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**Australian Government**  
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## The Army Learning Organisation Workshop

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### ABSTRACT

This report outlines the conduct, philosophy, management and facilitation of the Army Learning Organisation Workshop held at HMAS Harman Conference Centre on 24 - 25 February 2009. The workshop presented an opportunity for participants to discuss the relevance of the learning organisation concept within the Army context. The report provides a description of the activities performed by participants and the subsequent results of these activities. It also describes relevant theoretical and associated methodological concerns which informed the workshop design and structure, as well as reflections on the process of conducting the workshop by facilitators. The report, therefore, makes a practical addition to the literature on workshop methodology, and can be viewed as a template to inform future workshop activities.

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## The Army Learning Organisation Workshop

### Executive Summary

A total of 25 Army personnel participated in a two-day workshop sponsored by LWDC from 24-25 February at HMAS Harman in Canberra. Participants were chosen by LWDC (Land Warfare Development Centre) based on their broad array of expertise and their diverse roles/functions specific to learning in the Army. The participants took part in a combination of whole of group and syndicate based discussions.

The workshop comprised of a series of complementary activities designed to identify relevant learning organisation definition(s), characteristics, enablers and inhibitors of learning, and associated action plans. To this end the workshop aimed to deliver the following outcomes:

1. An agreed definition of the Army Learning Organisation (ALO)
2. The articulation of Army Learning Organisation Characteristics/Guidelines
3. The identification of perceived enablers and inhibitors of learning in the Army
4. In light of these identified enablers and inhibitors, the development of an action plan, or actions to assist with the development of the ALO
5. Validation of the Learning Organisation Questionnaire

Through a series of facilitated whole of group and syndicate activities two primary outputs were achieved: a definition of the Army Learning Organisation:

*Army has the people, processes and culture that enable it to learn, share and apply knowledge to quickly meet Australia's strategic goals*

The following list of characteristics which were viewed as being necessary for the generation of a supportive learning environment/climate:

- Inculcate leadership behaviours at all levels that reinforce learning
- Establish robust learning processes and practices
- Generate and reflect on a shared vision and understanding
- Encourage collaboration and team learning
- Develop an appreciation of the broader implications of decisions and actions by applying a systems approach
- Establish and sustain the free flow of knowledge
- Foster Professional Mastery
- Embrace evaluation and measurement

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- Exploit informal and formal networks
- Influence Defence strategic learning

The report provides a description of activities performed by workshop participants and the subsequent results of these activities. Taken as a whole, workshop activities represent a systematic and concerted attempt by the research team to assist Army with its goal of becoming an adaptive and learner centric organisation.

The report also describes relevant theoretical and associated methodological concerns which informed the workshop design and structure, as well as reflection on the process of conducting the workshop by facilitators. Thus, the report makes a practical contribution to the literature on workshop methodology, and thus can be viewed as a guide to inform workshop design.

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## Acronyms

AAR	After Action Review
ADEL	Army Doctrine Electronic Library
ADFAADS	Australia Defence Force Activities Analysis Database System
ACMS	Army Career Management System
ACOTC	All Corps Officer Training Continuum
ACSTR	All Corps Soldier Training Continuum
AKD	Army Knowledge Domain
AKM	Army Knowledge Management
ALE	Army Learning Environment
ALOP	Army Learning Organisation Principles
ALOQ	Army Learning Organisation Questionnaire
ALOW	Army Learning Organisation Workshop
ALOWG	Army Learning Organisation Working Group
ALSG	Army Learning Organisation Steering Group
ARTC	Army Recruit Training Centre
BOS	Battlefield Operating System
C2	Command and Control
CAL	Centre for Army Lessons
CASAC	Chief of Army Senior Advisory Committee
CAT/A	Combat Arms Training - Army
CIOG	Chief Information Officer Group
DAKM	Director of Army Knowledge Management
DALO	DSTO Army Learning Organisation
DASS	Defence Assisted Study Scheme
DLOQ	Dimensions of a Learning Organisation Questionnaire
DOCM	Directorate of Officer Career Management
DPTC	Defence Police Training Centre
FIC	Fundamental Inputs to Capability
FLOC	Future Land Operating Concept
FORCOMD	Forces Command
HCD-A	Head of Capability Development Army
HOC	Head of Corps
HOTO	Handover/Takeover
HR	Human Resource
ICT	Information Communication Technology
LWD	Land Warfare Doctrine
LWDC	Land Warfare Development Centre
NCO	Non Commissioned Officer
PAR	Post Activity Report
PDA	Personal Data Assistant
PED	Personal Electronic Device
POR	Post Operations Report
RAAEC	Royal Australian Army Education Corps

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ROA	Return On Assets
RODUM	Reports On Defective or Unsatisfactory Materiel
ROE	Return On Equity
ROI	Return On Investment
SCMA	Soldier Career Management Agency
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SNCO	Senior Non Commissioned Officer
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRI	Senior Range Instructor
TC-A	Training Command Army
TCE	Training Command Establishments
TDO	Training Development Officer
TMP	Training Management Package
TRA	Technical Regulatory Authorities
TTP	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
WO	Warrant Officer

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## 1. Introduction

The Australian Army is in the midst of a significant change initiative. In 2008, the Chief of Army stated his aspirations for the Army to become a learning organisation, and a major effort has followed to design and deliver structural transformations to achieve those aspirations. In support of this objective, DSTO's Land Operations Division is undertaking research into the attitudes, practices and approaches which are characteristic of learning organisations. This research will support and facilitate opportunities for the Army client to further develop, implement and evaluate its capability as a learning organisation at individual, team and organisational levels, by developing appropriate measurement and assessment tools which will become part of the Army learning process. Significant advances in the theoretical and practical development of the Army as a Learning Organisation are being made through the cultivation and refinement of the Army Learning Environment (ALE) concept and accompanying doctrine in the learning arena.

During discussions at the inaugural Army Learning Steering Group (ALSG) in October 2008, Commander Land Warfare Development Centre (LWDC) acknowledged his responsibility for implementation of the Chief of Army's ALE initiative. In line with research goals, DSTO outlined a workshop approach to define the ALO and associated characteristics as an initial aspect of implementing the ALE.

This report outlines the conduct, philosophy, management and facilitation of the Army Learning Organisation Workshop (ALOW). In particular, it describes relevant theoretical and associated methodological concerns which informed the workshop design and structure. It provides a description of the activities performed by workshop participants and the subsequent results derived from these activities. As proponents of reflexive practice, the observations and reflections of facilitators on the conduct of the workshop have also been included. This report is intended to make a practical addition to the literature on workshop methodology, and can be viewed as a template to guide future workshop activities.

## 2. The DSTO Army learning organisation framework

The overarching framework for the ALOW highlights a desire by the research team to align the agreed DSTO task objectives and associated research strategies (study plan) with Army's strategic goals. Through careful consideration of theoretical and methodological matters, research design and practice, and customer requirements, the DSTO Army Learning Organisation (DALO) Research Team endeavours to maintain synergistic linkages between research capability development and the Army's stated strategic goal of becoming a learning organisation. The ALOW represents one of several activities designed to examine the significance of learning at various levels throughout Army.

The framework incorporates a multifaceted approach to understanding existing learning practices in Army and their associated philosophical underpinnings. Additionally, the

framework integrates activities designed to assist Army with the articulation of learning requirements through policy and concept development, and provides/applies a variety of techniques/approaches to continually monitor learning. These activities include:

#### Policy and related concept development

- Contribution to the development of the Army Learning Environment (ALE) paper.
- Contribution to the development of the *LWD 7-0 Fundamentals of Education and Training (not published)*.
- Support to Training Command Army (TC-A)/Forces Command (FORCOMD)/Land Warfare Development Centre (LWDC) (currently under going restructuring) in the development of implementation approaches, including involvement with the Army Learning Steering Group (ALSG).

#### Familiarisation and knowledge building activities by the research team

- Visits to Army training establishments (i.e. Army Recruit Training Centre (ARTC) Kapooka, Defence Police Training Centre (DPTC) Holsworthy.
- Discussions with key stakeholders (Commander LWDC, Director Army Knowledge Management (DAKM), SO 1 AKM, COL PLANS HQTC -A, COL ET&D HQ TC -A and staff.
- Research and development of the Learning Organisation to produce a literature review.

#### Workshop design and implementation

This will be outlined below.

#### Future activities

- Implementation of the Army Learning Organisation Questionnaire (ALOO) to provide a baseline of the learning climate of Army.
- Case studies which further explore the issues identified in the questionnaire and workshop.
- Longitudinal study approach to track the learning trajectories of personnel.

Taken as a whole, these activities reflect a concerted effort by the DALO Research Team to:

- a) generate an informed view of learning in the Army and associated behavioural concerns;
- b) develop an appreciation for current approaches to learning in Army and implications for Army becoming a learning organisation;
- c) assist Army in its articulation of learning (and associated organisational concerns) through policy and doctrine development;
- d) facilitate learning among workshop participants;
- e) apply various methods to assess/monitor learning at individual, group and organisational levels; and relative to this, in the spirit of learning organisation principles, and
- f) expose the customer/client to a variety of techniques for the purpose indicated in (e).

## 3. Workshop approach

### 3.1 Participants and procedure

A total of 25 Army personnel participated in a two-day workshop sponsored by LWDC from 24 - 25 February 2009 at HMAS Harman in Canberra. Participants were chosen by LWDC based on their broad array of expertise and their diverse roles/functions specific to learning in the Army. Heterogeneity of the group allowed the discussion generated from the planned workshop activities to be situated within a broad experiential context, providing a rich descriptive base for achieving workshop goals. A list of participants and their organisations is provided in Appendix A.

The participants took part in a combination of whole of group and syndicate based discussions. Participants were divided into four syndicate groups with each group tasked with:

- (1) defining the Army Learning Organisation;
- (2) identifying and prioritising key Army Learning Organisation characteristics;
- (3) identifying enablers and inhibitors of learning; and
- (4) based on identified enablers and inhibitors of learning, developing an action plan to allow desired learning organisation characteristics to be realised.

Facilitation was provided through external (academic/subject matter expert) and internal (DALO Research Team) providers. The external facilitator was primarily responsible for whole of group facilitation (i.e. keeping activities on track and highlighting synergies between issues raised by syndicate groups). Each syndicate group was assigned a DSTO facilitator who was responsible for eliciting and codifying discussion where required.

### 3.2 The workshop

#### 3.2.1 Pre-workshop activities

Prior to conducting the workshop, and to ensure workshop success, considerable effort was expended by the DALO Research Team in devising a workshop approach which would achieve the outcomes agreed with the client. The agenda was constructed during multiple discussion sessions, endeavouring to apply learning organisation principles, particularly aspects of systems thinking, shared mental models and team learning in reaching a common view and approach. Discussion sessions were role played by the DALO Research Team with a view to ensuring: the link and flow between sessions; that sessions could achieve identified outcomes; and the identification of appropriate background material to allow participants to successfully contribute to group discussions. The completion of a draft literature review outlining major thinking in the Learning Organisation arena ensured a common base of understanding for this discussion. The engagement of an academic with experience in facilitation, and a strong theoretical focus and experience as a practitioner in the knowledge management/learning organisation domain provided a level of independence to the

facilitation process. The workshop facilitator also assisted with the examination and collation of inputs and ideas.

An administration instruction was circulated alerting invited workshop participants of the time, location and content of the ALOW. This instruction included the workshop agenda (see Appendix B), a draft of the learning organisation literature review produced by the DALO Research Team, and a copy of the ALOQ to be piloted by workshop participants. The participants were asked to familiarise themselves with the workshop agenda and read the literature review before arriving at the workshop. Participants were also asked to complete, and provide feedback on, the proposed questionnaire which is designed to measure individual, group and organisational learning in Army. By completing these pre-workshop activities, participants were exposed to relevant material to generate informed discussion during the workshop.

### 3.2.2 Main activities – Day 1

#### 3.2.2.1 *Welcoming address*

Following the initial introductory comments made by the workshop facilitator<sup>1</sup> and ice breaking activity, Acting Head Capability Development – Army (A/HCD-A) officially welcomed participants and outlined the scope and outcomes for the working group, focussing on providing clear lines of activity to form a draft action plan, to support Army in becoming a learning organisation. Other key outcomes for the workshop were also identified including: an ALO definition; the identification of ALO characteristics; identifying enablers and inhibitors to the development of an ALO; and the creation of actions plans for achieving outcomes.

In his role as overseeing the development and integration of new capability, A/HCD-A aligned the notion of the learning organisation within the context of Adaptive Army, cultural change, structural reforms, learning loops, and the modernisation of Army. He reflected on his early days in Army commenting on the complete control of information flows by the chain of command, a far cry from today's information rich environments. More significantly, A/HCD-A proposed that the ideas contained within a learning organisation be regarded as a framework for continuous improvement – or in other words, a vehicle for Army to do what it currently does, but better.

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<sup>1</sup> During the brief introductory session the proposed aims, outputs and outcomes of the working group were reported. The introductory session also provided an opportunity for workgroup norms to be established. These norms included: respect for other points of view, open and candid disclosure free of criticism, and leave rank out side the door. These norms were crucial for establishing an egalitarian rapport between working group participants, and between working group participants and DSTO facilitators.

### 3.2.2.2 *Presenting the literature*

As a way of generating discussion and building a shared understanding of learning organisation concepts, a summary of the key points of the literature review were presented to the workgroup (see Appendix C). The literature review aimed to describe and critique some of the ways in which the learning organisation, and some of the claims made about learning organisations are presented in the (academic, practitioner based, and defence) literature. In particular, the learning organisation literature review examined:

- Dominant meanings attributed to learning organisations.
- The key features of characteristics of learning organisations.
- The types of learning which are features of these organisations.
- How learning is facilitated in learning organisations.
- What types of behaviours, organisational structures and processes facilitate this learning.
- Who is responsible for this learning.
- Who are the teachers in learning organisations.

The literature review also examines the ways in which the arrival of the learning organisation can be linked to the historical and structural transformation of organisations over the past hundred or so years. The review also considers the role leaders play in creating learning environments, or cultures, where learning is able to occur among organisational members. Finally, the literature review endeavours to consider these issues in relation to the Army (i.e. what does all of this mean for Army?).

This session raised considerable debate and discussion regarding Army's current status. Is it already a learning organisation? Is it in the process of becoming one? The appropriateness of the term 'the Learning Organisation' as a descriptor for Army and its implication for current practice was also discussed. To this end, participants noted the need to strike a balance, or find the right mix, between extant learning processes and the more facilitative and generative approaches to learning highlighted in the literature review.

### 3.2.2.3 *Defining the ALO*

The Learning Organisation is a relatively new term to reflect a set of ideas which have been around for a long time – that is, successful adaptation to change and uncertainty is more likely to occur through the learning efforts of individuals and the organisation as a whole (West, 1994 cited in Reynolds and Ablett, 1998). The term has become a common phrase to describe a host of approaches to organisational development and activity, and reflects an interest in knowledge and learning by organisational and management theorists, practitioners, and consultants. A plethora of definitions of the Learning Organisation have emerged, each with their own particular focus (mainly within the private sector of corporations and big business rather than the public sector). The result of this proliferation of definitions is a degree of confusion over the term.

This session therefore presented an opportunity for participants to create a definition of a learning organisation that would resonate in an Army context. The creation of this definition entailed a deconstruction of a selection of well established definitions of the learning organisation provided within the literature, and reconfiguring their central components into a workable definition which would appeal to a variety of stakeholders. A more detailed description of this process is provided in the results section.

#### 3.2.2.4 *Characteristics of the ALO*

In defining the Learning Organisation authors identify salient characteristics of organisations which promote learning and enable change. Consequently, the Learning Organisation is often seen as being an organisational archetype characterised by the existence of certain internal conditions and proclivities which facilitate learning at individual, group and organisational levels, and enable transformation. These conditions and proclivities are often understood as being the necessary building blocks for constructing learning organisations.

Following the lead of the previous session, participants were asked to consider a list of major characteristics associated with learning organisations, in terms of their perceived relevance and importance to Army, and in the process, create a prioritised list of Army learning organisation characteristics. A more detailed description of this process is provided in the results section.

#### 3.2.2.5 *Army Learning Environment (ALE) document brief*

The discussion of the (ALE) concept paper (appendix D) outlined a number of issues in relation to:

- operationalising the ALE,
- the four dimensions of the ALE,
- learning loops and the ALE,
- doctrine development and the ALE (lessons linked to doctrine creation and promulgation), and
- leadership and executive management.

In this session workshop participants were invited to consider the extent to which Army Learning Organisation characteristics align with the ALE concept. In particular, participants were asked to take into account how ALO characteristics 'fit' within the four primary dimensions of the ALE: executive management; knowledge management; learning and assessment; and finally, information, communication and technology. Additionally, participants were asked to identify those stakeholders in the organisation who they believed would have the authority, or would be responsible for maintaining learning opportunities through their support of the ALO characteristics.



