



## **MENTORING CONCEPT**

### **ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED COMMISSIONED OFFICERS**

#### **Introduction**

ARCO's Mentoring Concept, derives from the following section of the Association's revised objectives, as adopted at the 2019 AGM: *"fosters professional excellence within the Defence Forces through the sponsorship of an award for the Best Student on Army, Naval Service and Air Corps Cadet Courses, and by supporting Defence Forces Mentoring Programmes"*.

The word mentor originated in Greek mythology when Odysseus, before heading to war in Troy, entrusted the care of his young son Telemachus to his old, faithful and wise friend, Mentor. The term then evolved to represent a wise and trusted counsellor, friend and teacher.

The purpose of this concept is to provide an outline of ARCO's support of the Defence Forces Mentoring Programme. Accordingly, the concept provides a framework for the direction, planning and execution of this particular support.

This Mentoring Concept supports the implementation of Objective A6 of ARCO's Relevance Action Plan associated with the August 2019 Workshop.

The concept, which is iterative in nature, will be modified, as necessary, to reflect the interface with the Defence Forces, and experiences deriving from the process. Based on the outcome of the process, there is potential to extend the capability to support retired officers remaining in the workforce.

#### **Defence Forces Leadership Doctrine (April 2016)**

According to the Defence Forces Leadership Doctrine, leaders provide knowledge and feedback through counselling, coaching and mentoring.

Coaching and mentoring are personnel centric processes used by leaders in willing relationships, in order to enhance learning and development.

Coaching is a more formal and structured process in which the coach and coachee seek engagement. Coaching can be used effectively on a one-to-one basis or in a team (Unit) scenario. The coaching process can have a powerful positive effect on personnel satisfaction and retention.

Mentoring is a less formal process, that normally involves a less experienced person learning from the more experienced person over a period of time as a result of a series of meetings, discussions or social interactions. This process can happen in an ad hoc manner, or it can be a more structured process.



## **Intent**

Availing of the wisdom, competencies, skill sets, expertise and experiences of retired officers, derived from service in the Defence Forces, on a voluntary basis and on request, ARCO will support the Defence Forces Mentoring Programme, and by means of interpersonal exchanges, provide advice, support, direction and feedback on personal and capability development.

## **Objectives**

- Reciprocating investment and experiences accruing from service in the Defence Forces.
- Enhancing Defence Forces legacy, values and ethos.
- Reinforcing ARCO's motto, and its outreach programme with serving officers.
- Fostering professional excellence, transitions, self-development and career management.
- Developing skills and competencies, enhancing performance and operationality
- Providing expertise in the area of mentoring, including:
  - Knowledge and Experience transfer,
  - Educational capability, and
  - Mentoring panel of retired officers, linked to specific appointments, skills, or competencies.
- Providing objective perspectives on potential and capacity development, and targeted encouragement to accomplish goals and achieve recognition, beyond the scope of the chain of command relationship.

## **Operational Framework**

- Senior level leadership acceptance and commitment by the Defence Forces and ARCO.
- ARCO's voluntary support reflected in Defence Forces HR Strategy and or Mentoring Strategy
- Realistic, Measurable and Attainable Level of Ambition for both ARCO and DFHQ.
- Identify and address Challenges identified during the formation phase of the Concept.
- Address any potential interface challenges associated with Defence Forces mentoring procedures.
- Education, Mentoring platforms, with the supportive role provided by ARCO.
- Develop Skills and Competencies, Enhancing Performance and Operationality.
- Communicate Mentoring Best Practice.
- Design Mentoring Programme.
- Management of Mentoring Programme.
- Review and Evaluation of Mentoring Programme.

## **Tactical Framework**

- Identify Defence Forces Mentoring Programme Coordinator - Point of Contact.
- Identify ARCO's Point of Contact.
- Define the Responsibilities of Points of Contact for advancing the Concept and Programme.



- Identify Defence Forces' Specific Requirements of ARCO's Supportive Role,
- Identify Mentee's Personal Goals, Demands and Career Path.
- Determine Mentorship Relationship (formal or informal).
- Emphasise Subject Driven Process, Voluntary, Mutual Trust, Confidentiality, Boundaries.
- Mentoring for a specific appointment, skill, role, or behaviour.
- Identification of likely Defence Forces appointments and skills.
- Formulate Credentials, Criteria, Skills and Role Description for Mentors.
- Source and develop Panel / Database of Mentors.
- Education, Training, Motivation and Briefing of Mentors by the Defence Forces,
- Application Process – Mentees.
- Matching Process – Mentor with officer / appointment.
- Convening, Location, Structure, Duration and Frequency of each Programme.
- Responsibilities of Mentors, and Mentees in advancing individual Programmes.
- Programme Monitoring and Programme Adjustment
- After Action Review and Implementation of Lessons Learned for each Programme.

### **Support Framework**

- Accreditation to the European Mentoring and Counselling Council (EMCC)
- Links to mentoring strategy, doctrine and procedures.
- Awareness Workshop for ARCO's members expressing an interest in the programme
- Selection, education and training of mentors from ARCO.
- Mentoring handbooks.

### **Expressions of Interest.**

ARCO members are now invited to submit expressions of interest to participate, as mentors, on a voluntary basis, in the Defence Forces Mentoring Programme.

Expressions of interest should be sent by email to: [Mentor@arcoireland.com](mailto:Mentor@arcoireland.com) Please provide name, county of residence, and details of any training or experience in the Mentoring domain.

### **Implementation Phases**

- **Phase 1 - Elaboration of Mentoring Concept – 2020**
  - **21 February**: Initial overview noted by EXCOM.
  - **20 March**: EXCOM's formal endorsement of Mentoring Concept.
- **Phase 2 – Interface with DFHQ - 2020**
  - **01 Apr**: Formal Written Submission to COS.
  - **16 Jul**: Initial discussions with DF Coaching and Mentoring Steering Group



- **09 Sep**: Meeting with COS
  - **15 Sep**: Second Meeting with DF Coaching and Mentoring Steering Group
  - **18 Sep**: SITREP for EXCOM, Evaluation of Discussions with DFHQ, Go/No Go.
  - **17 Nov**: Third Meeting with DF Coaching and Mentoring Steering Group
  - **15 Dec**: Forth Meeting with DF Coaching and Mentoring Steering Group
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- **Phase 3: Provision of ARCO Support 2020 – 2022 (Subject to Covid-19 Restrictions)**
    - **18 Sep 20**: EXCOM's formal endorsement of ARCO's Mentoring initiative
    - **02 Oct 20**: Promulgation of Mentoring Concept at ARCO's 26<sup>th</sup> AGM
    - **Q4 of 2020**: Article in ARCO's Newsletter, Number 39
    - **Q1 of 2021**: Seek Expressions of Interest from ARCO's membership – website
    - **Q2 of 2021**: Orientation Day for those ARCO's members who expressed an interest in the Defence Forces Mentoring Programme
    - **Q3 of 2021**: Training Workshop for ARCO Mentors selected for the initial programme
    - **Q3 of 2021**: Initiating and Monitoring of initial programme with ARCO Mentors.
    - **Q2 of 2022**: Evaluation and Report on initial programme.
    - **Q3 of 2022**: Follow-on programmes.

**Executive Committee**

**22 January 2021**