

VETERANS NETWORK LATEST NEWS

29 July 2021
News

VETERAN MENTORING INITIATIVE - INTERVIEW SKILLS WORKSHOP

29 July 2021

A workshop for our veteran mentees providing insight and tips on the interview process for the upcoming vacation clerkship applications and how best to prepare and perform.

HSF'S LONDON OFFICE GRANTED THE GOLD AWARD FOR ITS SUPPORT TOWARDS THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY

16 July 2021

Herbert Smith Freehills in London has been granted the Gold Award in the 2021 Defence Employer Recognition Scheme for its "outstanding support towards the Armed Forces community".

For more information, please click [here](#).

EX-INFANTRY SOLDIER AND HSF VETERAN MENTORING INITIATIVE MENTEE ANDREW EVANS SHARES HIS STORY IN LAWYERS WEEKLY

26 May 2021

Click [here](#) to read the story.

ANZAC DAY MILITARY LEADERSHIP WEBINAR

21 April 2021

Paul Ainsworth, Director of the Lincoln Institute and former Australian Infantry Officer delivered our ANZAC Day Leadership Webinar, where he shared his perspective on some military leadership approaches which are applicable in the private sector. During the webinar Paul discussed (among other things) how:

- understanding the 'Higher Commander's intent' has relevance across all vocations - to make sure people understand the WHY;
- to develop 'Operational Control' to empower teams so that they are an agile, accountable and sustainable unit; and
- the military develops a culture of robust feedback by setting 'behavioural' expectations and promoting 'confident' conversations.

VETERAN MENTORING INITIATIVE - CV AND COVER LETTER WORKSHOP

29 March 2021

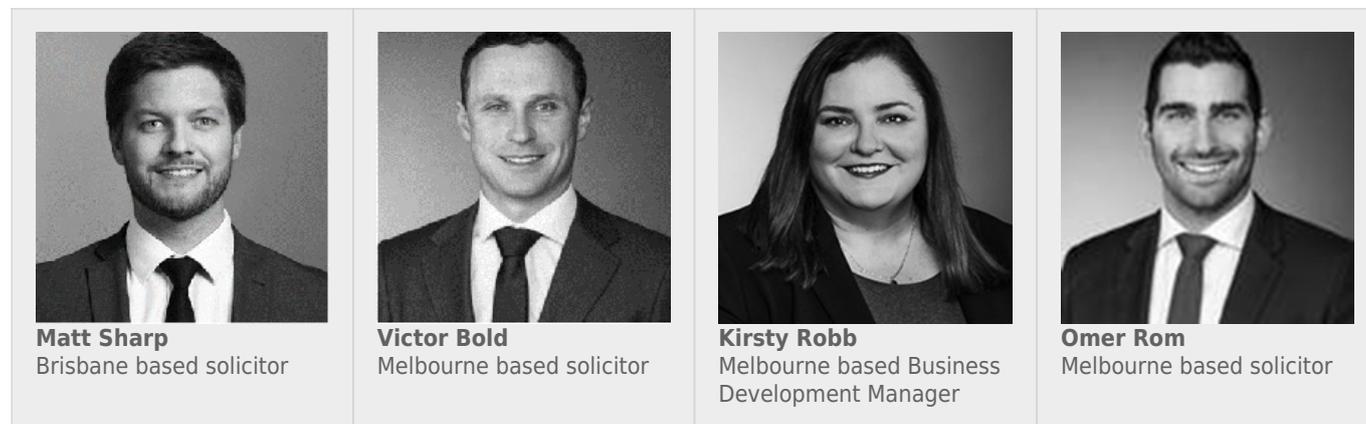
Our national Graduate Recruitment Manager, James Keane, hosted a webinar for our Veteran Mentoring Initiative mentees where he discussed the principles of an excellent CV and cover letter and how to 'sell' the transferrable skills that they acquired during their military service. James also provided insights and advice on applying for vacation clerkships and graduate positions at HSF more broadly.

VETERAN MENTORING INITIATIVE - CAREER JOURNEY PANEL

1 March 2021

Some of our members talked about their career journeys into the legal sector. The aim of the session was to get to know each other a little bit more and provide a view of some of the paths that have been trodden, decisions made, things considered and approaches taken in getting where they are today.

The panel members were:



VETERAN MENTORING INITIATIVE - LAUNCH

18 January 2021

Our firm's Veterans' Network in Australia has launched the Veteran Mentoring Initiative (the **VMI**), a national mentoring program which aims to enable veteran law students to raise questions and discuss opportunities, challenges and professional development more generally.