### 3.2.3 Main Activities – Day 2

#### 3.2.3.1 *Recap of Day 1 activities*

This session provides workshop participants with an opportunity to reflect on the ideas raised in the previous day's activities. Participants were re-introduced to the definitions and key characteristics shaped during syndicate activities, as these definitions and characteristics form the basis for the action and solution based activities proposed for Day Two. During this session participants were encouraged to seek clarification and pose questions to the rest of the group and facilitators alike. Seeking clarification and asking questions allowed participants to validate and develop their shared understanding of Army Learning Organisation characteristics.

#### 3.2.3.2 *Army initiatives relevant to the Army Learning Organisation*

During this session various learning organisation principles were put into practice. The group began to plan for the future by reflecting on initiatives, particularly those of the previous five years, considering the success or other wise of these initiatives, and keeping these factors in mind when considering how these contribute to the building of Adaptive Army, a Learning Organisation (See Appendix E).

Reflections centred on several seminal documents and initiatives produced by the Army:

- The Hardened and Networked Army initiative, 2003 focussed on the development of capability at all levels through individual, collective and organisational change. The initiative, though responding to changing strategic priorities and advancing technologies also noted "that realising the HNA will require cultural and educative development as well as organisational and equipment changes" (Australian Army, 2003).
- The related *Complex Warfighting* document (Australian Army, 2004) outlined Army's Future Land Operating Concept (FLOC) and introduced the notion of versatile, agile forces with 'orchestrated effects'. Notions of a devolved command philosophy and empowerment of junior officers also surface, highlighting a human centric approach.
- *Adaptive Campaigning* (Australian Army, 2006), the response to complex warfighting raises the issues of complexity, the adaptation cycle and the complex war as a 'competitive learning environment'. Here resilience and responsiveness join the lexicon.
- Building upon these issues and concepts the *I'm an Australian Soldier* (Australian Army, 2006a) initiative recognises the nature of the soldier who will deliver these advanced strategies and approaches envisaged in the documents. The message for each soldier 'everyday an opportunity for initiative'.

- The Army Learning Environment (ALE) concept paper *The Australian Army – a Learning Organisation* (Australian Army, 2007) was discussed in an earlier session and further progresses issues, indicating that Army “seeks to foster an adaptive culture by consolidating itself as a learning organisation” going on to outline the foundations and conditions necessary to achieve this outcome.
- In 2008, the Chief of Army presented *The Adaptive Army* (Australian Army, 2008) paper with a continuing theme of adaptability. More specifically he envisages an end state “when we have in place self sustaining processes to continually review and adapt Army objectives, structures and processes.”

The common thread through out this time frame - an Army’s ability to engender cultural preconditions and processes which enable it to change or adapt as a way of becoming more responsive to the changing environment, allowing personnel to demonstrate initiative, and allowing learning to be realised at individual and organisational levels.

These documents show a cumulative and evolutionary chain of thought which resonates with the notion of learner-centric organisations. In turn, participants viewed Army as constantly evolving and changing in line with the goals and objectives of these various papers. Interestingly those participants who had experiences of cultures of other Armies through their various overseas postings (or other opportunities such as visits, working with foreign national etc.) were particularly conscious of the impact of previous change initiatives on the Australian Army.

### 3.2.3.3 *Identification of enablers and inhibitors*

Drawing upon the prioritised list of Army Learning Organisation characteristics generated on the previous day, participants were asked to identify those factors which would allow or obstruct the realisation of chosen organisational characteristics. Through the identification of enablers and inhibitors, participants situated desired organisational characteristics within a diverse array of organisational contexts. This informed the development of action plans to assist with the implementation of these characteristics within the workplace/organisation.

### 3.2.3.4 *Implementation of ALO characteristics*

Building upon the session identified above, participants drafted implementation plans based on a prioritised list of enablers and inhibitors requiring action. In particular, syndicates were asked to consider the nature of factors or conditions that need to be in place for desired learning organisation characteristics to be realised in the Army. Some draft action plans took the form of recommendations or specific steps required to address identified inhibitors and enablers, so as to facilitate learning at individual, group and organisational levels.

### 3.2.3.5 *Questionnaire pilot and review*

Learning organisation researchers (Marsick and Watkins, 1996; Yang et al., 2004) have sought to measure learning (and its relevance to organisational performance) in learning organisations in accordance with the primary characteristics or dimensions of a learning

organisation. In these cases, researchers have employed Marsick and Watkins (1996) framework of the Learning Organisation for the deployment of the 'Dimensions of the Learning Organisation Questionnaire' (DLOQ). The seven dimensions of the learning organisations identified by Watkins and Marsick (1996) relate to an organisation's ability to:

- create continuous learning opportunities;
- promote dialogue and inquiry;
- promote collaboration and team learning;
- establish systems for capturing and sharing learning;
- empower people to create a collective vision;
- connect the organisation to its environment; and finally,
- provide strategic leadership for learning.

The strength of the framework provided by Marsick and Watkins (1996, 1999) is the attention it pays to the cultural underpinnings of learning within organisations, and the ability to situate these seven dimensions of learning within an individual, team, and organisational context.

One aspect of piloting the questionnaire had working group participants complete and provide feedback on an adaptation of Watkins and Marsick's (1999) 'Dimensions of the Learning Organisation Questionnaire',<sup>2</sup> with a view to creating a questionnaire that would later be employed across Army (the ALOQ). Excluding the demographic section, the questionnaire comprised sixty nine items concerning organisational practices, with participants invited to indicate the extent to which they perceive these practices occurring within Army by way of a six point Likert scale (See Appendix F). The participant information sheet (See Appendix F1) was also completed by workshop participants.

During the workshop, participants were introduced to some of the issues surrounding measurement of learning in organisations (See Appendix F2). They were then invited to provide feedback on the proposed questionnaire. Feedback pertained to:

- the efficacy of the measures employed,
- clarity of content,
- structure; as well as
- time taken to complete the questionnaire.

The results of the piloted questionnaire and associated feedback will be reported in the following section. This questionnaire will form a significant component of a long term research approach, designed to measure the learning climate of Army over two year cycles.

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<sup>2</sup> The DLOQ has primarily been designed to measure those learning environments found mainly in the private sector (corporations) and accordingly, its indicators use language specific to this domain. In particular, the performance measures formerly applied within the original version of the DLOQ were modified to suit Army practice. A forthcoming DSTO report will elaborate on this modification process.

### 3.2.3.6 *Back-brief for A/HCD-A*

After the culmination of working group activities, senior Army stakeholders/task sponsors and DSTO were given the opportunity to brief the A/HCD-A on the key findings and outputs derived from group activities.

### 3.2.3.7 *The closing address*

In the spirit of information sharing and forming, and communicating shared mental models, the A/HCD-A was invited to conclude the working group by way of closing remarks. Once again, the closing remarks presented an opportunity to consolidate the learning which had occurred during the working group, and validate the key observations made by work group participants.

To confirm Army's stated goal of becoming a learning organisation, the A/HCD-A indicated that the main outputs would be presented to the Chief of Army, during the following week with these outputs and associated actions subject to further review at the Army Learning Steering Group in May 2009 and later by the Chief of Army Senior Advisory Committee (CASAC).

## 3.3 Workshop methodology

The ALOW integrated learning organisation and action learning theory with the proposed workshop methodology, to provide a forum for sharing experiences, as well as identifying and solving work related problems. The ethos of the Learning Organisation, (Garvin et al., 2008; Senge, 1990) with its emphasis on systems thinking, reflection, creating a supportive learning environment, team learning, forming shared mental models and generating a shared vision informed the design of the workshop. Similar action learning principles of working in groups to learn from experience through reflection were also incorporated into the workshop design (Revans, 1980). Learning organisation and action learning principles included:

- ***Systems thinking:*** The workshop was structured to allow definitions of the learning organisation to be utilised as the building blocks for the generation of learning organisation characteristics, which in turn fed into the identification of enablers and inhibitors, and finally, the action plan phase. In this respect, the workshop was structured in such a way as to highlight the interconnectivity between planned activities, providing opportunities for participants to further situate the results of these activities into their own Army context. By employing a systems thinking approach, participants were encouraged to think from both a holistic and local perspective.
- ***Reflection:*** participants were encouraged to draw on past knowledge and experiences as illustrative examples of practice. Workshop participants were also encouraged to reflect on the synergies between activities through planned opportunities to 're-cap' events. Reflection provided the link between past actions and future actions.

- ***Creating a supportive learning environment:*** From the outset, workshop participants were invited to leave rank 'outside the room' and engage in honest, frank discussion, free of judgement. Participants were also encouraged to ask questions during presentations, and during group related discussions.
- ***Information sharing:*** By using their workplace and experience as the basis for learning, workshop participants were encouraged to share and compare ideas of learning at individual and organisational levels. Reporting to the whole of group allowed syndicates to receive feedback from other group members, enabling them to learn with and from each other.
- ***Team learning:*** For Senge, "teams, not individuals, are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations" (1990, p.10). Breaking the workshop into syndicate groups allowed members to collaboratively deconstruct, construct and reconstruct a given issue by raising questions and receiving feedback within the small group setting. Collective learning was achieved by encouraging syndicate groups to capture the essence of group discussions and report these to the whole group (workshop).
- ***Forming shared mental models:*** Sharing the stories, information and knowledge generated within the syndicate groups with others during whole of group discussions provided an opportunity for workshop members to analyse, reflect and consolidate the issues raised by syndicate groups. One of the goals of these discussions was the generation of a shared language and view of the Army Learning Organisation.
- ***Create a shared vision*** of the Army Learning Organisation: Deciding upon and creating a shared vision therefore requires participative openness, cooperation and commitment among all parties involved. This shared/mutually desirable vision guides people and the organisation through change. By working together in teams both workshop participants and facilitators are able to generate shared mental models and a shared vision of the Army Learning Organisation. Through the development of action plans, all workshop participants take part in setting, owning and implementing this joint vision.

The modified action learning cycle of planning (workshop design stage) → acting (facilitate workshop and observation) → reflecting (reflecting on the experiences of facilitation during workshop) → revising (adapting or modifying workshop plan as a result of emergent contingencies) also provided learning opportunities for workshop facilitators. In this respect, conducting the workshop could be viewed as a methodological experiment,<sup>3</sup> with the workshop activities and approach undergoing refinement after reflection, in readiness for subsequent stages of the workshop. The ultimate goal of this reflexive practice was to ensure the workshop met its stated aims and produced quality outcomes.

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<sup>3</sup> The term methodological experiment to describe research design, implementation and refinement has been used by James, P. (2005) 'Knowledge Asset Management: The Strategic Management and Knowledge Management Nexus' research thesis submitted to the Graduate College of Management, Southern Cross University, Australia, p. 178.

### 3.4 Workshop outcomes and expectations

The workshop comprised of a series of complementary activities designed to identify relevant learning organisation definition(s), characteristics, enablers and inhibitors of learning, and associated action plans. To this end the workshop aimed to deliver the following outcomes:

- An agreed definition of the ALO
- The articulation of ALO characteristics/guidelines
- The identification of enablers and inhibitors of learning in the Army
- In light of these enablers and inhibitors, the development of an action plan, or actions to assist with the development of the ALO
- Validation of the ALOQ.

The predetermined outcomes presented above closely align with the theoretical underpinnings of the learning organisation as identified in the literature, and reflect an attempt by the research team to complement the workshop content and outcomes with the existing inquiry undertaken by Army.<sup>4</sup> The workshop provided the forum for proposed outcomes and expectations to be contextualised and integrated within the 'lived world' of Army to ensure their relevance.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Defining the Army Learning Organisation

*Aim: Create an agreed definition of the Army Learning Organisation*

In order to devise an agreed definition of a learning organisation that would sit within an Army context, workshop participants and syndicate groups were invited to deconstruct several definitions of learning organisations presented in the literature (see Table 1 below).

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<sup>4</sup> Army has a considerable body of work to date which, to varying degrees, has relevance to individual and organisational learning (ALE, Optimal learning culture, defence attitude survey, Army Knowledge Domain (AKD) etc.).

Table 1: Definitions of the Learning Organisation

Author(s)	Definition
Senge (2000)	A learning organisation is one where: "people continually expand their capacity to create results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (3).
Watkins & Marsick (1993)	An organisation that 'learns continuously and transforms itself' (8).
DiBella (1995)	"the taking place of learning...changes the behaviour of the organisation itself" (287).
Marquandt & Reynolds (1994)	Learning organizations are those where attention is given to learning by the organisation system as a whole.
Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell (1991)	'an organisation that facilitates the learning of all of its members and continuously transforms itself in order to meet its strategic goals' (1).
O'Keeffe (2002)	Stores belief systems, memories of past events, frames of reference and values.
Marsick & Watkins (1996)	"...a learning organisation must capture, share, and use knowledge so its members can work together to change the way the organization responds to challenges. People must question the old, socially constructed and maintained ways of thinking. Learning must take place and be supported in teams and larger groups, where individuals can mutually create new knowledge. And the process must be continuous because becoming a learning organization is a never-ending journey' (4).
Garvin (1993)	'A learning organisation is an organisation skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights' (80).
Yeo (2006)	the collective learning of employees improves organisational performance.

These definitions were assessed by workshop participants according to the language used and tone implied within each definition, the clarity of the message contained within the definition, and the transferability of this message to other contexts. For many participants, the definition provided by (Garvin, 1993) struck a chord due to its succinctness and emphasis on knowledge creation and transfer and resultant modification of behaviour gained from new knowledge.

The deconstruction phase entailed breaking definitions down into key components, word, statements or phrases which resonated with participants (words, phrases, ideas which were meaningful in an Army context). Key words/phrases/ideas identified included:

- Continuous learning
- Transformation/adaptation as a result of learning
- Change or modification of behaviour as a result of learning
- Creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge

Additional terms proposed for consideration included:

- Tempo – learning and adapting at the right pace to meet challenges
- Raise, train and sustain
- Learning to learn
- Team and generative learning
- Sharing information
- Learning resulting in purposeful action
- Creating environments that promote learning
- Technology and resources (human, material resources and capital)
- The notion of an organic (systematically evolving) institution

From these key words/phrases and ideas the following four definitions for the ALO were proposed:

1. Adapting through learning in order to win the land battle
2. Adapts to the environment by continuous learning in order to improve Army's capacity to win the land battle
3. Army is an organisation skilled at continuously learning and adapting behaviour to reflect new knowledge to support its mission
4. Army has the people, processes and culture that enables it to learn, share and apply knowledge to meet its strategic goals

**Output: *Participants' preferred definition of the ALO***

*Army has the people, processes and culture that enable it to learn, share and apply knowledge to quickly meet Australia's strategic goals*

Discussions about definitions included considerations of whether there should be one conclusive definition which could be used in a holistic sense (i.e. representative of the entire Army), or whether there should be a few definitions which are more geared toward certain audiences. Thus, there was debate surrounding the need for a higher level definition which would be meaningful among the organisational groups that exist within Army, and a 'recruitment level,' or readily digestible definition which would be introduced to new personnel as part of the initial inculcation process (i.e. the first definition because it is succinct – to the point).



There was also contention over whether the land battle should be the ultimate focus for learning (see proposed definitions 1 and 2). While winning the land battle is identified in Army's mission statement, there was some discussion as to whether this should be the focus given Army's protection, humanitarian, and peacekeeping roles. To this end, 'land space' was viewed as being a more inclusive term which acknowledged the diversity of roles undertaken by Army.

Additional comments spoke of the need for the definition to reflect tempo, or an acknowledgement of the differing pace of learning and change and its application at different levels within the organisation (i.e. Section Command level – learn quickly and staff level – slow doctrinal change). There was discussion as to whether the definition required an 'end state' (which suggests a degree of finality, or stability) or should make reference to a 'steady state' (which connotes a more fluid or changeable state). The preferred definition adopts the latter stance, connoting a multidimensional view of learning in order to meet a variety of strategic goals, from a variety of stakeholder groups.

## **4.2 Establishing the characteristics of the ALO**

The generation of ALO characteristics entailed a multi-faceted approach requiring workshop participants to 'unpack' the learning organisation characteristics identified in the literature, and situate them within their lived experience, reconstructing them in ways which were meaningful to Army.

Firstly, participants were asked to consider a list of learning organisation characteristics as articulated within the literature in terms of key words, terms or ideas which struck a chord with their experiences of being in the Army. Syndicate groups were also asked to introduce alternative terms, words or ideas they felt were not captured in this list.

Secondly, participants were asked to consider these characteristics in terms of the extent to which they reflected current practice in the Army, and then consider them in relation to how they could look in the Army if it was a learning organisation (i.e. what would team learning look like in Army if it was a learning organisation).

Thirdly, participants were asked to condense, or reduce this list of characteristics by prioritising the learning organisation characteristics in terms of their perceived importance. Reducing the original list in this way ensured that only the 'big ticket' items would be considered for developing action plans.

