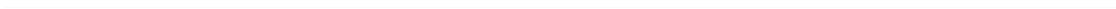




NEWSFLASH

Winter 2015-2016





MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Looking at the past and future...

Dear members, professionals in the field of threat assessment and management. Year 2015 is official in the history books and what a year it has been to threat assessment. Refugee crisis in Europe has clearly polarized people's opinions and created very hostile environment in various European countries. We have witnessed gruesome acts of violence in many European countries: Germanwings flight 9525 murder-suicide, Graz, Austria had an incident where a vehicle was used weapon, Copenhagen witnessed a terrorist incident, France had Charlie Hebdo shooting in Paris, as well as the later incident with multiple locations in November and an educational facility was a scene of a school violence incident in Trollhättan, Sweden.

But it's not just terrorism and spree killings. The prevention of domestic violence and stalking need more resources and training as well. Statistically you are more likely to be a victim of the first two crimes instead of the latter ones. Also, there is still huge amount of work to be done to get various professionals in the law enforcement, social services, victim aide as well as the courts and mental health professionals to be educated in threat assessment and –management.

We can easily say that there is a constantly growing need for skilled professionals who are using evidence based, structured professional judgment in cases where one's behavior causes concern.

The positive side of this is, is that our four associations across the globe have been actively working together, communicating more than ever before and the ties between all our associations (AETAP, ATAP, APATAP and CATAP) are very strong. This means bigger networks for all our members and better access to data from different continents. All conferences in 2015 managed to get bigger audiences than in previous years and we have even seen ATAP and CATAP provide online access to regional events; certainly something that AETAP is also very interested to look into.

For the members of AETAP year 2016 will also bring us regional seminars, and we will start with half-day seminars in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. Those of you who attended our 2015 conference in Lucerne, should remember that we introduced a membership recruitment program. To promote the association, we launched a recruitment campaign to increase our numbers during 2015. If any of our current members recruit two new members, the person will receive a one-year free membership. If a member during the same period recruits five new members, the member will receive a free participation to an expert seminar at the next AETAP conference. So if you don't like to pay the annual fee but would like to get the JTAM and attend our conferences with membership prices, make sure you get at least two new people to join the association. Also, if you have any good suggestions to be our sponsors in 2016 conference in Belgium, or you would like to sponsor the event yourselves, please let us know.

Remember to check out our AETAP LinkedIn page as well as AETAP Twitter account for interesting news articles and discussions.

The work of AETAP would not be possible for your continued support, but please make sure that your colleagues and contacts hear about our association and hopefully also attend the annual conference and join our association.



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And as always, please keep in mind that the Executive board with our associate board members aka “The Team” spends countless hours of their own time while making sure the association keeps on functioning as well as possible. So, thank you very much for the Team for the tremendous input you all are donating to the European association.

Thank you for your support in 2015

On behalf of our Team,

Totti Karpela
President
AETAP

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Research in progress

“Experimental research on communicated threats”

Researchers at the universities of Gothenburg (Sweden) and Portsmouth (England) have recently started a three-year research project within the field of threat assessment. Their line of research rests on the presumption that threatening behaviour, although deviant, still is deliberate and can therefore be understood from theories on social cognition. Instead of examining specific domains of targeted violence, the focus of this project is on understanding threatening behaviour on a more general level. What difficulties do people face when making a threat; what goal do threateners generally share; what type of information should be revealed or concealed in order to be convincing? And importantly, do bluffers differ on these aspects from people who truly intend to follow up their threat and commit a violent act? The project consists of separate studies. Specifically, these studies address: i) the content of verbal threats, ii) strategies that threateners use to pose a convincing threat, and iii) strategies that threat assessment professionals use when interviewing subjects of concern. The aim is to gain basic understanding of threatening communication. Ultimately, such knowledge should contribute to elicit and identify markers of actual threats (vs. bluffs). For more information on this research project you may contact the leading researcher, Renate Geurts on renate.geurts@psy.gu.se

Interesting call for commissioning research

The UK's security and intelligence agencies in partnership with the UK's Economic and Social Research Council are funding a new independent academic centre focused on behavioural and social science to counter and mitigate threats.

The Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST), launched in October, conducts, commissions and communicates unclassified research on all aspects of understanding, countering and mitigating security threats. Members of CREST (a consortium of five UK universities led by Lancaster University) are engaged a broad programme of research, including on violent ideologies and actors, online behaviour, effective interviewing, and protective security.



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The team includes many who have deep experience of working with and in government and law enforcement, and this will ensure that CREST's outputs are tailored to the needs of security, law enforcement and intelligence end-users.

