

# Cove Advocate Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why is PME important?

Given the changing nature of warfare, it is more important now than ever to invest time in developing our mind the same way as we would to enhance our bodies. Individually, and collectively as a fighting force we need to develop our cognitive abilities so we can:

- Understand complex and changing situations
- Assimilate and process information
- Make faster, better, decisions than our adversary.

This is commonly referred to as enhancing our *Intellectual Edge*. This intellectual edge can be improved by our experiences and training we receive over time. However, it also relies on an individual's own motivation to invest in education, which includes PME.

The great news is PME can occur in many different ways. It's open to everyone and it does not have to be hard. For example, PME can be; watching educational TED Talks or YouTube videos, listening to audio books or a podcast, reading books or blogs, having robust discussions and contesting ideas with peers and team members, attending conferences or seminars, or studying a formal Australian Qualifications Framework course (talk to your local Army Education Centre for Army funded courses).

What matters is your ability to retain the information and take steps to apply what you know to improve your way of life, both personally and professionally. Identifying the need for self-improvement and seeking opportunities to develop yourself and others is what being a member, and a leader, within the profession of arms is all about.

We, *The Cove*, are one of many pathways to engage in PME.

### So what does The Cove have to offer?

Your role as an advocate is to promote and encourage people to access, download and interact with Cove content and events. Importantly, The Cove should be seen as a pathway for developing yourself and others. This is why we challenge everyone to engage in content that may not be their usual preference. It's about expanding what you know and trying to bring together ideas and perspectives from multiple angles to create a more holistic view.

Engagement with The Cove, or PME in general, does not have to occur every day – but making time to engage and learn new things intermittently is the goal. Encourage others to get involved by viewing our content; making a submission; hosting an event; or commenting, liking or sharing on our platforms. Keep reading for more detail on how to do this.

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## The Cove Website

Our website is unique as it is The Australian Army's space to share and contest ideas. In this sense, it's created by our people, for our people. Our site hosts soldiers 5s, PME resources, and a stack of interesting content. We're confident there will be something of interest for everyone.

We encourage people to make submissions through our site that show critical thinking and clearly communicated ideas. Alternatively, an insightful reflection that would benefit a wide audience. We have five broad themes to guide submissions, but the ideas that can emerge from here are endless. Our five themes are:

See our site for further information on our [submission guidelines](#). In the meantime, keep an eye out for new content you feel is worthwhile sharing, and encourage others to share what they know by making a submission or making a comment on someone else's post.

## How to make a cove submission

To make a Cove submission, simply go to our website <http://cove.army.gov.au> and select "make a submission" on the top menu. Be sure to review our [submission guidelines](#), prior to uploading your document. We prefer articles between 800 and 1,500 words for website publication. If you, or someone you know, is concerned about how to start - why not view the Cove+ Effective Communication unit first, to see if this helps draw out some ideas. Or, grab a buddy or respected peer and create a collective piece.

We also accept multimedia submissions in the form of short podcasts (2-7 minutes) or videos (2-8 minutes). To submit this to us, you will first need to contact us at [soldiercove@gmail.com](mailto:soldiercove@gmail.com), so we can talk you through the upload process.

## Cove+ : Army's Professional Development Program

Cove+ offers a large library of tertiary-level units, hosted on ADELE(U). Units have been developed in partnership with the Queensland University of Technology to ensure the learning is credible, current and challenging. The units are open to all serving members of the ADF and APS. Units vary in length to complete and use a range of media to facilitate engaging learning experiences. As a self-paced program, users can engage anytime, anywhere, at no cost.

As the expectation grows for individuals to make the time to improve what they know and how they think within the profession of arms, Cove+ offers an ideal way to practice becoming a self-regulated learner – because there is no time pressure or formalised assessment. Come and go when you have the time. Try it yourself, or encourage others to commit to a unit for a specified amount of time per week. Be open to seeing where the learning takes you within this program.

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Cove+ delivers content across our five main themes.

1. The Art and Science of Thinking
2. The Art and Science of War
3. Leadership, Ethics and Society
4. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
5. Organisational Management, Projects and People

70 units will be available by the end of 2021. Over the next five years, Cove+ aims to provide a stack more content that will offer a way to unlock your potential, both personally and professionally. To view all available units [click here](#). All content can be accessed and completed in any order, once you complete the gateway Reflective Practice unit.

Reflective practice was used as a gateway unit because we believe it is a foundational skill upon which all learning should occur. Reflection gives you an opportunity to pause, sort through information and experiences and create new meaning. You may be surprised at how reflective practice changes your perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in all manner of circumstances. This unit is also supported by a *Reflective Journal App* (available on iOS and Android) that can assist in creating a habit of reflective practice.