Finally, participants were asked to consider those features of the current Army cultural and learning environment which would enable or inhibit the realisation of these characteristics in the workplace.

The results of these deliberations are highlighted below.

#### 4.2.1 Unpacking the characteristics

*Aim: Review and understand the learning organisation characteristics and the components identified in the literature*

Workshop participants were presented with a series of learning organisation characteristics (13 in total) derived from the learning organisation literature and were asked to consider the essential features of these characteristics in terms of terminology used and their perceived relevance to the Army domain. Participants were also asked to consider features of a learning organisation which they considered to be important but were missing from the original list.

#### **Original list of characteristics of learning organisations as identified in the literature**

- A supportive learning environment/climate
- Concrete learning processes and practices
- Leadership behaviour that provides reinforcement
- Empower people towards a collective vision
- Encourage collaboration and team learning
- Establish systems thinking
- Knowledge management – the capture and distribution of the individual and group’s knowledge (formal and informal mechanisms).
- Organisational learning<sup>5</sup>
- Personal mastery
- Shared mental models and values
- Evaluative/measurement plan
- Networked learning
- Strategic learning

#### **Additional characteristics raised by syndicate groups included:**

- Speed and aggression tempered by risk evaluation and aversion
- Linking individual and collective learning
- Exploiting and investing in technology to facilitate learning (i.e. blended and E-learning)
- Lifelong or continuous learning
- Focus on the learner
- Developing the instructor
- Striking a balance between ‘what to think’ and ‘how to think’

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<sup>5</sup> There is acknowledgement in the literature that the concepts organisational learning and learning organisation are closely interrelated. In recognition of this close relationship, Ortenblad (2004) notes that organisational learning can be viewed both as one aspect of the learning organisation, as well as being an idea in its own right. Central to the idea of organisational learning is the notion that organisations, along with individuals, can learn, and in the process, change and adapt in order to remain competitive and survive.

By collapsing and integrating the main themes contained within the original list of learning organisation characteristics with those of the list created by participants, the following key characteristics, or guidelines for the ALO (and accompanying descriptors) were produced.

**Output: List of key ALO characteristics and descriptors**

**Characteristics for the ALO (derived from the workshop)**

- Inculcate leadership behaviours at all levels that reinforce learning
- Establish robust learning processes and practices
- Generate and reflect on a shared vision and understanding
- Encourage collaboration and team learning
- Develop an appreciation of the broader implications of decisions and actions by applying a systems approach
- Establish and sustain the free flow of knowledge
  - *Note Post workshop CoA suggestion: establish & sustain the free flow of knowledge across the short, medium & long learning loops*
- Foster Professional Mastery
- Embrace evaluation and measurement
- Exploit informal and formal networks
- Influence Defence strategic learning

**Descriptors of characteristics as derived from workshop and literature**

- **Inculcate leadership behaviours at all levels that reinforce learning**

Originally, the characteristic 'leadership behaviour that provides reinforcement,' was changed so as to give more emphasis to the socially constituted, or learnt nature of leadership that occurs through social interaction and enculturation practices in Army. The vagueness surrounding the term 'providing reinforcement' was overcome by more succinctly linking the idea of learning with demonstrable leadership behaviours which manifest across Army irrespective of rank.

Individual and organisational levels of learning are often influenced through the behaviour of leaders. Leaders create supportive learning environments and promote learning by:

- Adopting a 'values based' rather than 'compliance based' style of leadership (i.e. practicing a mission command approach to leadership)
- Encouraging the learning efforts of others by:
  - Mentoring
  - Viewing mistake-making as being a part of the learning process
  - Encouraging responsible experimentation and risk taking to assist the development of decision making and critical thinking skills
- Demonstrating their own commitment to learning, and developing their communication skills to impart knowledge more succinctly and successfully
- Reinforcing the importance of knowledge transfer and reflection

- Creating a shared vision of the organisation among personnel
- **Establish robust learning processes and practices**

The original reference to 'concrete' learning processes and practices was changed due to the perceived ambiguity of the term. Participants noted that concrete could apply to 'solid,' 'fixed' or 'rigid' (and thus immutable) processes and practices, as well as more 'formal' learning opportunities provided by training and education programs. More significantly, participants noted the multi-layered nature of informal and formal learning processes and practices.

Learning organisations have processes, structures and practices in place to facilitate learning among organisational members. At the individual level, processes and practices include:

- Education programs (incorporating sound curriculum design, and delivery by qualified and dedicated instructors) and training regimes designed to provide learners with necessary Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes (KSA) and opportunities for development. Approaches to education and training need to be integrated to ensure seamless learning outcomes (systems approach to training and education)
- Observation and social networks to allow the transfer of tacit knowledge and experience.

At the group level, processes and practices include:

- The development of collective competencies for collective training, and team learning

At the organisational level, processes include such things as:

- Formal processes for the generation, collection, interpretation and dissemination of knowledge throughout Army

At the inter-organisational level, learning is facilitated through:

- Leveraging off the knowledge bases provided by external organisations such as academia and the private sector

➤ **Generate and reflect on a shared vision and understanding**

The third characteristic 'empower people toward a collective vision' was changed to incorporate the ideas of a shared vision and mental models (replaced by the term 'shared understanding'). Additionally, the notion of reflection was included to capture the fluid essence of this vision, as well as the contested nature of understanding (i.e. the ability to reflect on, and challenge where required, underlying assumptions governing practice).

A shared vision occurs when individual aspirational views of the organisation/ pictures of the future are aligned. This shared vision guides people and the organisation through change. Rather than being imposed on the organisation, the shared vision is cultivated and shaped by

organisational members, with leaders encouraging this process so as to generate a better 'cultural fit' (buy in/ownership).

➤ **Encourage collaboration and team learning**

This characteristic remained unchanged. Collaboration and team learning provide opportunities for the sharing of information and generation of knowledge between organisational members and others. Collaboration can occur within the organisation (i.e. between divisions, units, HQ's etc.) but also between Army and external agencies (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, DSTO, practitioners, Universities etc.). Team learning incorporates the idea of collaboration within teams, as members work on tasks, raise questions, receive feedback, develop collective competencies and make decisions as a group, with the learning ability of the group viewed as being superior to the learning ability of any individual.

➤ **Develop an appreciation of the broader implications of decisions and actions by applying a systems approach**

The notion of systems thinking created debate within the syndicate and working groups. On the one hand, systems thinking was articulated in ways which related to the adoption of a systematic approach (methodical or ordered planning) to the task at hand. On the other hand, systems thinking was equated with the idea of systems theory – which is concerned with the relationships between parts of a system (i.e. an organisation) which contribute to the functioning of the whole, or working in concert to produce a result. Additionally, others described systems thinking as an awareness of the interconnectivity between parts of an organisation and the (sometimes indiscernible) flow-on effects of actions which could be felt across the organisation. The descriptor above attempts to amalgamate these concerns.

Despite the degree of confusion over the term, all who synthesised the principles agreed that systems thinking underpins the ALO and informs concepts already articulated by Army such as Adaptive Army, Adaptive Campaigning, and learning loops. Doctrine is also seen as a vehicle for infusing systems thinking. Systems thinking is the ability to see the big picture. It provides a conceptual framework which encourages organisational members to see the relationships and interdependencies between many parts, recognise the patterns in organisational life, and start to identify processes rather than (linear) distinct cause and effect relationships. Through this awareness, people begin to gain an appreciation for the consequences of their actions on other parts of the system (Senge, 1990). Better access to other's information can facilitate this appreciation for the interconnectivity between parts of the organisation. Systems thinking allows learning by highlighting the relationship between decision making, actions, and their consequences, informing subsequent action.

➤ **Establish and sustain the free flow of knowledge**

The characteristic highlighted above pertains to the adoption of sound knowledge management practices. The focus here is on information capture and dissemination, and associated knowledge flows (both tacit and codified), whether through formal or informal

mechanisms. Given Army's interest in the capture and transfer of knowledge across the learning loops, the notion of knowledge creation was omitted from this characteristic.

In the ALO, it is important that all members know what type of knowledge is held in Army. Moreover it is important not only to know what knowledge exists in an organisation, but more significantly, that this knowledge can be accessed and used in an efficient and timely manner. This knowledge can be an individual possession and an organisational asset. When individual learning and knowledge is embedded into organisational systems and structures, the organisation can learn at the collective learning level. Mechanisms for the free flow of knowledge and learning identified by work group participants included:

- Policies and processes in place to facilitate free flow of knowledge
- Systems and processes for the capture, analysis, storing and distribution of knowledge which enable the flow of knowledge throughout an organisation and facilitate individual learning
- Social networks
- Teamwork
- Technical infrastructure (i.e. more access points etc.)

➤ **Foster Professional Mastery**

Similar to its counterpart, personal mastery, professional mastery entails honing skills and competencies to reach a high level of proficiency. In turn, these skills need to be matched by increased self awareness (achieved through reflection) and thoughtful application of knowledge derived from personal experience and formal training in changing contexts.

Mechanisms for fostering professional mastery identified by working group participants included:

- All Corps training
- Alignment between job specific competencies, roles and knowledge
- Continuous or lifelong approaches to learning and self development
- High quality educators who can facilitate learning in others

➤ **Embrace evaluation and measurement**

'Embracing' evaluation and measurement pertains to the idea of supporting efforts to measure performance in principle and practice, whether through established internal mechanisms, or through the approaches adopted by external agencies like DSTO. Importantly, this evaluation and measurement includes organisational performance.

Evaluation and measurement forms an important part of mapping the learning that is going on in organisations. Within the corporate sector, measurement and evaluation plans have been employed to determine the effect of learning on financial performance. More recently, attention has turned to evaluating learning climates of organisations, identifying those conditions or cultural antecedents which enable learning to occur at individual, group and organisational levels. Whatever the case, having a measurement plan enables organisations to

confirm if their learning strategies and proposed changes are producing desired outcomes (changes in performance).

➤ **Exploit informal and formal networks**

The original learning organisation characteristic of 'networked' learning was expanded so as to more explicitly acknowledge the extent to which both formal and informal (social) networks facilitate learning in the Army.

Boundaries associated with tribalism and personal desires to hoard knowledge can be overcome by encouraging personnel to exchange information across an organisation (between divisions, units or departments). Networks are effectively teams operating inside and around the organisation, and present opportunities for combining existing knowledge and creating new knowledge. These networks operate under conditions of trust and reciprocity.

➤ **Influence Defence strategic learning**

This guideline remained unchanged from the original characteristic presented in the literature. Learning is a deliberate, conscious part of strategy in learning organisations. In this sense, policies and strategies are developed as part of a learning process which incorporates research and review. The notion of strategic learning linked across a number of previous discussions. Participants viewed the long learning loop included in the Army Lessons process as one aspect of strategic learning allowing a focus on strategically important issues. Knowledge creation, acquisition and sharing from a strategic perspective, incorporates opportunities to consider issues from a broad base perspective, linking future strategic approaches to today's practical issues and challenges.

### **General observations**

Questions from the floor prompted discussion on the current challenges of organisational and cultural change. It was suggested that to address the challenges of the Adaptive Army restructure, Army should ideally have the ALO definitions and principles in place to support and facilitate the change. Participants noted that Army's disparate organisational units, and accompanying cultural diversity, produce an array of interpretations and applications of change initiatives. The understanding that a bureaucratic hierarchy might try to control this change to achieve consistency was at odds with the notion of the learning organisation and an adaptive army. Given these challenges, DAKM encouraged the group to appreciate the need to engender a set of enduring principles. These principles will form foundations or building blocks to support future organisational change in Army.

It is worth noting that the two primary omissions from the set of ten ALO characteristics reported here concerned organisational learning and the generation of a supportive learning environment/climate. These two items were not omitted because they were perceived to be unimportant. On the contrary, the ten guidelines highlighted above were seen as being necessary antecedents, or prerequisites, for the generation of supportive learning climates and organisational learning.

It is also worth noting that a working group participant queried the decision by the research team to have participants define the ALO, prior to considering the characteristics of this type of organisation - the point here of course being that only when the characteristics have been determined can you begin to consider a definition, as these characteristics will make up the content of the definition. The decision to start with definition construction rather than the determination of characteristics was based on the following assumptions:

- Considering a definition of the Army Learning organisation would get participants to start to think about (imagine or visualise) what this type of organisation could look like, and in relation to this,
- In the act of defining the Army Learning Organisation, you invariably begin to consider its components, or those sets of ideas or behaviours you would like to manifest within such an organisation.

In reality, either (a top down or bottom up) approach is workable. Indeed, the working group adopted a 'give and take' or 'to and fro' approach to problem identification and solving. In this sense, the workshop adopted an iterative approach to problem solving. Here, participants were encouraged to revisit and adjust their previously held views according to the generation of new knowledge, including their initial deliberations over organisational definitions and characteristics.

### 4.3 'As Is' and 'To Be' characteristics of the Army Learning Organisation

***Aim: Identify those characteristic which are currently a feature of Army practice, and how these characteristics would manifest in the Army learning Organisation.***

Syndicate group participants were asked to reflect on the significance of learning organisation characteristics for Army. In particular, syndicate groups were asked to consider whether these characteristics were a feature of current practice (AS IS context) as well as how these characteristics would look in an ALO (COULD/TO BE context). Considering the current and desired ALO state in this manner allowed participants to identify gaps in current practice. This exercise allowed workshop participants to articulate their perception of the extant learning climate in Army, and further served as a precursor to the development of a prioritised list of ALO characteristics requiring actions for their realisation.

Learning organisation characteristics covered by syndicate groups included:

- Creating supportive learning environments
- Leadership behaviour that provides reinforcement
- Systems thinking
- Concrete learning processes and practices
- Having systems, processes and cultures in place to support organisational learning
- Personal mastery
- Knowledge management
- Networked learning



- Evaluation/measurement plan
- Shared mental models
- Empower people toward a collective vision
- Strategic learning

#### 4.3.1 Creating supportive learning environments

##### 'As Is' learning environment

The range of learning environments identified by participants was quite broad. For example, promotion courses, formal training courses, mission specific courses, and on the job training were identified as areas where learning occurred. In general, there was a perception among workshop participants that the current learning environment was not entirely supportive. This lack of support was attributed to:

- Information not being sent out to the right people at the right time
- Resource constraints, primarily time restrictions which impacted on the delivery of course content

A syndicate group expressed the view that individual learning courses and training for operations were well resourced. In contrast, this level of resourcing did not flow into the workplace (barracks) or for collective training.

##### 'Could Be' learning environment

The preferred learning environment expressed by workshop participants was one where:

- People can access information and share knowledge when and where required
- Better inter and intra-organisational interactions and collaboration are possible
- Adequate resources (including time to learn, reflect, assimilate information) are provided
- The practical application of knowledge; including opportunities to experiment, take calculated risks, and learn from mistakes, are available

#### 4.3.2 Leadership behaviour that provides reinforcement

Leadership was one of the most consistently addressed topics in syndicate and whole of group discussions. Leadership, the function of leadership in the Army, the role of leaders in shaping learning environments, and those factors which either promoted or constrained leadership behaviour were some of the issues generated and discussed by syndicate groups.

##### 'As Is' leadership behaviour

Participants were generally positive about current leadership behaviour, but did identify some areas for continuing improvement. Participants noted that:

- There are lots of examples of good leadership in the Army, and that leaders are appropriately selected, well trained and prepared for leadership roles
- Most senior soldiers are good oral and written communicators
- Leadership was moving more away from compliance based to values based style, but needed to move further
- Mission command is an ideal form of leadership but requires appropriate balance between competency, authority, and responsibility
- There were systematic process in place to prepare leaders, but these processes were often personality driven in application
- Posting cycles could result in:
  - commanders making changes even to the detriment of effective processes and functions
  - commanders being reluctant to make and admit to 'stuff ups'
  - a lack of opportunities for commanders to see their good ideas to fruition

Some of the perceived negative features of leadership included:

- A punishment based system
- Competitiveness
- A risk averse culture impacting upon displays of initiative
- A lack of mentoring
- Leadership being weighted in favour of academic excellence rather than practicable abilities to lead soldiers

#### 'Could Be' leadership behaviour

While participants were for the most part complimentary in their discussion concerning extant leadership behaviours, some suggestions were made as to how leadership behaviours might be enhanced within the ALO. These suggestions included:

- Leaders enabling disciplined initiative and empowerment through the execution of mission command
- Mentoring becoming a more prominent feature of leadership
- Leaders showing a greater tolerance of errors, with mistake making and asking questions viewed as being acceptable mechanisms for learning
- Introducing communications skills earlier so that younger ranks can improve written and verbal communication skills

A syndicate group discussed the risk management aspects of Army leadership in relation to a perceived mismatch between responsibility, capability and authority (they acknowledged Pigeau's and McCann's (2006) C2 model of thinking which includes the human dimension). While not overtly discussed, the assumption was that this mismatch came from authority being inappropriately delegated upwards (for example, live fire approval going to the 2 star level).