CREST also has an ambitious programme for commissioning new research, and the first call went live in December 2015. The call is open to Higher Education Institutions, Research Organisations, charities, commercial companies, and individuals from the UK and overseas, who can demonstrate a capability to deliver a high-quality programme of research. Applicants will be invited to submit proposals for activities that address areas of both theoretical and practical importance, including workshops, and research projects of short (up to 6 months) and longer (up to 12 months) duration. These projects could include high quality synthesis and communication of existing research, and original empirical research involving all forms of qualitative and quantitative analysis, including case studies, proof-of-concept studies, and methodological developments.

More details of CREST's research programme and the commissioning activities can be found here: www.crestresearch.ac.uk The deadline for applications to the current call is 5 February 2016.

Published Research

Book review. Paul Gill (2015). "Lone-Actor Terrorists. A behavioural analysis."

Routledge: New York.

Just to say it first, short and sweet. Paul Gill's book is a "must read" for every threat assessment professional working in the field of radicalization; or everyone who is interested in the prevention of terroristic acts committed by lone attackers or small groups. Gill has analysed 111 cases of lone-actor terrorism from several countries. His database is also very much behaviourally orientated. As a result there is a lot of practical hands-on information presented which is helpful for every threat assessment expert. Gill offers interesting numbers and statistics combined with significant case studies. His book is a wonderful example for sound and innovative research, which is also attempting to be of good use for practitioners. The chapters of the book cover a wide range of topics like for example mental illness, the role of the Internet and the phenomena of leakage in such acts. After the terrible attacks in Paris of last November, Gill's work is needed more than ever, and the book is an excellent resource for counter-terrorism work. There is only one weak point, which needs to be mentioned. The price of the book is rather expensive - more than 120 EURO for 200 pages. This unfortunately may lead to the effect that it will not find as many readers as it should. However, after you have read his book you will not wonder anymore why he has been chosen as one of the main speakers at our conference in Ghent this year. Come to Ghent in April to admire his work.

Jens Hoffmann



Release of NTAC reports

The U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) has very recently released their latest report, **Attacks on Federal Government 2001-2013: Threat Assessment Considerations**, as well as three case studies that describe different elements of a threat assessment investigation. Their study is based on 43 attacks targeting federal government facilities; most of the attacks were committed by lone-actors. Though offenders chose their targets for a variety of reasons, almost half of them exhibited fixation. The report gives some operational considerations, such as:

- Identify concerning behavior,
- Ask detailed questions to explore the link between mental health symptoms and an individual's motive and behavior (50% experienced mental health symptoms and in almost 25% these symptoms influenced their motives!),
- Recognize stressors, assess their impact, and examine options for managing them (over 75% of the offenders experienced a stressful event in the year prior to their attack),
- Identify diverse sources of information, including records, interviews and online searches,
- Develop physical security plans that extend beyond the building perimeter (almost 75% of the offenders initiated their attacks outside of a facility).

All these extensive documents are available for download on <http://www.secretservice.gov/protection/ntac/>. The website also hosts an interactive timeline as well as a map that features brief descriptions of the 43 incidents examined in the report.

Increasing awareness of workplace violence risk and threat assessment expertise

It is a good that AETAP and the other international professional associations have been working hard and have put an increasing amount of effort into the certification and accreditation of threat assessment professionals.

Our mission as an association is to provide an organisation where experts - from all over the world, from different organisations and with different backgrounds can find knowledge, education and a community of other experts with whom they can interact professionally. We are convinced that such a network will lead to higher levels of expert advice, evidence based threat management practice, finally making our communities and our workplaces a safer place to live and work in. In order to achieve such levels of professionalism we believe that it is necessary to gather all experts in the field, and to provide (ongoing) education, and certification.



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There are clear indications that not only psychologists, psychiatrists and general security companies, but also large advisory corporations are starting to 'discover' threat assessment, and actually selling 'threat assessment and threat management' services.

This on itself shows us that the importance of threat assessment and - management is increasingly recognised. Having seen the examples, it is impressive to observe how easy some security professionals, behavioural analysts, mental health professionals and corporate advisors view and promote themselves as professional threat assessment specialists, without having the necessary background, education and professional network backup. Even more concerning is the fact that these individuals and organisations seem to experience very little restriction in taking in cases and actually providing 'expert advise'. Members of associations such as AETAP will all agree that this is not at all a positive development, that one of the core characteristics of the real expert is that he/she knows exactly where the boundaries of his expertise lie. The real expert is also aware of the fact that he/she has to refer to somebody who is educated, experienced and affiliated with an association in that specific field when asked to advise or educate in a field which is not covered by his expert knowledge.