Veterans offer unique skills, experience and characteristics to business and industry, but also face significant challenges when transitioning from the military to civilian employment. The VMI aims to help with this transition and make entering the civilian professional realm less intimidating.

The mentorships are offered to veterans who have completed the first year of their law degree and are looking to discover the opportunities that are open to them as they embark on their legal careers. As part of the VMI, regular workshops are held for the mentees on a range of topics, including:

- professional networking;
- preparing job applications and
- interview techniques.

Getting to know some of the mentors



L - R: Victor Bold (Solicitor, Melbourne), Mark Darwin (Partner, Brisbane), Will Henry (Learning & Development Manager, Sydney), Martin MacDonald (Partner, Melbourne), Kirsty Robb (Business Development Manager, Melbourne), Omer Rom (Solicitor, Melbourne) and Matt Sharp (Solicitor, Brisbane).

Mentors are matched with mentees based on their common experiences and interests. The mentors are members of the HSF Veterans' Network, and have either transitioned from the military into the legal sector, or have a close personal connection with the military. The mentors will use their experience, perspectives and contacts to help veterans successfully establish themselves in a fulfilling legal career.

We spoke with two of our mentors – Omer Rom and Matt Sharp, who along with Kirsty Robb and Will Henry, founded the VMI.

Why did you decide to be a mentor?

Matt: We spend our whole careers in the military watching our mates' backs. This forges incredibly strong bonds between veterans and a commitment to look out for each other. That's one of the reasons why I decided to become a mentor. I've been in their shoes and know how difficult it can be to readjust to civilian life. If I can support them in any way, whether that be by providing study tips/tricks, clerkship application advice or general career advice, I want to be there for them.

What do you think have been the biggest challenges for your mentee?

Omer: A number of the mentees I have spoken to believe that they may be disadvantaged because of the time they spent in the military. This misconception has led them to undervalue their potential and desirability as candidates. And so, it is important for mentors to help the mentees realign their perspective and understand how their experience can bolster their appeal to a prospective employer, when framed correctly.

Another challenge relates to uncertainty around the process of entering the legal profession and the various fields within it. For example, a number of the mentees are unfamiliar with the clerkship application process, despite being in their penultimate year and having an interest in commercial law.

Matt: When you leave the military you don't just say goodbye to a job or a way of life, you say goodbye to a community. All of a sudden you lose the support you had around you and find yourself in a brand new and unfamiliar world. This can be quite overwhelming for veterans as they enter the next stage of their lives and new career paths.

What do you think are some of the key characteristics of veterans that lend themselves well to a career in law?

Omer: Several of the characteristics which law firms (and businesses in general) prioritise are part and parcel of a soldier's training. Day one in most militaries will have cadets working in teams and being encouraged to exhibit leadership. They are also required to overcome various challenges while thinking analytically, rationally, and laterally. Boot camp, training and missions will see soldiers receiving difficult tasks that can continue late into the night or early into the morning. Finally, they will rarely underestimate the gravity of an error, no matter how small.

Matt: Veterans are used to operating within constantly evolving operational environments and have the ability to readily adapt to changing requirements. They also lead by example and motivate others to achieve tasks, both on-time and on-budget.

What is your number one aim as a mentor?

Omer: To equip our mentees with as much confidence and information as possible, with a view to easing their transition from the military into the workforce and expanding the range of opportunities open to them. Acclimatising to the civilian world can be incredibly challenging, especially for soldiers who have spent an extensive amount of time in a defence force. I empathise with, and am eager to support, those who are experiencing the difficulties of transitioning from the military to university and then to a legal career. As a mentor, I can share my experience with veterans and encourage them to harness the soft skills they have accumulated during their time in the military.

MILITARY INSIGHTS - OPERATING IN AMBIGUITY WEBINAR

16 June 2020

Members of our Veterans' Network who have previously served in various militaries, hosted an 'Operating in Ambiguity' webinar to explain how they were trained to operate when not armed with all the facts in fast changing situations. During the webinar, the presenters shared some of their experiences in the military and their take on what lessons and approaches could be applied to operating effectively at HSF.

The presenters included:



HSF RECOGNISED BY THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE IN EMPLOYER SUPPORT AWARDS

11 December 2019

Our firm has been recognized as a Supportive Employer by the Defence Reserves Support Council (DRSC), a national organisation which aims to promote the benefits of Reserve service to the Australian community.