There was also discussion about the implementation of mission command, or more specifically, as it could or should be implemented, in comparison to the ways in which it is

currently practiced. A syndicate recognised that mission command is the ideal form of leadership, and in fact, the term conveyed more than just leadership. Drawing upon the model highlighted above, it was noted that mission command required the appropriate balance between authority, responsibility and competency. The view was expressed that leaders are given responsibility, but often not the sufficient authority to act.

### 4.3.3 Systems thinking

Systems thinking was primarily understood by workshop participants to concern issues surrounding 'inter-relatedness' between disparate parts of Army, and in relation to this, increased awareness and shared understanding of the roles and duties of others in the organisation.

#### 'As Is' systems thinking

The current view of systems thinking in the Army was expressed in the following ways:

- The existence of 'stovepipes' or 'silos of competence' within Army. Consequently, little knowledge of how other parts of the organisation operate (i.e. each part having its own discrete sets of internal mechanisms and processes)
- Little understanding of worlds outside own 'empire' (e.g. Land Command and Training Command have own systems, yet need to know how each other works in order to create Forces Command)
- Little awareness of the ways in which other organisations operate in the 'external' world (lack of inter-organisational awareness)
- Having a well documented process for sharing and accessing information about others, but a lack of co-ordination and review of these processes (information systems)
- Processes are recognised as being outcome-focussed rather than process-focussed

#### 'Could Be' systems thinking

By implication, the ALO was viewed as being a place where:

- Better accessibility to other's information would facilitate shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, duties and synergies
- The ALE would promote a better understanding of processes, and the interrelationships/interdependencies between parts of the organisation
- There would be a better understanding/visibility of the whole system and its interactions
- The organisation would not only be outcome focussed but would become more focussed on appropriate processes and interactions

### 4.3.4 Concrete learning processes and practices

The term 'concrete' raised some debate among workshop participants. For some, the term concrete conveyed a sense of 'fixed' or immutable practices. While for others concrete was

understood as pertaining to those formal learning processes and practices which were associated with training and education programs.

#### 'As Is' learning processes and practices

Current learning processes and practices were characterised as:

- Strong at an individual level - not as strong at an organisational or collective level
- Not being sufficiently reinforced at the unit level
- Lacking a systems approach to training
- Yet to establish collective competencies
- Not incorporating a satisfactory balance between training and education

#### 'Could Be' learning processes and practices

Within the ALO, learning processes and practices were understood as entailing:

- A systems approach to learning
- Collective competencies for collective training
- A better balance between training and education
- Explicit steps when it comes to planning learning processes and practices

### 4.3.5 Organisational learning

Within the literature, organisational learning is the method or vehicle for achieving the learning organisation. Organisational learning is the process whereby individual learning becomes embedded in organisational structures and processes so the organisation as a whole benefits and learns.

#### 'As Is' organisational learning

The current organisational learning culture was understood as incorporating information sharing and associated knowledge management practices, and having appropriate policies and technological support to facilitate these practices. The extant organisational learning climate was observable where:

- Learning was viewed as being personality driven rather than doctrinally driven
- Sound process and policies were in place to facilitate organisational learning (in terms of capturing and storing information) but these processes and policies were not consistently followed
- Collecting and storing information was a strong point, but abilities to share this information across the organisation were lacking
- Decision making was subject to a degree of 'inertia' due to having to push decisions through too many layers within the organisation
- Follow up or monitoring (i.e. quick acquisition of kit without necessarily providing ongoing monitoring of its training implications) practices were not fully considered

### 'Could Be' organisational learning

Organisational learning in the ALO by contrast was viewed as having:

- Better application of mission command (guidance and task)
- Allocation of resources for the validation of training
- Validation of Training Management Package (TMP) - Training Command Establishments (TCE's)
- Better dissemination of information (right people at the right time, right lessons in the right format)
- Better/more access points to allow the distribution of information
- The ability to access information on the secret system
- Information Communication Technology enabled learning (through better use of the internet)
- Ongoing red tape reduction

### 4.3.6 Personal mastery

For the most part, the organisation's ability to foster the development of personal mastery through the appropriate balance of knowledge creation, skill and attitude attainment, as well as personal development was viewed in a positive light.

### 'As Is' Personal Mastery

The development of personal mastery is currently being promoted through:

- 'Good' all corps training (i.e. All Corps Officer Training ACOT and All Corps Soldier Training Continuum ACSTC)
- Army finding the right fit between job specific competencies to allow soldiers to perform in their designated trade/skill/appointment
- Allocating resources for professional honing of knowledge, skills and attitudes linked to life learning (personal and directed)

### 'Could be' Personal Mastery

The Army learning Organisation would maintain the activities mentioned above, but would also be a place where:

- Soldiers should not "have to" attain degree qualifications
- Army culture would allow for frank and honest reporting

### 4.3.7 Knowledge management

Knowledge management includes among other things capturing, organising and facilitating the sharing of knowledge. Knowledge management is therefore vital for leveraging existing knowledge and converting new knowledge into organisational learning through the KM cycle

of collecting, storing, analysing, accessing and disseminating knowledge. For the most part, participants tended to focus on the deployment and maintenance ('hard' aspects) of technological infrastructures which support information sharing when discussing current and future knowledge management landscapes. The social/human or 'soft' side of knowledge management was implied through comments regarding the provision of feedback and communication.

#### 'As Is' Knowledge Management

Current knowledge management approaches were characterised as being:

- Not as good as they could be and led by organisations/systems such as Centre for Army Lessons (CAL) and the Australia Defence Force Activities Analysis Database System (ADFAADS)

And where:

- HOTO docs are mandated
- Knowledge ownership is held in documentation, functional COMD, Training Authorities (TA), and HCD-A
- Information sharing is facilitated through the use of Ops, doctrine and training
- Capability development is good
- Other network nodes are available
- Knowledge collection is good, however there needs to be better synthesis/fusing/ dissemination and feedback (close the loop)

#### 'Could be' Knowledge Management

Within the Army learning Organisation model, knowledge management practices were also seen as incorporating:

- Better handover processes required to allow knowledge to be shared
- A degree of training for soldiers on how and when to give feedback, and progress information into lessons learned
- Better advertising and promotion of CAL
- Better communication of Handover/Takeover (HOTO) documents throughout Army

#### 4.3.8 Networked learning

Through encouraging the internal exchange of information across an organisation (between internal units, divisions or departments) and between organisations, networked learning can occur. Networked learning is therefore reliant upon building strong interpersonal relationships, team work and systems thinking among organisational members, as well as having ICT support to facilitate this process.

### 'As Is' Networked Learning

Participants primarily equated networked learning with ICT networks rather than social networks which required face to face interaction for their maintenance. When social networking was acknowledged, these networks were mediated or supported through ICT support (distributed communities of practice, or online communities) such as the provision of chat rooms, email and campus learning which allowed codified knowledge to be shared. In this respect, networked learning was therefore made possible through such things as:

- Intranet – Army Doctrine Electronic Library (ADEL) etc.
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Tactics Techniques and Procedures (TTPs)
- HQ/unit web pages providing specialised information
- The availability of email to some units to facilitate information transfer
- Informal social networks

### 'Could be' Networked Learning

In the Army Learning Organisation, networked learning was viewed as entailing:

- An improved campus learning system
- The synchronisation of learning systems into one system (a one-stop shop)
- The introduction of chat rooms to facilitate better communication availability
- Creating one dedicated website that shows all available online learning options

#### 4.3.9 Evaluation and measurement

Evaluation and measurement forms an important part of mapping the learning that is going on in organisations. Within the corporate sector, measurement and evaluation plans have been employed to determine the effect of learning on financial performance. More recently, attention has turned to evaluating learning climates of organisations, identifying those conditions or cultural antecedents which enable learning to occur at individual, group and organisational levels. Whatever the case, having a measurement plan enables organisations to confirm if their learning strategies and proposed changes are producing desired outcomes (changes in performance).

### 'As Is' Evaluative/Measurement Plan

Group discussions revealed that the performance and learning of personnel were subject to review and evaluation. This evaluation took the form of:

- Individual or group evaluation of learning that occurs through course attendance and participation.
- Evaluative and survey instruments currently used by Army
  - After Action Review (AAR)
  - Post Activity Report/Post Operation's report (PAR/POR)
  - Reports On Defective or Unsatisfactory Materiel (RODUM)

- Technical Regulatory Authorities (TRA)
- Army Balanced Scorecard (organisational level evaluation)
- Defence Attitude Survey (organisational level evaluation)

#### 'Could be' Evaluative/Measurement Plan

Participants believed that evaluation processes in the ALO would further comprise of:

- Better evaluation techniques across Army including AAR, PAR etc.
- More use of publications and RODUMs
- Feedback on the feedback – soldiers and officers often complete feedback on an activity but there is no evidence that it has been accepted (ongoing review process)

#### 4.3.10 Empower people toward a collective vision

For Senge (1990), collective visions are the shared 'pictures of the future' that engender commitment rather than compliance. Accordingly, in learning organisations the creation of a shared or collective vision is facilitated by leaders, who encourage organisational members to shape and own this vision. Thus, the creation of a shared vision is determined by top down and bottom up processes.

#### 'As Is' Empower people toward a collective vision

Participants noted that currently the collective vision is:

- Often a top down directive – an opportunity for the divisional level to form/influence the vision
  - However this vision is open to future change if it does not present the right 'cultural fit'

As a top down driven venture, some participants noted the potential for the vision to not resonate with those less senior personnel who are supposed to embody this vision through their behaviour.

#### 'Could be' Empower people toward a collective vision

In comparison to the top down, or 'directive view' of vision articulated above, participants considered the collective vision in the ALO as being 'collective' in terms of a shared view, but also in terms of all organisational members playing a role in shaping and sustaining this vision. Here, the collective vision was understood as incorporating:

- The need to find the balance between the collective view and the directive view
- Clear communication of the vision, and encouraging 'buy in' and 'ownership' so that the vision can be sustained
- The idea of mission command (power of decisions)



#### 4.3.11 Shared mental models

Mental models are the underlying assumptions and ideas of how an organisation looks and its function, which informs action. The goal in learning organisations is to create shared mental models. One mechanism for achieving shared mental models is team learning.

##### 'As Is' Shared mental Models

Workshop participants acknowledged the importance of social interaction and culture in shaping and sharing mental models. In particular, participants noted how mental models become shared through:

- Recruitment processes – such as Day 1 at ARTC.
- Demonstrating, codifying and upholding organisational values like courage, initiative, and teamwork
- Maintaining a sense of community or Corps support

##### 'Could be' Shared Mental Models

In terms of the 'could be,' or imagined view of shared mental models in the ALO, participants identified the following factors as precipitating the generation of shared mental models:

- Policy which is consistent with, and enables the demonstration of organisational values such as courage, initiative, and teamwork
- A culture of knowledge sharing
- A common baseline of effective role modelling and leadership

#### 4.3.12 Strategic learning

Learning and strategy are closely integrated in learning organisations. In this respect, policy and strategy comprise part of a learning process which includes research, application and review.

Workshop participants saw strategic learning occurring in the following inter-connected ways:

- As strategy development and modification derived from learning
- As the timely insertion of lessons within learning loops

A syndicate group for example, noted how Army currently influences and shapes long-loop learning by driving "upwards" into the Joint and combined services domain, and by incorporating other agencies input. At the ADF level (4 star), the CDF is shaped by Army's requirements, and others within this level. There was general agreement among workshop participants that in terms of strategic learning, this level is doing what it needs to do. Thus, there wasn't any significant difference between "as is" and "could be" scenarios.

### Summary of As Is/ To Be exercise

Workshop participants recognised the interconnectedness of many learning organisation characteristics (for example leadership, learning environment and team learning were viewed as being connected). The complex interactions of these characteristics present a range of challenges in implementing and realising the Adaptive Army requirements. Interventions designed to improve organisational effectiveness and outcomes in one area are constantly confronted with parallel processes which are being implemented and adapted to meet the requirements of the specific environments in other areas. Therefore, factors that enable and inhibit one characteristic are likely to affect others. There was agreement among participants that the specific context of each characteristic will determine whether it can be viewed as enabling or inhibiting learning. For example, team learning or information sharing within training institutions may be interpreted as collusion or plagiarism, and as such frowned upon. Yet, the same behaviour (information sharing) within a staff position, for example, copying a previously completed piece of work may be deemed a useful and appropriate method of team learning. Due to the contextual and 'interconnected' nature of characteristics, participants acknowledged that "one size does not fit all" when it comes to building a learning organisation, one must be constantly vigilant to other initiatives arising around actions.

#### 4.4 Prioritisation of Army learning organisation characteristics

*Aim: The nomination of characteristics from which to consider enablers and inhibitors of learning.*

Syndicates were asked to undertake a simple voting process to determine their top five Army Learning Organisation characteristics. This process entailed each group participant numerically ranking each characteristic from highest to lowest, with the characteristic receiving the lowest aggregated score (i.e. a supportive learning environment) being viewed as being the most important/highest priority.

Aggregation of the four syndicate groups lists resulted in the following prioritisation list of characteristics:

##### **Major items (appearing at the top or near the top of all lists)**

- A supportive learning environment/climate
- Leadership behaviour that provides reinforcement

##### **Secondary items (appearing in 3 of the 4 lists)**

- Concrete learning processes and practices
- Knowledge management

##### **Other items (appearing in 2 lists)**

- Establish systems thinking
- Evaluative/measurement plan
- Personal mastery
- Organisational learning

- Team Learning\*

The leadership and supporting learning environment characteristics were clearly considered by all groups as prominent characteristics worthy of additional attention. Leadership and a supportive learning environment are mutually sustaining ideas – with leaders shaping learning environments or climates, and in turn being shaped by these environments. Similarly, knowledge management can be viewed as a mechanism for facilitating organisational learning, with approaches to individual and organisational learning being shaped by input derived from an evaluative/measurement plan. In turn, in combination with concrete learning processes and practices, team learning and leadership can be viewed as mechanisms for developing personal mastery.

Only two syndicate groups considered organisational learning (albeit in a minor way) as being a priority when building a learning organisation. This is an interesting outcome given the centrality organisational learning plays in the creation and functioning of learning organisations. While individual learning is an important component of an organisation's learning capability, mechanisms which facilitate organisational learning are crucial for enabling learning at the collective level to occur. These mechanisms allow individual learning to become organisational in character, transforming individual learning into an organisational asset. This result can be explained in part by the scope of breadth of the characteristic, and accompanying levels of agency (including authority and autonomy) to intervene or produce change. It could be that participants prioritised those characteristics which they felt they could more easily shape or to make the biggest contribution through their actions, and more significantly, keep track of through existing indicators of performance. In this sense, organisational learning presents a challenge insofar as it is reliant upon a series of mutually sustaining practices, relationships and processes, which occur both within and between disparate elements of the organisation, requiring a sophisticated degree of coordination and cooperation to occur.

More significantly, in order to gauge just how well an organisation learns (in an intentional rather than happenstance manner), there needs to be mechanisms in place to effectively monitor/evaluate learning at an organisational level. Such considerations may make the idea of tackling organisational learning as a somewhat overwhelming prospect, particularly when plans made to increase organisational learning capacities may not come to fruition until years after their implementation. This is why it is important to 'think small about big things.' Another possible explanation is that workshop participants may have a priori knowledge of what organisational learning entails, but limited experience of seeing it in action, and as such it remains an abstract idea which is hard to pin down in a practical way. Alternatively, workshop participants may have felt that organisational learning practices within their respective workplaces were effective and did not warrant extra attention.

While it is important to identify key characteristics for the development of action plans to facilitate organisational change, it is also important to recognise the synergies of these key characteristics with others (by applying systems thinking), and thus recognise the possible residual or flow on effects of proposed changes into other domains of learning. Although one

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\* Team learning appeared in one list.

characteristic may be ranked above another, the links between them mean that neither can be considered in isolation or as independently more important than another. This ranking exercise was conducted purely to gain an appreciation of the common priorities of the syndicates, with leadership and a supportive learning environment ranked highly across all syndicates.

#### 4.5 ALO characteristics: enablers and inhibitors

***Aim: the identification of enablers and inhibitors of learning which will allow or prevent the realisation of Army Learning Organisation characteristics***

Enablers and inhibitors (understood as either supporting or thwarting the realisation of Army Learning Organisation characteristics within the workplace) were viewed as having structural (i.e. posting cycles, training and education programs), social (i.e. networks, communication/interaction), cultural (i.e. behavioural norms and organisational values) and material (i.e. physical infrastructures and resources) underpinnings. There was also acknowledgement among group participants of the 'Janus like' quality of these enablers and inhibitors - or in other words, the extent to which the same factors (such as leadership for example) can either inhibit or enable learning, depending on how they are manifested in the context.

***Output: List of enablers and inhibitors for each key characteristic***

##### 4.5.1 A supportive learning environment/culture

Enablers of supportive learning environments within the Army learning organisations identified by syndicate groups included the following:

- Doctrine which allows instructors to do what they do
- Medium to Long learning loops codified in the form of doctrine (i.e. AAR, instructor handbooks, CAL products)
- Training in accordance with doctrine
- Systems approach to training and education (analyse need, evaluate and improve). This systems approach enables the integration of training and education into a seamless facilitator of learning.
- Leadership
  - which encourages trust/ communication, freedom of action
  - Mission Command (delegated authority)
  - Policy
- Defence Assisted Study Scheme (DASS)
- Assessment - enables learning in a training context
- More focus on learners and developing instructors
- Quality professional educators e.g. not just Royal Australian Army Education Corps (RAAEC) but Training Development Officers (TDO), Senior Range Instructors (SRI) and Commanders/specialists - producing skilled facilitators, not just trainers
- Having facilitation skills, not only in TC-A, but also in the workplace (i.e. commanders facilitating learning)

- Chief Information Officer Group (CIOG) providing ICT infrastructure to support learning and information sharing (i.e. global remote access, one time data entry, universal processes)
- Appropriate resources for learning - Wargaming and purpose built buildings, "Classroom 21," and E-learning
- Culture where students want to learn, leaders are learners and encourage learning in others
- Culture which supports time off for study
- Culture which encourages the view of mistakes as learning opportunities and empowers individuals
- A learning environment where people can be open and share ideas, speak their mind

The factors which could inhibit the creation of a supportive learning environment/climate identified by syndicate groups included:

- Directorate of Officer Career Management/Soldier Career Management Agency (DOCM/SCMA) - a culture of selection which does not support the selection of dedicated instructors (fill in holes instead).
- Career model - command is seen as the pinnacle, a way of moving up the ranks, consequently posting to training institutions is not seen as prestigious
- A career management system that does not have the capacity to accurately match current and future training needs of personnel - have the technology to identify people with training needs, but don't apply it in the training selection process.
- Disconnect between policy/TMP and person (their opinion/experience)
- Not having a focus on the learner
- Focus on generalists rather than specialists
  - specialists who are available to assist are under utilised
- Lack of resources (financial and time)
  - Time constraints - can't fit everything into time available (i.e. recruitment training).
  - Limited funding for ICT resources
  - Awareness of learning opportunities is limited - not knowing what resources/learning is available out there
- Posting cycles
  - Knowledge drain - consistent shifting and churn of staff
  - Change for change's sake - as a reflection of promotion criteria (need to be seen as making an impact within the posting cycle) which leads to consistent change.
  - The change over time and learning the position (i.e. only effective for 12 months out of the 2 years - 6 months learning, 12 months performing, last 6 months leading into next position).
- Recruitment and retention issues undermining all of the above

From the enablers and inhibitors identified above, a supportive learning environment was characterised as one which incorporated quick loops as part of the deployment cycle - allowing the speedy integration of lessons into operations/training, and doctrine/policy,

thereby providing input into medium term loops. In comparison to the barracks environment, participants noted that operations were better placed to support effective learning due to being better resourced and containing more focussed activity. Within the barracks environment, learning opportunities diminished due to resourcing issues, and a lack of time for reflection. More effective delivery of knowledge was seen as providing more time for reflection.

Supportive learning environments were also spoken of in terms of 'empowering and motivating learners' – environments where it is 'safe' to make mistakes as mistake making is viewed as being a learning opportunity, and where experimentation and calculated risk taking is encouraged. To this end, cultural and structural enablers included having established processes in place to identify quality instructors and leaders, and value their contribution as facilitators of learning. The significance of leaders as enablers and inhibitors of learning is examined further below.

#### 4.5.2 Leadership behaviour that provides reinforcement

Enablers and inhibitors of leadership behaviour highlighted the extent to which products such as policy, doctrine, and training, and organisational culture shaped leaders' abilities to learn and facilitate the learning of others. Those factors which enabled leaders to facilitate learning in others included:

- Leaders who are flexible and adaptive – willing to accept and drive change
- Leaders who communicate with simplicity – non-complicated writing to make an impact at all ranks and levels.
- In relation to the point above, leaders who are strategic in their communication through such things as:
  - Order of the day
  - Articulation of strategic plans
- Well educated leaders who demonstrate organisational values
- Leaders who have life learning experiences (training, staff, operational)
- Mentoring and training mentors
- Recognition of the important role of mid level champions
- Governance which focuses on values based/ principles based behaviours, rather than being compliance based
- Positive reinforcement of policies to reinforce leadership (tendency to focus on negatives when stressing the importance of leadership)
  - Policy environment incorporating induction and instructor training
- Rewarding and empowering leaders at all levels of the organisation so that they can reward and recognise the efforts of others
  - Reward systems that recognise the values we espouse (such as loyalty) are appropriate
- Growing a culture where leaders can accept risks as part of learning process
- A culture which views mistake making as being a learning opportunity rather than adopting a punitive response to mistakes
- An open culture which allows leaders to report up, down and horizontally

- Whole of Army approach to leadership that encompasses the selflessness and confidence of previous role models

Factors perceived as inhibiting leaders' abilities to facilitate learning included:

- Lack of confidence and empowerment of leaders to recognise/reward efforts of others
- Not having a culture of reward which recognises the facilitation of learning by leaders
- Performance punishment
- Not recognising/rewarding mentoring
- Don't train mentors and cultural cringe when it comes to mentoring
- Personnel who are not encouraged to reflect on own performance, and having evaluation processes which do not provide mechanism for self reflection/evaluation
- Self interest and professional mastery which equates with arrogance
- Disbanding the head of corps (provided expertise and support to junior leaders)
- Culture of bureaucracy and risk aversion, and policy which is restrictive and prescriptive rather than values based
- Tendency for leaders to communicate mixed messages – ask for one thing and then expect more than they have requested.
- Poor connectivity with the lower ranks and lack of awareness of coal face issues and attitudes
- Balance between values learnt through training and education, and learning derived from experience (within the unit and while on Ops)
- Mission command taught but not enacted/enabled

The discussion generated through this activity revealed the interconnectivity between learning organisation characteristics such as the creation of supportive learning environments or climates, systems thinking, evaluation, and personal mastery. Enablers were equated with individual characteristics of leaders, that is, whether they displayed moral courage, flexibility, adaptability, and simple communication techniques, or were willing to drive change. It was noted by participants that the abilities of leaders to develop and demonstrate these individual characteristics was informed by the presence of an organisational culture which empowered, rewarded and trusted its leaders, giving them more freedom of action, and allowing them to learn from their mistakes.

Perceived inhibitors pertained to a leader's and organisation's ability to share information, or leaders not having sufficient confidence or power to lead. Interestingly, personal mastery was seen as being a possible inhibitor to leaders demonstrating supportive learning behaviours. In this regard, having a high level of mastery was equated with a lower inclination to consult doctrine and policy, in favour of one's own experiential base/expertise. In terms of leaders facilitating learning in others by empowering subordinates, there was some discussion as to whether subordinates want to be empowered, and how empowerment would look on reports for leadership performance (i.e. delegating responsibility can make it difficult for leaders to demonstrate leadership qualities (make decisions, authority etc.). Structural and cultural inhibitors associated with bureaucracy were seen as preventing leaders from leading. Bureaucracy was associated with such things as leaders losing control over their 'own area,' having to answer to too many people, and the production of a risk averse culture.

### 4.5.3 Concrete learning processes and practices

There was some discussion as to whether 'concrete' is the right terminology here. Groups considered whether 'formal' learning processes and practices were more accurate. Formal learning processes and practices pertained to such things as learning provided through training and education, as well as the agencies and codified knowledge (policies and doctrine) used to support training, education, learning and development of personnel.

Identified enablers which supported the effective delivery of concrete learning processes and practices included the following:

- Organisational structures which encouraged the sharing of information
- An alignment between people, skills, positions and posting cycles
- CIOG access policies, practices - (web enabled Personal Electronic Device (PED) a, doctrine on PED)
- Proscriptive policies
- Experienced personnel who can apply policies and procedures
- Reporting procedures, and attitudes towards change
- The provision of adequate resources for doctrine writers and training staff
- All Corps Officer Training Continuum/ All Corps Soldier Training Continuum - (ACOTC/ACSTC)
- Commanders who are willing to release personnel for required courses

Identified inhibitors which undermined the effectiveness and delivery of concrete learning processes and practices included:

- Organisational structures - not sharing information due to the existence of stovepipes (individual training, collective training etc.)
- Agencies like DOCM posting wrong types of people to positions
- Resourcing - cuts to doctrine writers and training when times get tough
- SES and reporting procedures, and attitudes to change (changing for change sake - commander compelled to make changes to make their mark even if change isn't really required)
- Descriptive rather than proscriptive policies
- Inexperience in applying policies and procedures
- Compliance issues
- Current tempo and time required to change course/TMPs
- Lack of validation of processes and practices
- Sheer volume of existing practice/processes

### 4.5.4 Knowledge management

While knowledge management was prioritised as an important ALO characteristic, no syndicate group specifically identified enablers or inhibitors for knowledge management approaches and practices in the Army. General discussion by syndicate groups for this topic



pertained to issues associated with storing, accessibility and distribution of information across the organisation, and those factors which either impeded or supported the above.

#### 4.5.5 Establish systems thinking

Syndicate groups recognised a distinction between process views of practice and change, and a 'systems view' of practice and change. The process view was equated to linear relationships and linear understanding of change, whereas the systems view was associated with non linear, complex relationships and non linear understanding of change. Systems thinking was also understood to describe the interconnectivity between parts of an organisation, and in turn, how the behaviour of one part of the system can have (unforseen) implications for others.

Systems thinking was seen as being a feature of Army – particularly in the Defence Training Model (analyse, design, implement and evaluate). The adaptive learning loops described in this model indicate that Army already thinks in a systems way. Once the group had seemingly comprehended and gained a better understanding of the definition of systems thinking, there was further recognition of systems thinking underpinning the ALO, as well as concepts such as Adaptive Campaigning and Adaptive Army. Systems thinking was also observed to be evident in doctrinal publications such as LWD – 1.

Identified enablers or facilitators of systems thinking included:

- Education to develop understanding and mindset
- Doctrine to permeate and infuse systems thinking
- External agencies to provide alternative lens and perspectives (e.g. DSTO)
- Existing policy and procedures in place
- Gap analysis process (to identify ebbs and flow)
- Greater visibility of the relationships between agencies
- Acceptability of concept of capability (the fundamental inputs to capability / Battlefield operating systems are utilised to understand the system).
- Organisational structure

There was a suggestion put forward by one syndicate group that systems thinking could be introduced through education programs (i.e. as an introductory topic/lesson – “Systems 101”). This could also include a base level of understanding delivered through the officer education courses which would describe systems thinking in a holistic way, rather than getting 'bogged down in the physics of it.' DSTO was also viewed as a resource to describe the mechanics and theory behind systems thinking. Through close consultation with Army, it was suggested that this abstract knowledge base could be transformed into 'military speak.'

Identified inhibitors included:

- Language which creates fear and confusion
- Decrease in resources to support research to inject into Army system
- Commanders who do not embrace systems thinking

- Complexity itself - not understanding what's out there (visibility)
- Organisational inertia- tribalism
- Short cutting without holistic understanding of process
- Risk avoidance in planning
- The consuming processes that do not add value

There was recognition that the idea of systems thinking needs to be communicated through practical or applicable language so as to make complex theoretical and conceptual ideas more accessible to a wider audience thereby enhancing understanding. Primarily, inhibitors were seen as (a) process in nature - such as those practices which undermined the effectiveness of existing processes, and ineffective processes, and (b) cultural - tribalistic, and not imbuing a notion of systems thinking into leadership discourse.

#### 4.5.6 Evaluative/measurement plan

Group discussions highlighted the difficulty in measuring learning and organisational performance/ finding suitable performance indicators. Indeed, from a systems perspective, measurement is problematic due to the existence of second and third order effects which make the determination of causation difficult. Nonetheless, groups were able to identify some factors which enable or inhibit the measurement and evaluation of organisational performance and learning.

Proposed enablers included:

- A system to capture lessons, standards and analysis
- Culture of acceptance (which adopted learning rather than punitive approach)
- An understood reporting process that is practiced
- Tools
- Systems thinking
- Staff processes

Identified inhibitors related to a variety of temporal, cultural, structural and cognitive concerns. These inhibitors included such things as:

- Time frame/ tempo which makes measurement and evaluation difficult - (the organisation is not static, but in a constant state of change or flux)
- Culture - is there a culture in place which embraces idea of measuring and evaluating performance?
- Resources (human, time, finances)
- Organisational inertia (lack of end result)
- Restricted and lengthy to analytical stage (evidence)
- Preconceptions - mental models about what could/should be measured

#### 4.5.7 Establish professional mastery

When discussing the possible enablers of inhibitors of professional mastery in the Army Learning Organisation, participants aligned the notion of professional mastery with such things as skill acquisition and honing, competency attainment, proficiency, and personal development, and in terms of enablers, those mechanisms which supported their realisation.

Identified enablers included:

- The training continuum
- Trade management
- Ongoing development of personnel (and in relation to this, producing motivated staff who want to improve)
- Reward/recognition of those personnel who demonstrate mastery

Identified Inhibitors included:

- Relevance to unit disregarded
- Scope of skills
- Recognition of value
- Op Tempo limiting available time to hone skills

### **4.6 Embedding the ALO characteristics into the Army Learning Environment (ALE)**

The ALE brief outlined the executive, knowledge management, learning and assessment and ICT dimensions of the ALE, the related ALE principles and the importance of the short, medium and long term learning loops in delivering an effective ALE.

During this session participants were asked to consider the new learning organisation characteristics and situate them within the dimensions of the ALE framework. Part of this exercise also included the need for workshop participants to determine who would be responsible for the implementation, maintenance, and future development of these characteristics.

The activity did not progress successfully because participants felt that most of the characteristics fell under the purview of the Army Learning Authority or Forces Command. The fact that Army's structure was in the process of undergoing significant change in the implementation of the Adaptive Army initiative, with lower level structures not yet firmly defined added to the confusion. This resulted in responsibility being assigned to the highest possible organisational level in an effort to overcome this ambiguity. Subsequently, the activity was abandoned as it could not provide a useful output.

## **4.7 The implementation of ALO characteristics**

### **4.7.1 Identifying enablers and inhibitors requiring actions**

Prior to creating actions plans, syndicate groups were asked to prioritise their identified enablers and inhibitors of learning. This was conducted in accordance with described states of being adapted from Army's use of these categories of classification. All enablers and inhibitors needed to be categorised according to whether they could be sustained (S) (for enablers), improved (I) (for enablers and inhibitors) or needed to be fixed (F) (for inhibitors). Additionally, proposed actions were then prioritised according to whether they are essential (E), useful (U) or nice to have (N). Four items were addressed and the aggregated results of group deliberations are presented below.