This is a message to us as a professional association – it is necessary to provide more information about the work of AETAP to our colleagues in the different fields where threat assessment professionals are active. We need to warn self-proclaimed experts (whom we are all aware of) and explain the dangers and ethical problems arising when advise is given without a solid and proper expertise. I also want to urge our fellow associations to continue with the difficult but good work of certification and accreditation.

Bram Van der Meer

New Tools & Techniques

TRAP-18 - a risk assessment tool in the making

The Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol (TRAP-18) is composed of 8 proximal warning behaviors and 10 distal characteristics, and is a rationally-derived investigative template for risk of individual terrorism or members of small independent cells. It is not seen by its main developer Reid Meloy as risk assessment tool yet as more validity research is needed from his perspective. But research is underway now in the US, Canada and Europe. In one of the next editions of the Journal of Threat Assessment and Management (JTAM) there will be several studies included on the TRAP-18.



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One study is analyzing 22 individuals from Europe who carried out acts of terrorism between 1980 and 2015. Seven of these individuals formed autonomous cells. Also two more case studies will be included in this JTAM special section utilizing the TRAP-18 analyzing one right-wing and one islamic attacker. Even more several translations of the TRAP-18 template are planned or even already work in progress.

Next to the original version in English, the TRAP-18 may be also used in the future by Swedish, Arabic or German speakers and perhaps in even more languages to come.

The first section of the TRAP-18 consists of the 8 factors of the warning behavior typology which was developed in 2011 by an International group of experts. In the TRAP-18 methodology those warning behaviors are seen as proximal factors. This means that if at least one warning behavior is present a case should be monitored more closely or even other management strategies should be applied. The second section of the TRAP-18 covers 10 distal characteristics. In a first version the distal factors were published by Meloy and Yakeley in 2014. Distal characteristics signal that this may become a radicalization case which should get more professional attention. The TRAP-18 therefore provides a means by which mental health, intelligence, law enforcement, and security professionals can organize accumulating operational data on a person of concern, and therefore plan for his or her active monitoring or risk management to reduce the threat of targeted violence.

At the next AETAP conference this year in Ghent Reid Meloy will give a one day workshop on the TRAP-18. If you are interested in this tool to come you should mark the 18th of April in your calendar. I have seen a half day workshop from Reid on the TRAP-18 last year in Zurich. It was great, packed with up-to-date scientific information and fascinating case studies. So I will be there at the 18th of April in Ghent.

Jens Hoffmann



International Associations, Professional Networks & Education

CATAP

Chateau Lake Louise, October 17-21, 2015

The annual CATAP conference, held in beautiful Lake Louise, was well attended by a strong delegation representing mental health, policing, security, criminology and other corporate threat management professionals. We enjoyed three days of excellent presentations as well as highly informative expert seminars on Mental Disorder and Threat Assessment (Stephen Hart & Laura Guy), Critical Legal Issues Related to Threat Assessment and Management in Higher Education (Kelly Nicholson & Stephen Hart), Left Wing on the Left Coast: A look at Left-Wing Extremism in the Pacific Northwest (Rik Hall), and Extremism: Operational Implications for Threat Assessment (Peter Collins).

The conference kicked off with a very strong presentation by Phil Gurski, former intelligence analyst at CSIS, on violent radicalization in Canada. Gurski took at one point himself the role as a radicalized person to increase our understanding of the logic behind these peoples way of reasoning.

A very strong acting by Mr. Gurski! Even though we all could see and understand that it was him, many of us became concerned. Very impressive! Next speaker was Ms. Molly Amman from the FBI. She provided a case presentation on assessing an active hostage crisis: "The boy in the bunker". Ms. Amman's presentation was one of those where you can hear a needle fall to the floor. We were all totally absorbed about this story, and impressed by the good threat management work that was done in this case. I consider us very lucky to have Ms Amman present at our annual AETAP conference in Ghent in April! The first day ended with a presentation by Michael McEvoy, Office of Information Privacy Commission of British Columbia. The topic was "Sharing Information in Emergent Circumstances" which is a very important, and still somewhat unclear, topic for professionals in our field. What exactly are the legal duties and liabilities? The importance of these issues was well displayed by the great number of questions that were raised by the attendees.

The second day started by Dr. Reid Meloy presenting on his new investigative template for operational use in counterterrorism efforts. His new TRAP-18 (Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol) is supported by European and North American data sets. Very interesting, and very well needed. Undoubtedly the first tool of its kind backed up with an impressive amount of empirical data. I foresee that Dr. Meloy will have quite a few attendees at his workshop on TRAP-18 at the AETAP conference in Ghent in April. I will for sure be one of them. Dr. Lynn Van Male from the US Veterans Health Administration presented on workplace violence prevention in health care. After presenting a 5-element model for violence prevention, taking its starting point from the SPJ model, she described the practical use of this model by a successful case description.