## Cove Conferences

Cove Conferences are designed and delivered by FORCOMD's PME Cell. Otherwise known as The Cove Team, in close consultation with the training audience's chain of command. Conferences are normally conducted over two days and are based on a suitably determined theme. Typically, audiences are segmented based on rank groupings to ensure the right information is targeted at audience participants. For example, a rank group may consist of PTEs, LCPLs, CPLs and LT, and another of SGT, WO, CAPT and MAJ. However, this doesn't always have to be the case. The conference may also include small group activities, often led by syndicate leaders.

Ultimately, Cove Conferences aim to increase Army's intellectual edge by providing intensive learning experiences. It's a space to learn from subject matter experts, engage in robust discussion and reflect on information presented.

## CoveTalks

CoveTalks are presentations where subject matter experts present to an audience. The presentations are also livestreamed online to increase event participation and viewership despite geographic dislocation. Questions are regularly sought from both local and virtual audience members to explore presented ideas and perspectives allowing open, robust and respectful discussions to occur.

Both national and international experts are engaged to deliver information. Cove Talks offer an accessible way to explore unique insights from experts that are not easily attained through other means. Livestreamed CoveTalks are only available to current serving ADF

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members and require pre-event registration. Where appropriate, recordings of the event may be made available on our website shortly after the event.

If you are aware of an event where a subject matter expert will present on a topic that has broad ADF audience appeal, we encourage you to make contact with us at [soldiercove@gmail.com](mailto:soldiercove@gmail.com) to discuss potential Cove Team recording presence.

### How to leave comments on the Cove's website or social media accounts?

<https://cove.army.gov.au/>

Advocates can encourage others to interact with content on the website and our social media accounts.

There is a space to leave a comment at the bottom of each content page on our website. We encourage professional discussion, commentary and the contest of ideas presented. Although we encourage you to stick by your opinion, there is capacity to leave an anonymous comment if you feel this will assist in driving attention toward your comment, rather than who you are.

You can also like, share and comment on each post made on our Facebook and Twitter social media accounts.



Please be aware The Cove team review all comments prior to posting to our website and social media accounts. As long as commentary is appropriate in tone and kept professional, we will not remove them.

### Our Cove Apps

We have two Apps that are available both on iOS and Android devices for you to encourage others to download.



*The Cove App* is one click away from having PME in your pockets! Encourage others to download the App and leave notifications on – so we can inform you of key content and events.



*The Reflective Journal App* is **not** just a tool that can be used to support learner's engagement in Cove+ units as they progress through their learning. We encourage you to use this app on the job, during training, or following any significant event that feels relevant and informative to you and your personal growth. See MAJGEN Chris Fields article on Reflection [here](#). It's an example of how to approach reflection with discipline.

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## What kind of feedback do we need?

The Cove team can't improve what we do, or remain relevant, if we don't know the impression we've made or how our content is resonating (or not) with users. Your peers will be open, honest and at times – brutal, with their opinions and preferences. We want to hear this frontline feedback from you, so we can improve what we do and make sure our effort supports the current and future educational needs of Army.

As an advocate you are best placed to share information regarding trends, resistance, or preferences of users with the content and events that we provide.

The key questions we want answered are:

- 1. How does The Cove need to adapt to create content and events that are relevant and interesting to users?*
- 2. What value does our work bring to improving our members Intellectual Edge?*

## How do I provide Cove Feedback?

As a Cove Advocate you will have access to our private Cove Advocate Network on ForceNet where we will share relevant information and call for information from you. An alternate option is to email us at [soldiercove@gmail.com](mailto:soldiercove@gmail.com). We may schedule virtual teleconferences with Advocates across the country for informal feedback sessions so we can:

1. Connect you as fellow advocates
2. Discuss feedback provided and see if it applies in other contexts

## What recognition do I get for being an Advocate?

We recommend you raise with your chain of command the work you are doing as a Cove Advocate; this may lead to recognition in your PAR/PFADs. Alternatively, you may wish to include you are a Cove Advocate in your email signature block so people know they can come to you for guidance regarding our PME initiatives.

## What if I don't know the answer to someone's question?

As an Advocate, you don't need to know everything or have all the answers. Either encourage members to make contact with us via our email: [solidercove@gmail.com](mailto:solidercove@gmail.com), alternatively you can reach out to us on their behalf. We encourage you to build a rapport with your local Army Education Centre, so if members seek guidance on Army funded education programs you can steer them in the right direction.

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