**Supportive learning environment/climate****Enablers**

- Chief Information Office Group providing ICT infrastructure to support learning and information sharing (i.e. global remote access, one time data entry, universal processes) **(Essential, Fix)**
- Systems approach to training and education (analyse need, evaluate and improve) **(Essential, Fix)**
- Medium to Long learning loops codified in the form of doctrine (i.e. AAR, instructor handbooks, CAL products) **(Essential, Improve)**
- Places to learn and experiment **(Essential, Improve)**
- Culture where students want to learn, leaders are learners and encourage learning in others **(Essential, Improve)**
- Defence Assisted Study Scheme (DASS) **(Essential, Improve)**
- More focus on learners and developing instructors **(Essential, Improve)**
- Good e-learn opportunities **(Sustain)**
- Good quality professional educators **(Sustain)**
- Learning is encouraged across the spectrum of command **(Sustain)**
- Values and behaviours **(Sustain)**
- Doctrine which allows instructors to do what they do **(Essential, Sustain)**
- Wargaming and purpose built buildings “Classroom 21” **(Essential, Sustain)**

**Inhibitors**

- ICT - improve access to the ICT for clients **(Essential, Fix)**
- Improve use of the specialist trainers/educators **(Essential, Fix)**
- Align policy with values **(Fix)**
- Align rewards with values **(Fix)**
- Encourage a culture of enquiry/questioning **(Fix)**
- Use of assessments, application of results, positively allow experimentation (note the journey , not just the destination ) as part of training **(Fix)**
- Mentoring **(Fix)**
- Development of personnel **(Fix)**
- TIME - increase course lengths - don't keep cropping **(Improve)**
- Awareness - better marketing of what is available out there **(Improve)**
- Educate instructors about use of the TMP **(Improve)**
- Need more time in order to facilitate: **(Improve)**
  - Compliance
  - Tempo
  - Validation
  - *All inhibited by volume*
- Not having a focus on the learner **(Essential, Improve)**

**Leadership behaviour that provides reinforcement**

**Enablers**

- Mentoring and training mentors (**Essential, Fix**)
- Growing a culture where leaders can accept risks as part of learning process (**Essential, Improve**)
- Governance which focuses on values based/ principles based behaviours, rather than being compliance based (**Essential, Improve**)
- Positive reinforcement of policies to reinforce leadership (tendency to focus on negatives when stressing the importance of leadership) (**Essential, Improve**)
- Flexibility and adaptability (**sustain**)
- Start instilling supportive leadership qualities at the soldier level (**sustain**)
- Simplicity and clarity (**sustain**)
- Exposure to military related 'life learning' experiences (education) (**sustain**)

**Inhibitors**

- Don't recognise/reward mentoring (**Essential, Fix**)
- Don't train mentors (**Essential, Fix**)
- Mission command taught but not enabled (**Essential, Fix**)
- Resourcing (review and improve both human and fiscal resources) (**Essential, Fix**)
- Misused messages - make sure that all levels of policy and direction are unambiguous and that there is consistency (**Essential, Fix**)
- Poor connectivity - senior officers and displaced SNCOs/WOs need to keep in touch with the coal face (**Essential, Fix**)
- Diversity of training at the individual and collective levels (**Fix**)
- Create communication opportunities e.g. junior NCO, officer training (**Fix**)
- Risk - Increase exposure to risk and allow innovative action and adaptation (**Improve**)
- Bureaucracy - realign level of command and hierarchy so that decisions are often devolved down to lower level (**Improve**)
- Apply Mission Command philosophy home and away (**Improve**)
- Development of facilitation skills for all individuals (**Improve**)
- Review and devolve authority (**Improve**)

**Establish Systems Thinking****Enablers**

- Education to develop understanding and mindset (**Essential, Fix**)
- Structure (**Sustain**)
- Doctrine (**Sustain**)

**Inhibitors**

- Language which creates fear and confusion (**Essential, Fix**)
- Broaden visibility of interactions between systems/ the organisation / processes and their consequences (**Fix**)

- Doctrine accessibility **(Fix)**
- Management systems to bring information together e.g. ACMS **(Fix)**
- Synchronisation of learning effects (FIC, BOS) **(Improve)**
- Catering for social learning not Army systems Approach **(Improve)**
- Commanders who do not embrace systems thinking **(Essential, Improve)**

### Concrete learning processes and practices

#### Enablers

- All corps training continuum is good **(Sustain)**

#### Inhibitors

- Commanders must release individuals to attend courses/advanced training/experiences/life stuff **(Essential, Fix)**
- Need more time in order to facilitate: **(Improve)**
  - Compliance
  - Tempo
  - Validation
  - All inhibited by volume
- Inexperience in applying policies and procedures **(Essential, Improve)**
- No HOC champion of set policies and procedures **(Essential, Improve)**
- Lack of clear doctrine for CAT/A **(Essential, Improve)**
- CIOG access policies, practices - (web enabled PDA, doctrine on PDA's) **(Essential, Improve)**
- Resourcing - cuts to doctrine writers and reviewers, and training when times get tough **(Essential, Improve)**
- SES and reporting procedures, attitude to change (changing for change sake - commander compelled to make changes to make their mark even if change isn't really required) **(Essential, Improve)**
- Organisational structures - not sharing information due to the existence of stovepipes (individual training, collective training etc.) **(Essential, Improve)**

#### 4.7.2 Actions designed to address identified enablers and inhibitors of learning

After categorising enablers and inhibitors of learning, syndicate groups were then instructed to create actions for those enablers and inhibitors which were deemed essential, requiring improvement, or which needed to be fixed.

#### Actions required to generate a supportive learning environment

1. Establish a culture focussed on the learner where:
  - Students are given the desire to learn
  - Leaders encourage learning

- Initiatives are established/continued to support learning
  - Instructors are developed
2. Ongoing doctrine development:
    - To support short, medium and long learning loops
  3. Continue a systems approach with policies and processes regarding training and education.
  4. Provide infrastructure to support learning through the provision of:
    - ICT e.g. remote access, one time data entry etc.
    - General facilities e.g. classrooms, PowerPoint, equipment bays etc.
    - Specialist facilities e.g. experimentation, simulation, combined arms field training

#### Actions required to generate leadership behaviour that provides reinforcement

1. Army must inculcate mentoring of subordinates at all levels. This inculcation can be achieved by a 'cradle to the grave' philosophy and facilitated by HR strategies. Mentoring should be a feature of all training activities and be recognised/ rewarded.
2. Army must develop a climate/culture where the permissiveness of errors is accepted in order to learn from mistakes made.
3. Instigate policies which focus on values/principles based behaviour rather than compliance.
4. Continual and effective positive reinforcement of policy to assist commanders
5. Reward of leadership at all levels. Army must empower leaders to reward rather than punish.

#### Actions required to establish systems thinking

1. Incorporate systems concepts into the curriculum of NCO and officer education/courses.
2. Develop a common lexicon which supports systems concepts and can be incorporated and understood by military practitioners.
3. Educate, encourage and expose commanders to systems concepts through commander seminars and roadshow presentations.

#### Actions required to realise concrete learning processes and practices

1. Identify lead for Army learning processes and practices e.g. FORCOM = Training and Assessment, LWDC = Assessment Management. List who does what.



2. Identify key positions for producing policies and procedures processes and practices. and ensure that they are staffed (DOCM/SCMA)
3. Educate SES officers in relation to reporting and not implementing 'change for change sake.'
4. Submit an 'ICT Blueprint' to CIOG that articulates Army's requirements, and hold them to the implementation plan.
5. Investigate the re-establishment of the HOC position with empowerment over policies and procedures.
6. Identify an authority for CAT/A and direct/empower them to develop policies and procedures (doctrine).

Note: as not all action plans could be created in the time frame of the workshop additional consideration of these issues will be undertaken at LWDC post workshop.

## 4.8 The Questionnaire

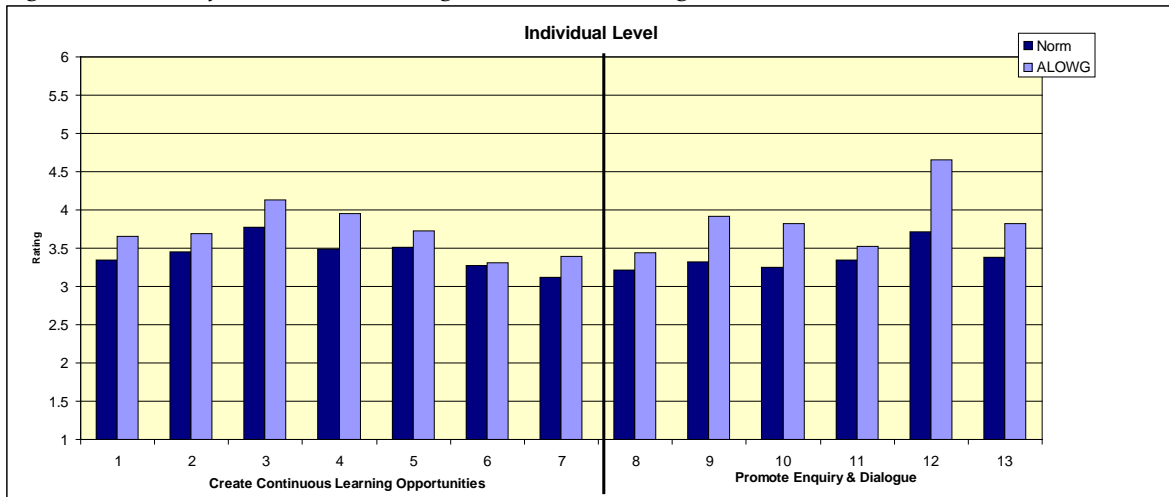
As outlined previously, as part of a piloting exercise, working group participants were asked to complete and provide feedback on an adaptation of Marsick and Watkins' (1999) 'Dimensions of the Learning Organisation Questionnaire (DLOQ), to be employed across Army.

In particular, the questionnaire asked respondents to consider the extent to which a variety of statements concerning issues such as inquiry and dialogue, collaboration and team learning, and strategic leadership for learning, manifest themselves in their organisation. A six-point Likert scale was employed. Respondents were notified that the results of the pilot and any feedback regarding the questionnaire would be reported back to them during the workshop. For the purposes of determining how to best tailor the questionnaire to Army, feedback was sought from respondents on the following: (1) length of the questionnaire, (2) difficulty of questions, (3) terminology used, (4) demographic questions and (5) any other comments. Questionnaire results are presented below.

### 4.8.1 Questionnaire results

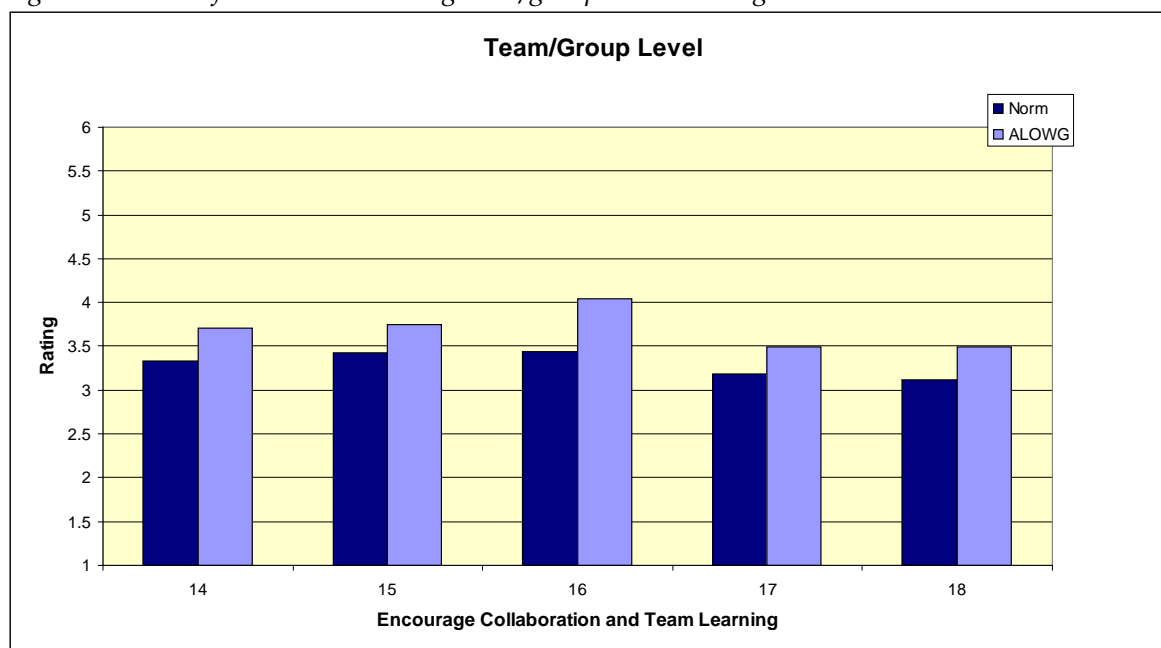
Twenty-three respondents completed the questionnaire (response rate of 92%). Results below are presented in terms of the responses from the Army Learning Organisation Working Group (ALOWG), that is the 23 respondents and the normative database (Norm) compiled by Marsick and Watkins (1999) since the questionnaire's inception in 1993. This Norm data has been generated through online questionnaire use and also data from personnel from more than 200 companies. In terms of the individual learning component of the questionnaire, respondents were generally positive (scoring higher than the norms generated by Marsick and Watkins) in regards to the organisation's ability to provide continuous learning opportunities and promote inquiry and dialogue. This was especially the case for Item twelve *people treat each other with respect* (the average response for this item was 4.7 compared to a norm of 3.7) (See Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Results for items concerning individual learning



Respondents noted that the workplace was ‘improving’ in terms of providing continuous learning opportunities and promoting dialogue and inquiry for personnel. However, some respondents suggested that a ‘competitive environment’ with a ‘short term focus’ was not always conducive to fostering a learning environment with opportunities for reflection and professional development.

Figure 2: Results for items concerning team/group level learning

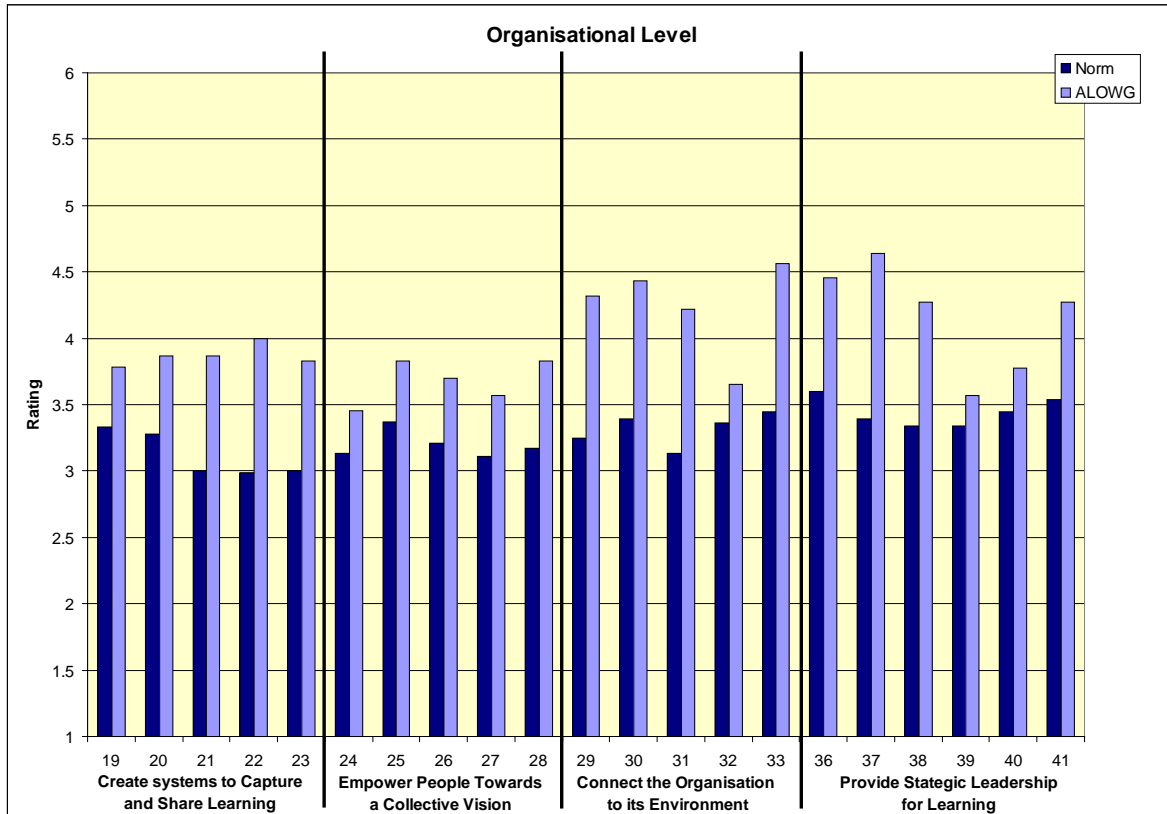


In regards to team or group learning, results indicated that collaboration and team learning were viewed as being in line with the organisational norms provided by Marsick and Watkins (Figure 2). In particular, there was a stronger agreement with the propensity for teams to be able to focus on the task at hand as well as reflect on the actual performance of the team as a whole (Item 16 - teams/groups focus both on the group's task and on how well the group is working).

While collaboration and team learning were recognised as being a feature of the organisation, one respondent noted that the allocation of rewards often went to 'team leaders' rather than to the team as a whole.

At the organisational level, responses to learning items were again above the norm. For example, respondents were positive about the organisation's ability to foster an environment where lesson capture and sharing, empowerment towards a vision, the provision of strategic learning, and connections between the organisation and the environment, were evident (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Results for items concerning organisational learning



#### 4.8.2 General feedback on questionnaire design, content, and applicability

For the most part there was a general agreement among workshop participants that the demographic and main section of the survey (Parts 1 & 2) comprising of individual, group and organisational learning items were acceptable. However, Parts 3 and 4, which covered items associated with organisational change and organisational performance measures respectively generated much discussion. In particular, workshop participants found it difficult to answer questions associated with change as it pertained to financial resource allocation, media representation, public support and success rate of operations, due to allocated timeframes (i.e. change over 12 month period). Aligned with this was also the sheer breadth of issues covered which fell beyond individual experience and as such were not relevant to all participants. To this end, participants felt it was difficult to externalise their own personal or lived experience and then apply this limited view to the organisation as a whole.

More heated debate was generated through those items dealing with measuring performance at the organisational level (Part 4). Again, respondents noted their difficulty in trying to think 'organisationally' (or in the broader organisational context), specifically in regards to their views on the effectiveness of government policy, number of hours spent increasing capability, and a clearer understanding of strategic goals within the last 12 months. This did come as some surprise as parts 3 and 4 had been adapted in a manner we considered would be able to be used with Army. The adaptation utilised established measures created to determine performance in the government sector and reflected on issues raised in the Defence Balance

Scorecard. These questions had also been reviewed by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with positive feedback.

It was difficult to find any measures of performance which weren't specifically linked to corporate or commercial enterprises, which tended to employ performance measures based on Return on Investment (ROI), Return on Equity (ROE) and Return on Assets (ROA)- more commonly associated with profit based organisations.

The DALO Research Team tried to develop these indicators of organisational performance in a manner that more closely aligned their subject matter to defence related issues, however based on participant responses this alignment was not successful. As a result, the current version of the revised questionnaire no longer includes these organisational performance measures. It should be noted that when asked to provide possible alternatives to these performance indicators, working group members did not produce any alternatives, suggesting that these types of questions or any questions following this format would not be well-received or answered by Army. Consequently, the DALO Research Team returned to the literature to examine alternative measures which could be incorporated into the questionnaire. Measures under consideration include: organisational trust, attitudes toward organisational change and organisational commitment.

Although this questionnaire is primarily for the use of Army, the DALO Research Team, in accordance with the scientist practitioner model (Barlow et al., 1984), are endeavouring to create a solid foundation of our research and scientific practice for this work. Although the knowledge and techniques used will hopefully go some way towards addressing problems identified by the client, the work should also sit separately as a robust body of work within the scientific community. Thus the research aims to test a theoretical model of the learning organisation, accompanying enablers and inhibitors of learning, and possible mediators.

## 5. Conclusion

The organisation and development of the Army Learning Organisation Workshop was undertaken through an extensive consultation process with DAKM, SO1 AKM and interested Army stakeholders. Additionally, workshop planning was significantly informed through careful consideration of both the aspirations outlined in various Army documents and initiatives, and the theory and practical considerations highlighted in the literature. Considerable effort was made to ensure that participants were well informed in issues of policy and theory through the provision of an extensive reading list and the request for elicitation of information from their peers and workgroups to allow the full engagement of participants. Efforts were also made to create a safe forum for frank and fearless discussion so as to elicit a wide range of experiences and ideas irrespective of rank. The mix of background reading and discussion ensured that through these efforts participants would leave the workshop with a sound understanding of what a learning organisation could look like in an Army context.

While on the surface, the workshop appeared to be a highly structured activity, facilitators were required to be flexible in their facilitation of activities. This flexibility took the form of facilitators allowing syndicate groups to guide discussion at times, as well as injecting and interrogating emergent ideas which may have fallen outside the original scope of the activity. In this sense, facilitators had to resist the urge to constrain the direction of discussion so as to produce standardised and neatly comparable 'data' across groups. This approach to 'data' elicitation was not inconsistent with the workshop methodology, as one of the aims of the workshop was the generation of powerful themes derived from a broad experiential base.

When designing the workshop, attention was given to the order of activities to ensure that they flowed in a logical sequence of events, and that each activity built upon the knowledge and learning generated from its predecessor. On reflection, more time was needed to be allocated for the design and implementation of action plans. Initial approaches were altered to utilise a 'standard' Army approach adapted from After Action Reviews. The range of interpretations of this 'standard approach' highlighted the diverse understandings of approaches we believe are common in our organisation. Considerable confusion ensued and only the facilitator who continued to utilise the pre-agreed approach in conjunction with the additional requests, moved effectively to the planning stage. Furthermore, though the prioritisation of enablers and inhibitors requiring actions reduced the range of issues to be considered (which in itself was a time consuming activity<sup>6</sup>), the one and a half hours allocated for the development of action plans proved inadequate. Although some actions plans were produced, a further hour and a half would easily be required to ensure clarity of purpose for the consideration and articulation of these plans. This extra time would permit the consolidation of syndicate learning into tangible change initiatives. This activity was to be continued by LWDC staff at a later date, unfortunately without the benefit of the context and range of diverse viewpoints provided by the participants.

One of the more successful features of the workshop entailed the elicitation of highly contextualised data. Through careful facilitation, participants were able to situate events and their personal experiences within broader organisational contexts. Thus, personal accounts were imbued with structural, processual and systemic overtones which revealed the inter-related and social character of organisational practice. This was particularly evident with regard to the organisation of learning opportunities according to rank (i.e. junior personnel were viewed by more senior personnel as requiring more training to become effective communicators); and the acknowledgement that successful information sharing is supported by integrated ICT systems as well as relationship building activities.

From a methodological point of view, accounts also provided additional food for thought in regard to the relevance and utility of proposed questionnaire items, strengthening our resolve for multi, or mixed method approaches. The (negative) feedback given concerning the suitability of proposed measures for organisational learning performance resulted in this section being removed from the questionnaire. However, the inability of workshop members to provide alternative measures for organisational performance represents an organisational challenge for determining the extent to which learning is producing desired outcomes – a

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<sup>6</sup> Indeed, most of the allocated time was devoted to this prioritisation process rather than designing action plans.

challenge which may be addressed at the research/theoretical level through the adoption of a mixed method approach.

Should we wish to measure the success of the workshop in terms of the utility of the outputs it would appear a highly successful activity in that Army now have an agreed definition of the ALO and an agreed set of ALOP. The ALSG, CASAC and Chief of Army have agreed to a definition and a set of principles, with minor alterations to those proposed at the workshop (Appendix G). The outputs are now utilised in the development of doctrine relating to learning and in consideration of various lessons processes and gap analysis activities.

#### *Future research*

As noted earlier in the discussion concerning the ALO framework, the workshop constitutes one of many activities already undertaken, or to be undertaken, by the research team. Future research activities entail the roll out of a diagnostic questionnaire across Army designed to assess and profile Army's learning capabilities at individual, group and organisational levels. Results derived from the analysis of questionnaire data will inform sample choices for the collection of (primarily qualitative) data through the adoption of a case study methodology. These case studies will be able to provide the contextual richness and explanatory power to the data collected by the questionnaire. The case studies will be further augmented by a series of longitudinal in-depth interviews conducted with a select group of participants designed to identify enablers and inhibitors of learning. The in-depth interviews will also allow researchers to map learning trajectories across Army and examine the significance of these trajectories according to a variety of demographic concerns.

Taken as a whole, these activities represent a systematic and concerted attempt by the research team to assist Army with its goal of becoming an adaptive and learner centric organisation. Cognisant of the temporal, philosophical, structural, material and human pieces of the change puzzle, in consort with Army, the DALO Research Team has adopted a multi-tiered and incremental approach to organisational change. The change process, in this respect, can be conceptualised (and by implication operationalised) in terms of:

- (our own and client) strategic thinking about learning in and by Army (at the planning level)
- discursive formations concerning learning in and by Army within doctrinal and other publications (at the representational level)
- strategies designed for the identification and evaluation of learning in and by Army (at the empirical or observational level)
- facilitating learning in and adaptation by Army through an ongoing process of action and review (at an interventionist<sup>7</sup> level)
- change in practice (at both practitioner and organisational levels)

These levels of inquiry/abstraction do not necessarily follow a linear path, but may operate in tandem or intersect in varying/recursive ways.

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<sup>7</sup> In this respect, the research process itself, along with the products of this research (i.e. data, action plans, interventions) can be viewed as activities associated with the change initiative.

*Closing comments*

Army has initiated a significant change journey as our review of various documents and participants perspectives has established. The important outcomes derived from the workshop provide yet another opportunity for the development of a shared language and understanding to assist Army on this journey. This is consistent with the Learning Organisation philosophy of building a shared understanding, developing shared vision and mental models, as well as taking a systems approach to change at the individual, team and organisational level.

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## Appendix A: List of Participants and their Organisations

COL MARTIN, Rowan	LWDC (AKMG)
LTCOL HALE, Liam	LWDC (AKMG)
LTCOL GREENBERRY, Andre	LWDC (AKMG)
MAJ JOLLEY, Gregg	LWDC (AKMG)
Mr COOPER, Geoff	LWDC (CAL)
COL ALEXANDER, Stephen	TC-A (Plans Branch)
LTCOL BRADFORD, Deb	HQ TC-A
MAJ McVAY, Katherine	HQ TC-A
CAPT ALGER, Carl	RMC - A
CAPT BAKER, Howard	HQ LWC (OTW)
MAJ BOXHALL, Crispin	AHQ
MAJ BROWN, Michael	WO & NCO Academy
LTCOL COLQUHOUN, Michael	ADC Weston Creek
CAPT CROOKS, Robert	SFTC
Mr CRUICKSHANK, Ian	HQ 1Div
MAJ CUTTELL, Mathew	CTC
MAJ HART, John	DG PERS-A
MAJ HARVEY, Claire	RMC-A
MAJ HOWE, Jeff	LHQ
MAJ NOBLE, Mark	AHQ
LTCOL RICHARDS, Bernie	AHQ
WO2 RITCHIE, Steve	ARTC (DW)
MAJ SHUM, Karen	HQ LWC (OTW)
CAPT SYLVESTER, Paul	ARTC (IRTB)
WO1 THAMM, Phil	RMC

## List of Facilitators and their Organisations

Team Lead	
DROBNJAK, Maya	DSTO
Syndicate Group Facilitators	
MCDOWALL, Denise	DSTO
TALBOT, Steven	DSTO
STOTHARD, Christina	DSTO
KUESTER, Natalie	DSTO

Workshop Facilitator  
O'TOOLE, Paddy

Flinders University

## Appendix B: Army Learning Organisation Workshop Agenda

### ARMY LEARNING ORGANISATION

### WORKING GROUP

24 – 25 February 2009


HMAS Harman Conference Centre

Canberra

Tuesday 24 FEBRUARY			
<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity Description</i>		<b>For Participant Consideration to report to the WG.</b> <b>Note</b> the discussion will benefit from the provision of examples to support the views expressed by participants.
0830	<u>Registration</u>		
Start 0900	<u>Welcome &amp; Admin</u>		
0915	<u>Introduction &amp; Ice breaker</u> The <b>goal</b> of this session is to present the overall aims, outputs and outcomes of the working group.	<i>Group Activity</i>	
0930	<u>Welcome Address</u> A/HDC-A		
1000		Morning Tea	
1030	<u>Short Literature Review Brief</u> The <b>aim</b> of this session is to describe some of the ways in which the learning organisation, and some of the claims ascribed to learning organisations are	<i>Group Activity</i> <b>Outcome</b> Participants will have: ▪ a clearer understanding of the scope/content of	Consider the extent to which ideas presented in the literature align with practice within your organisation/unit, and Army as a whole.


	presented in the (academic, practitioner based, and Defence) literature.	the literature review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an appreciation for the different components through which we come to view learning organisations</li> </ul>	<i>See Draft Literature Review</i>
<b>1100</b>	<b><u>ALO definitions</u></b> The <b>aim</b> of this session is to assist stakeholders in creating an agreed and workable definition of a learning organisation.	<i>Group and Syndicate</i> <b><u>Outputs</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An agreed definition of an Army learning organisation which can be referred to in subsequent documents produced by Army.</li> </ul>	Consider the definitions of learning organisations as presented in the literature. What are their main features?  Which aspects of the components of the LO definition resonate with you or your organisation?  How can the ideas raised in these definitions fit/apply to your organisation/Army as a whole?  <i>See Draft literature Review</i>
<b>1230</b>	<b>Lunch</b>		
<b>1330</b>	<b><u>ALO Characteristics</u></b> The <b>aim</b> of this session is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review and understand the LO characteristics and the components identified in the literature</li> <li>modify or develop Army's LO characteristics and associated components</li> <li>identify the components Army currently does and what they should do?</li> </ul>	<i>Group and Syndicate</i> <b><u>Outcomes</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A shared vision of the Army learning organisation</li> <li>Grounded discussion which will assist with the reporting of 'findings' in Technical Report (provide context/justification for choice of characteristic).</li> </ul>	What do you consider to be the essential characteristics of the learning organisation?  Are these characteristics a feature of your organisation/of Army?
<b>1430</b>	Afternoon Tea		
<b>1500</b>	<b><u>ALO Characteristics continued</u></b>		
<b>1600 to 1730</b>	<b><u>ALE Document Brief</u></b>	<i>Group</i> Review ALE dimensions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Executive Management</li> <li>Knowledge Management</li> <li>Learning and Assessment</li> </ul>	<i>ALE PDF</i>

DSTO-TN-1189

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Syndicate and Group</i></p> <p>Relative placement of the ALO characteristics within the ALE dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What characteristics fit /don't fit?</li> <li>▪ Which dimensions can be expanded to included these characteristics?</li> <li>▪ Does Army need a new dimension?</li> </ul>	 ALE-Concept-Final.pdf
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**Wednesday 25 FEBRUARY**

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity Description</i>		
<b>0830</b>	<b><u>Questionnaire</u></b> The <b>aim</b> of this session is to provide feedback to participants on the Dimensions of Learning Questionnaire and to receive feedback from them		<i>See distributed questionnaire</i>
<b>0930</b>	<b><u>Recap of previous days events</u></b> The <b>aim</b> of this session is to review and reflect on the key characteristics determined on previous day with reference to context and key characteristics 'should' and 'are'.	<i>Group activity</i>	
<b>1000</b>		Morning Tea	
<b>1030</b>	<b><u>Short Brief:</u></b> <b><u>Army's Initiatives relating to Army Learning Organisation</u></b>	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HNA</li> <li>▪ I'm an Australian Soldier</li> <li>▪ Adaptive Campaigning</li> <li>▪ Adaptive Army</li> <li>▪ The Human Dimension</li> </ul>	<a href="http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/DGDP/comweb.asp?page=3242&amp;Title=Publications/Orders#AdaptiveCampaigning">http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/DGDP/comweb.asp?page=3242&amp;Title=Publications/Orders#AdaptiveCampaigning</a>  <i>links to Complex Warfighting Adaptive Campaigning ALE concept Paper</i>

			<p><a href="http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/CA/comweb.asp?page=145264&amp;Title=Adaptive%20Army">http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/CA/comweb.asp?page=145264&amp;Title=Adaptive%20Army</a></p> <p>links to Adaptive Army home page</p> <p>Human Dimension pamphlet PDF</p>  <p>Human Dimension.pdf</p> <p><a href="http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/ASH/docs/I_am_an_Australian_Soldier_Poster.pdf">http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/ASH/docs/I_am_an_Australian_Soldier_Poster.pdf</a></p> <p>I'm an Australian Soldier poster</p>
1100	<p><b>Identification of enablers and inhibitors</b></p> <p>The <b>aim</b> of this session is to identify enablers and inhibitors in terms of achieving the state where key characteristics are manifested.</p> <p>Participants should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the significance of the characteristics as they apply to ALE and Army.</li> <li>▪ an appropriate implementation approach for their organisation and Army.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Group and Syndicate</i></p> <p><b>Outcome</b> To enable participants to reach common understandings on what helps and hinders Army from achieving the ALO.</p> <p><b>Output</b> List of inhibitors and enablers for each key characteristic.</p>	<p>What factors enable or inhibit learning in your organisation/or Army?</p>
1200	<b>Lunch</b>		
1300	<b>Presentation by syndicates to group</b>	<i>Group</i>	
	<b>Implementation of ALO key characteristics</b>	<p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clear direction to further the aspiration of Army</li> </ul>	<p>What factors or conditions need to be in place for your desired learning organisation</p>

UNCLASSIFIED

DSTO-TN-1189

	Aim: To draft an implementation plan based on the identified inhibitors and enablers of the Army Learning Organisation. The draft will be presented for consideration at the ALSG.	<p>as a Learning Organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An understanding by participants of the requirements within Army to further the aspiration of the ALO.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outputs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft action plan outlining how to achieve Army Learning Organisation characteristics.</li> <li>▪ Identification of individuals and their associated responsibilities in implementing Army Learning Organisation characteristics.</li> </ul>	characteristics to be realised?
<b>1430</b>	Afternoon Tea		
<b>1500</b>	<b>Back-brief for A/HCD-A</b>		
<b>1530 to 1600</b>	<b>A closing address, A/HCD</b>	A/HCD-A closing address	

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## **Appendix C: Summary of the Key Points of the Literature Review**

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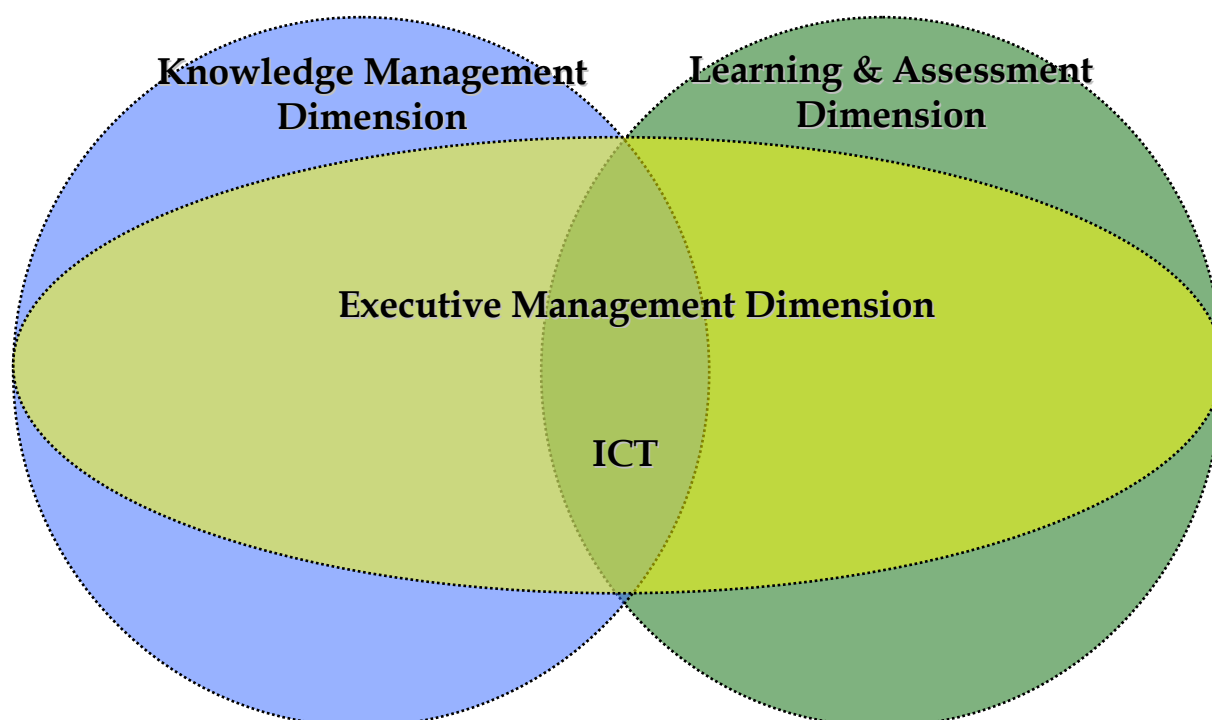
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## Appendix D: The Army Learning Environment (ALE) Brief

For Army, the optimal learning environment comprises three dimensions: executive management, knowledge management and learning and assessment. These are linked by robust Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

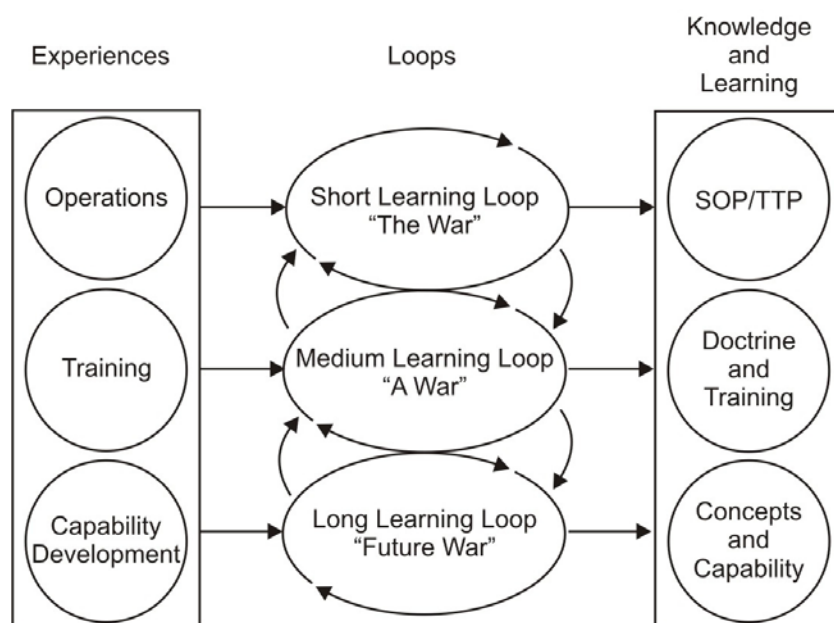


### ALE PRINCIPLES

- ❖ All learning outcomes are linked to capability requirements.
- ❖ Learning is an ongoing activity that occurs formally and informally at all levels of the organisation.
- ❖ Every opportunity to learn will be seized, including opportunities to learn how to learn.
- ❖ All learning processes are integrated. This means that policy and procedures governing executive management, knowledge management, learning and assessment are linked, automated where possible, and mutually supporting.
- ❖ Operations, training and capability development are established as overlapping knowledge categories and knowledge is made available to them at a rate and in a manner appropriate to their unique needs.
- ❖ Learning is innately accepted as an individual and an organisational responsibility.

- ❖ Individual, team and organisational learning comprises elements of what to think (convergent thinking) and how to think (divergent thinking). ICT requirements are identified at the earliest stages of capability development, introduced and integrated in a timely and effective manner, and routinely refined.

### Learning Loops



[http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/DFLWS/docs/The\\_Australian\\_Army\\_A\\_Learning\\_Organisation.pdf](http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/DFLWS/docs/The_Australian_Army_A_Learning_Organisation.pdf) (as at Jan 2010)

## Appendix E: Background Brief – A Chronology – Reflecting on previous initiatives



### Background

- Hardened and Networked Army -
- Complex Warfighting
- Adaptive Campaigning
- I'm an Australian Soldier
- ALE
- Adaptive Army

## Appendix F: The Dimensions of the Learning Organisation Questionnaire

These questions ask about how your organisation may support learning, at the individual, team and organisational level. Your answers will help create a learning profile of your workplace.

Your answers are strictly confidential, and only collated results of the survey will be reported.

The survey will take you approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

### PART 1: Participant Information

This section asks demographic questions used to describe the sample and allow further analysis of sub-groups. All information is anonymous and confidential.

Please answer the questions as accurately as possible.

Gender:

- Male  
 Female

Service:

- Regular  
 Reserve  
 APS  
 Other:.....

Age:

- 18 - 25  
 26 - 35  
 36 - 45  
 46 - 55  
 56+

Highest level of education completed:

- Did not complete high school  
 Completed High school  
 Technical or Vocational Training  
 Completed Undergraduate Degree  
 Completed Post-graduate Degree

Number of years in Defence:

- 0 - 5 years  
 6 - 10 years  
 11 - 15 years  
 16 - 20 years  
 21+ years

Number of years in current rank:

- < 1 year  
 1 - 4 years  
 5 - 8 years  
 9 - 12 years  
 13+ years

Army Rank/Equivalent:

- No Rank  
 PTE - CPL  
 SGT - WO  
 LT - CAPT  
 MAJ - COL

Are you currently enrolled in a formal course of study?

- Yes  
 No

Corp: .....

**PART 2: Measuring the Learning Organisation**

In this section, please think about your workplace at an **individual, team/group and organisational level**.

We are interested in **your perceptions of your workplace**. Please indicate to what extent each statement is true for your workplace. There are no right or wrong answers.

Tick one response for each question.

**Individual Level**

In my workplace:	Almost Never					Almost Always
1. People openly discuss mistakes in order to learn from them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. People identify skills they need for future work tasks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. People help each other learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. People can get money and resources to support their learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. People are given time to learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. People view problems in their work as an opportunity to learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. People are rewarded for learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. People give honest and open feedback to each other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. People listen to others' views before speaking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. People are encouraged to ask "why" regardless of rank.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Whenever people state their views, they also ask what others think.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. People treat each other with respect.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. People spend their time building trust with each other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please make any comments relevant to this section:

.....  
 .....

### Team/Group Level

In my workplace:	Almost Never				Almost Always	
14. Teams/groups have the freedom to adapt their goals as needed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Teams/groups treat members as equals regardless of rank, culture or other differences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Teams/groups focus both on the group's task and on how well the group is working.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Teams/groups are rewarded for their achievements as a team or group.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Teams/groups are confident that the organisation will act on their recommendations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Organisational Level

My workplace:	Almost Never				Almost Always	
19. Uses two-way communication on a regular basis, e.g. suggestion systems, open meetings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Enables people to get required information at any time quickly and easily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. Maintains an up-to-date profile of employee skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Creates systems to measure gaps between current and expected performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. Makes its lessons learnt available to all employees.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Measures the results of the time and resources spent on training.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Recognises people for taking initiative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Gives people control over the resources they need to accomplish their work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. Supports people who take calculated risks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Generates a shared vision across different levels and groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



<b>My workplace:</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>				<b>Almost Always</b>	
29. Helps soldiers to balance work and family life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. Encourages everyone to bring the stakeholders' views into the decision making process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. Considers the impact of decisions on morale.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. Works with communities to meet mutual needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. Encourages people to get answers from across the organisation when solving problems.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34. Encourages people who are new in this organisation to question the way things are done.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. Failures are seldom constructively discussed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>In my workplace:</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>				<b>Almost Always</b>	
36. Leaders generally support requests for learning opportunities and training.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
37. Leaders share up-to-date information with staff about the strategic, capability and organisational directions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
38. Leaders empower others to help carry out the organization's vision.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39. Leaders mentor and coach those they lead.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40. Leaders continually look for opportunities to learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
41. Leaders ensure that the organisation's actions are consistent with its values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
42. Leaders resist change and are afraid of new ideas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
43. Leaders can accept feedback without becoming overly defensive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
44. Leaders often reward innovative ideas that work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
45. New ideas from workers are not treated seriously by Leaders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please make any comments relevant to this section:

.....

.....

**PART 3: Changes in Organisational Performance**

In this section, please think about your **workplace** in terms of its **performance**. Keep in mind your scores represent your own views.

We are interested in **your perceptions of your workplace**. Please indicate to what extent each statement is accurate of your workplace. There are no right or wrong answers.

Tick one response for each question.

In my workplace:	Least Accurate				Most Accurate	
46. In the last 12 months, financial resources have been used more effectively than previously.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
47. In the last 12 months, resources used in technology and information processing are greater than in previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
48. In the last 12 months, the Government has been more supportive than previously.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
49. The media have been more supportive in the last 12 months than in previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
50. The general public has been more supportive in the last 12 months than in previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
51. The success rate of operations was greater in the last 12 months compared to previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please make any comments relevant to this section:

.....

.....

#### PART 4: Measuring Performance at the Organisational Level

In this section, please think about your **workplace** in terms of its performance.

We are interested in **your perceptions of your workplace**. Please indicate to what extent each statement is accurate of your workplace. There are no right or wrong answers.

Tick one response for each question.

In my workplace:	Least Accurate				Most Accurate	
52. In the last 12 months, the total number of hours supporting operations was greater than in earlier years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
53. In the last 12 months, the total number of hours developing capabilities was greater than in previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
54. In the last 12 months, we conducted more operations than in previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
55. Implementing Government policy was more effective in the last 12 months than previously.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
56. Activities to support operations were more effective in the last 12 months than previously.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
57. In the last 12 months, we have been better at identifying lessons learnt than in previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
58. In the last 12 months, we have been better at implementing lessons learnt than in previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
59. In the last 12 months, we have delivered more operational capabilities than in previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
60. More resources were allocated according to need in the last 12 months compared with previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
61. There has been a clearer understanding of strategic goals in the last 12 months than previously.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
62. There has been greater intra-organisational collaboration in the past 12 months than previously.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
63. There were fewer resources wasted in the last 12 months than in previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
64. Morale has increased in the last 12 months.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
65. The number of suggestions implemented in the last 12 months is greater than previous years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In my workplace:	Least Accurate				Most Accurate	
66. The number of effective training and educational services has increased in the last 12 months.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
67. There has been a better match between individual skills and work requirements, in the last 12 months.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
68. The resources devoted to training and education is has been greater in the last 12 months.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
69. The number of individuals learning new skills has been greater in the last 12 months.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please make any comments relevant to this section:

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Thank you for completing the questionnaire as a part of our Pilot Study.**

This questionnaire has not previously been used for Army but rather private organisations, so in an effort to tailor it to Army we'd like for you to provide feedback on the following aspects of the Questionnaire:

**How long did the questionnaire take you to complete?**

- 0 - 5 minutes
- 5 - 10 minutes
- 10-15 minutes
- 15 - 20 minutes

**Which questions did you find difficult to answer?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Is the terminology used easy to understand? Which questions did you find difficult to understand?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Are there any additional demographic questions you would include?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Any other comments?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

## F.1. Participant Information Sheet

### ARMY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: ARMY LEARNING ORGANISATION CHARACTERISTICS WORKING GROUP

#### Brief Description of the Study

We are piloting a DSTO-modified Learning Organisation questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire, and provide us with feedback. It is envisaged that this questionnaire may be administered Army-wide to examine how Army uses learning at an individual, team and organisational level. Possible organisational learning enablers and inhibitors existing within Army will also be considered. The questionnaire is part of a wider DSTO study which is contributing to the further development and implementation of the ALE.

The results of this questionnaire will be reported back to the Working Group that you will be attending on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of February. As such, it is imperative that this questionnaire is completed and returned by **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> of February** to allow us to collate your responses in time for the Working Group.

#### Your Part in the Study

- Please complete a hard copy of the questionnaire, and provide feedback if appropriate.
- Post to Natalie Kuester at the address provided below WITHOUT any identifying information attached.

**NOTE: PLEASE EXAMINE THE PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SECTION BUT START ANSWERING FROM PART 2 ONWARDS.**

On Examination of Part 1: Participant Information (demographic section), please provide feedback where appropriate.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

We have asked you to **START FROM PART 2** to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of answers. Due to the small number completing the questionnaire, completing the demographic section may produce potentially identifiable responses.

#### On Duty

DF members will be considered 'on duty' during participation.

#### Statement of Privacy

The data collected will be stored securely with investigators only having access. All information collected will be treated confidentially, and anonymity preserved in reports or published articles. Any personal data collected will be used for the purpose of this study.

#### Points of contact:

**Natalie Kuester**  
DSTO 75 labs LOD  
PO Box 1500  
Edinburgh SA 5111  
08 8259 6243  
[Natalie.Kuester@dsto.defence.gov.au](mailto:Natalie.Kuester@dsto.defence.gov.au)

**Christina Stothard**  
DSTO 75 labs LOD  
PO Box 1500  
Edinburgh SA 5111  
08 8259 4543  
[Christina.Stothard@dsto.defence.gov.au](mailto:Christina.Stothard@dsto.defence.gov.au)

Should you have any concerns about the manner in which this project is conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the researchers in person.

## **F.2. Measuring the Learning Organisation**

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## **Appendix G: Adaptive Army as a Learning Organisation Definition and Supporting Principles**

**CHIEF OF ARMY'S SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (through Army Learning Steering Group)**

R4303965 CASAC SUBMISSION 25/09

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARMY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT PHASE II**

#### **Adaptive Army as a Learning Organisation Definition**

*"Army has the people, processes and culture that enables it to learn, share and apply knowledge to quickly adapt and meet Australia's strategic goals."*

#### **Adaptive Army as a Learning Organisation Principles**

For Army to achieve the requirements of the above definition, the following Army Learning Organisation Principles were developed to provide a principles based approach to creating a supportive learning environment.

- inculcate leadership behaviours at all levels that reinforce learning,
- establish robust learning processes and practices,
- generate and reflect on a shared vision and understanding,
- encourage collaboration and team learning,
- develop an appreciation of the broader implications of decisions and actions by applying a systems approach,
- establish and sustain the free flow of knowledge across the learning loops,
- foster professional mastery,
- embrace evaluation and measurement,
- exploit informal and formal networks, and
- influence Joint and Interagency learning



<b>DEFENCE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA</b>				1. PRIVACY MARKING/CAVEAT (OF DOCUMENT)	
2. TITLE  The Army Learning Organisation Workshop			3. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION (FOR UNCLASSIFIED REPORTS THAT ARE LIMITED RELEASE USE (L) NEXT TO DOCUMENT CLASSIFICATION)  Document (U) Title (U) Abstract (U)		
4. AUTHOR(S)  Steven Talbot, Denise McDowall, Christina Stothard and Maya Drobnjak			5. CORPORATE AUTHOR  DSTO Defence Science and Technology Organisation PO Box 1500 Edinburgh South Australia 5111 Australia		
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19. ABSTRACT This report outlines the conduct, philosophy, management and facilitation of the Army Learning Organisation Workshop held at HMAS Harman Conference Centre on 24 - 25 February 2009. The workshop presented an opportunity for participants to discuss the relevance of the learning organisation concept within the Army context. The report provides a description of the activities performed by participants and the subsequent results of these activities. It also describes relevant theoretical and associated methodological concerns which informed the workshop design and structure, as well as reflections on the process of conducting the workshop by facilitators. The report, therefore, makes a practical addition to the literature on workshop methodology, and can be viewed as a template to inform future workshop activities.					