The second day ended with a very impressive case description by Drs Alasdair Goodwill and Imre Juurlink from Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada, on assessing anonymous threats. The case study highlighted the importance of a multidisciplinary approach including behavioural analysis and best practices.



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The final conference day contained presentations on mental illness and the management of risk for targeted violence by Bert Choi and Liam Ennis, and strategies in handling high-risk clients in the context of workplace violence by Mark Evans. The attendees also got the opportunity to attend two bonus sessions provided by Kelly Nicholson and Stephen Hart, and Peter Collins. Unfortunately, this writer did not have the opportunity to attend these presentations due to complicated travel arrangements back to Europe.

Worth mentioning is that the number of posters has increased. There were twelve high quality and very interesting posters that drew a lot of attention among the attendees. It seems that a poster session is something that increasingly is getting more and more important at our conferences. Finally, it is always such a great pleasure to be fortunate to enjoy the almost overwhelming kindness and hospitality at the CATAP conferences. Always outstanding and world leading speakers, perfectly organized conferences, and a friendly and good atmosphere. We will do our very best to make the AETAP conference in Ghent, April 18-22, 2016, become something similar.

Henrik Belfrage

APATAP conference in Bangkok

Our sister-organization APATAP (Asia Pacific Association of Threat Assessment Professionals) held its 4th annual conference in November. For the first time in APATAP's history, the location was outside of Australia. Location for the conference was Bangkok, Thailand in the most pleasant environment one could imagine. One of the main reasons for this was to create awareness around the region and to get more professionals from nearby countries to attend. The conference managed to gather close to 60 participants with a broad representation of various professional fields from 11 countries. Speakers were excellent with topics ranging from domestic violence prevention, radicalization, cross cultural issues, stalking, red teaming and international cooperation and case management. Keynote topic on expert's day was related to investigative interview techniques by prof. Martine Powell from Australia. The participants also had the luxury of enjoying very open and interesting speeches by the Australian ambassador and a high-ranking Thai government official. AETAP was also strongly presented with a few European participants and Mr. Berndt Rif lecturing about predictive security profiling, Dr. Susanne Strand lecturing about Improving Assessment in Stalking Cases - The SAS-R and the SRP and Dr. Jens Hoffmann lecturing about lone actor terrorists.

Please note, that the APATAP committee made a strategic decision to move the time of the conference to February/March season, so that any possible overlap with other global conferences would be avoided. Because of this, the next conference will most likely take place in 2017. More info will be posted to www.apatap.org shortly.

Totti Karpela



25th ATAP conference in California, United States of America

The biggest and the oldest organization within the field of threat assessment and management, ATAP (Association of Threat Assessment Professionals) held its 25th conference in August. The conference was huge. Over 800 participants from all over the North Americas and most of the speakers were truly legends in their own rank. Even though the ATAP is heavily attended by law enforcement, there are also private practitioners, mental health professionals, professionals from educational facilities and global corporations. ATAP is definitely worth the trip and due to the fact that the conference is always held at Disneyland resort, you can also take your family along and they can easily enjoy their time at Disney's theme park. We have also seen that AETAP and APATAP have started to create interest amongst the participants and hopefully we will see more global exchange between the participants, not just amongst the speakers.

ATAP has also been very generous towards AETAP board members and this year it was the same policy. AETAP board representatives have also the possibility to attend the ATAP board meeting during the conference. Since ATAP has been around for 25 years and their membership numbers are 1000+, there is lot to learn from the management and the dynamics and future projects that ATAP is progressively doing. This will surely be beneficial to AETAP in the long run as well. ATAP conference has always shown excellent logistics and very easy access through LAX with many international flights from Europe on a daily basis.

ATAP is also looking into webinars, and as previously mentioned, AETAP is certainly interested in looking at this option as well. We will keep our members posted regarding the developments under this topic as soon as we get more information.

Those of our members who are interested about attending ATAP events, the main conference is always in August and the spring regional is usually in April. Unfortunately the spring event almost clashes with our main conference. More information about the events can be found from www.atapworldwide.org

Totti Karpela

Education

Online training TRAP-18

Beside the possibility to follow an interactive whole day workshop at AETAP in Ghent this year, people can already listen to a three-hour introductory lecture from Reid Meloy online:

<https://www.gifrinc.com/course/the-lone-terrorist-trap-18-as-an-investigative-template/>