The DRSC conducts an [Employer Support Awards](#) program where members of the Reserves in the Australian Defence Force nominate their civilian employer to receive an award which formally acknowledges their employer's commitment to supporting Reservists in their workplace.

Major Victor Bold, a solicitor in our Alternative Legal Services (ALT) team in Melbourne, nominated the firm in appreciation of its continued support.

The award was presented to the firm at a special ceremony attended by Joe Cook (Senior Manager, Disputes, ALT), Victor and Emily Coghlan (Head of Disputes, Australia, ALT), along with senior members of the Australian Defence Force and the Victorian business community.

Joe Cook said, "We felt really privileged to have been recognised for our firm's support of the Australian Defence Force. Being there to receive this award really brought home to us the broader impact of supporting Victor in his work with the Army Reserves and what he had been able to contribute to Australia and to our community."



I - r: Joe Cook, Victor Bold and Emily Coghlan at the awards ceremony.

In support of veterans and those currently serving, our firm recently launched our Veterans' Network across our Australian offices and became a signatory to the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Commitment.

During the launch of the Veterans' Network, Victor Bold (having just returned from a deployment to Afghanistan) said, "The support provided by the firm allowed me to concentrate on safely completing my deployment. On return, the firm has allowed me to reintegrate into my practice group as if I'd never left, after a 14 month absence. I was thrilled to see the firm be formally recognised during the Defence Reserve Support Council Awards in Melbourne."

HSF'S PROMISE TO WELCOME, EMBRACE AND SUPPORT THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED AND THEIR FAMILIES

10 November 2019



This is a day of remembrance held across the Commonwealth of nations (and Veterans Day in the USA). It is an important occasion to commemorate the Armistice which ended the First World War in 1919 and a chance to remember those who served and still serve.

To mark Remembrance Day, Herbert Smith Freehills is becoming a signatory to the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Commitment in Australia and launching our Veterans' Network across our Australian offices. By signing this commitment, we are committing to support the employment of veterans in recognition of the skills and experience, as well as the diversity of thought and leadership, that veterans bring.

Matt Sharp is a graduate in our Disputes practice in Brisbane who formerly served in the Australian Army for six years. Matt said "I have been really impressed with HSF's proactivity around Diversity and Inclusion and think that launching a veteran's network will be a great way to tap into and support the market of experienced, capable leaders who are leaving the military."

Will Henry is one of our Learning and Development Managers based in Sydney and spent eight years as an Officer in the British Army. He added "I was very fortunate to be able to access corporate military transition programs when I was leaving the Army in the UK. I think there is a real opportunity for HSF to establish a proactive network across our Australian firm and with our clients, which can really help those transitioning from the military to recognise and make the most of their transferable skills and experience."

The launch of the Veteran's Network in Australia builds on the work of the London Military Network. In 2014, our London office signed up to the UK Armed Forces Covenant and since then has been collaborating with other law firms in raising awareness among those leaving the armed forces of the opportunities across the legal sector.

Our Australian Veterans' Network aims to:

- Refine our HR policies to equitably support the recruitment of veterans, providing a military lens through which to understand their application;
- Raise awareness of the pathways into the legal sector by attending career events to encourage veterans to apply;
- Start conversations with our clients to expand our Veterans' Network and look for opportunities to actively support those transitioning from the armed services; and
- Encourage our people to consider a role in the Reserves and support them with policies and practices that accommodate leave for Reserve training and deployments where possible.

Peter Butler AM RFD is a senior partner in the Sydney Disputes group and has agreed to sponsor the network. He is a former Managing Partner (Australia) and attained the rank of Major in the Australian Army. He was awarded the Reserves Forces Decoration for more than 15 years supporting the army legal services. He commented *"I am very excited to see HSF signing up to the Veterans Employment Commitment and setting up a network to support and hopefully attract more ex-military people to our firm. Service personnel bring a different way of thinking which will be valued by both their colleagues and clients."*

Victor Bold is a graduate in our ALT practice in Melbourne. He continues to serve in the Army Reserve, having recently returned from a deployment to Afghanistan. He said *"The support provided by HSF allowed me to concentrate on safely completing my deployment. On return, the firm has allowed me to reintegrate into my practice group as if I'd never left, after a 14 month absence. I was thrilled to see the firm be formally recognised during the Defence Reserve Support Council Awards in Melbourne."*

If you would like to know more about our Veterans' Network and what we have planned please contact: veterans@hsf.com.