medals for service people from overseas?

As well as requests from New Zealand veterans and ex-service people or their families for information about medals, you may also get requests from people who served in overseas forces (especially British or Australian forces).

In most cases, because of time zone differences, it's best to communicate with overseas defence force contacts via email or fax. Provide the contact detail of the relevant force to the person making the enquiry and if they ask you to act on their behalf, then by all means make the initial contact yourself to see what needs to be done from there.

You can find:

- UK medals information on the Veterans UK website:
www.veterans-uk.info/recordsmedalsbadges.htm
- Australian medals information on the Australian Department of Defence website:
www.defence.gov.au/medals/



Appendices



Role Description – RSA Support Advisor

Title	Local Support Adviser (LSA)
Reports to	<p>Support matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President, Local Association, or • Chairperson, Local Association Support Services / Welfare Committee. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary / Manager Local Association • District Support Adviser (Monthly Claims and Individual Activity Sheet)
Functional Relationships	<p>Local:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees, Local Association Poppy Trust and other Welfare Funds. <p>District / National:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Support Manager • District Local Support Advisers • RNZRSA Support Services Team <p>External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local NZDF units • Local Government Agencies (e.g. VA, WINZ, DHB, ACC etc) • Local Non-Governmental Organisations and Charities (e.g. No Duff, GP Clinics, Salvation Army etc.)
Purpose of Position	To deliver support services to clients within their local Association area and Community. The LSA will provide direct support to clients; advise local RSA executive and welfare officers on support best practice; and collaborate with stakeholders in advocacy and delivering support. Support is one of the strategic priorities of the RSA to remember and care for all those impacted by military service for New Zealand.
Key Responsibilities	<p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be available to take enquiries and requests for support, including after hours, emergency situations. • Advise eligible people on services and entitlements available. • Assist with the completion of applications for services and entitlements. • Advocate for eligible people as necessary. • Coordinate delivery of support within the local Association, as well as with

	<p>other RSAs and other support and welfare agencies as necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to meet eligible people if necessary. • Foster regular visits with isolated and/or confined persons (e.g. home & hospital visits, rest homes, bereaved etc). • Maintain an individual's confidentiality. • Abide by the RSA Support Services 'Code of Ethics'. <p>Coordination and Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice on Support Services to the local Association and the DSM. • Plan and coordinate the delivery of local Support Services in conjunction with the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Association plan, and ○ The District plan (reflects the RNZRSA Support Services Strategy). • Recruit, develop and coordinate a team of volunteers to assist in the delivery of support. • Attend meetings and other activities relevant to the role, including the provision of activity reports when requested. <p>Relationships and Local Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure local Association and other volunteers are kept up-to-date with all relevant local, district and national issues. • Network and foster relationships with other local service providers. • Represent the RSA at relevant public / service provider meetings. • Increase the awareness and understanding of the RSA role and support among eligible people within the community. <p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an excellent understanding of the types of support relevant to <i>all</i> generations of eligible people. • Maintain an excellent level of knowledge of RSA rules and support services policy. • Maintain an excellent level of knowledge of <i>Local</i> support services issues, practice matters, and local providers. • Maintain a working knowledge of <i>District</i> and <i>National</i> support services issues and practice matters. • Maintain a good understanding of the 'Military Culture'.
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	<p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain accurate records and files relevant to the role. • Provide activity reports to the local Association as required. • Submit monthly claims (Government Grant) to the DSM. • Submit monthly 'Individual Activity Sheets' to the DSM. • Fulfil all legal obligations relative to premises, property, equipment inventories and vehicles, and ensure all security, health and safety requirements are met.
<p>Grievances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially to Local Association President, then to DSM, then to RNZRSA as necessary.
<p>Individual Requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge or empathy towards military service and its impacts on military personnel and their families. • Proven discretion in handing sensitive personal and organisational information. • Highly organised and able to work collegially in a small team or independently as required. • Sound knowledge of RSA Support Services, General RSA rules and, policies, the VSA 14, the public health system and some knowledge of the ACC Act. • Ability to write effective reports and submissions. • Clear and confident verbal communication skills. • Willing and able to travel around their local community and District, and to attend training whether locally or outside their area. • Innovative thinking and ability to see the 'bigger picture'. • Excellent rapport building skills. • Good listener. • Patient. • Flexible. • Excellent liaison skills. • Proactive. • Computer / IT literate. • Current car licence.



Code of Ethics

The Royal New Zealand Returned And Services' Association National Support Services Committee endorses the following Code of Ethics for adoption by RSA Support Advisors, Lay Advocates and others who assist the veteran and ex-service community. Such persons have a responsibility to maintain a high standard of ethics in order to safeguard their own integrity and to protect the interests of veterans, ex-service people and their families.

Support Advisors are asked to read, understand and sign off on the code of ethics and send the signed original to their District Support Manager to sign off. DSMs please send a copy of the completed signed document to the RNZRSA.

RSA Support Advisors will:

- Give full, accurate and truthful information to veterans, ex-service persons and their families in relation to pensions, benefits and services.
- Act only on the veteran's, ex-service person's or dependant's instructions in relation to action to be taken in respect of an application for pensions, benefits or access to services.
- Have regard for the privacy of the veterans and ex-service persons, their families and ensure that proper authorities to contact outside agencies are obtained.
- Keep personal information secure and not disclose such information to others without express consent.
- Ensure that all contact with members of the veteran and ex-service communities, staff of government agencies, providers of services and the general public is conducted in a respectful and professional manner.

- Encourage veterans and ex-service persons, their families and others to give full, accurate, truthful and relevant information when applying for pensions, entitlements and support services.
- Ensure that all available relevant details and documents are submitted with applications for entitlements and services.
- Promote the interests of the veterans and ex-service communities by communicating openly and honestly with Veterans' Affairs New Zealand, and other service providers, and by complying with requests for information.
- Only undertake work to the level of their knowledge and expertise.
- Maintain and expand their knowledge base by attending training and information seminars and by seeking advice from relevant persons and organizations, for example, RSA District Support Advisor, RNZRSA National Manager Support Services, Veterans' Affairs New Zealand or Work and Income New Zealand.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I understand the RSA code of ethics, and how it affects my role as a Support Advisor for the RSA. I will abide by this code of ethics in my position as a RSA Support Advisor in the day to day conduct of my role and agree to its statutes.

Name of RSA
Support Advisor:

Signature of RSA
Support Advisor:

Date:

Name of
District Support Manager:

Signature of
District Support Manager:

Date: