



Intelligence

state of the art threat assessment

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Upcoming Events

Victim Safety Planning Using the ASAP

How to Assess and Manage Risk for Hate Crimes

Aid for Violence Risk Triage Workshop

How to Assess and Manage Risk for Group-Based Violence

Self-Directed Violence Risk Triage Workshop

15th AETAP Conference

Assessing and Managing Risk for Sexual Violence: Using the RSVP-V2
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Editor's Note



providing a practice update about sequencing parallel investigations. This is a very important topic given that multiple investigations are not the exception, but the norm, can be extremely challenging to navigate, and are associated with institutional risk.

We also have several special announcements! The APATAP conference will be held in Sydney, Australia, between 8-10 May 2024 with a special emphasis on exploring the intersection between AI and Threat Assessment.

Protect International will also be releasing the long awaited Aid for Violence Risk Triage. Manuals, worksheets, and licence agreements will be available for purchase in January 2024!

We hope *Intelligence* will continue to provide a forum for you to share and develop your expertise in threat assessment.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Watt, PhD

Director and Threat Assessment Specialist at Protect International

As always, *Intelligence* will keep you up to date with recent advances in threat assessment from around the globe through knowledge and experiences shared by world-leading experts.

Our team hopes this newsletter finds you making plans for the holiday season with your family, friends, and colleagues.

In this issue, Ms. Yan Lim who recently joined our team as a Threat Assessment Specialist, will provide a book review of *Violence and Mental Illness: Rethinking Risk Factors and Enhancing Public Safety*. This book is a very important reminder that even though MI is an important risk factor for future violence, on its own, it does not give us reason to be concerned about violence risk.

Ms. Nicole Russell and Dr. Brianne Layden are

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Review us 

Violence and Mental Illness: Rethinking Risk Factors and Enhancing Public Safety By Eric B. Elbogen & Nico Verykoulis

In this book, the authors explored the intricate relationship between mental illness (MI) and violence. Their mission is clear: to dispel prevailing misconceptions and furnish readers with a nuanced understanding of this complex issue. Written for a broad audience, the book was clear and approachable and provided a comprehensive overview of this subject. The authors started by cautioning against heedlessly blaming violence on MI. They contended that such a simplistic and fallacious view only serves to further stigmatize MI and hinders effective prevention and intervention. They critiqued the social stigma and cognitive biases that cloud public perception and contribute to this hyperbole of MI's causative role in violence.

The book's main premise is that MI is neither necessary nor sufficient for violence to

occur and the link between them is much weaker than commonly believed. The authors differentiated between serious MI and the more common experiences of stress and anxiety and utilized case vignettes to help humanize these diagnoses. They also noted psychiatric symptoms that were more strongly associated with violence, which is a good reminder for threat assessment professionals (TAPs) to focus on relevant symptoms, as opposed to diagnostic labels, when assessing cases. The authors provided a user-friendly primer on the technical aspects of scientific studies to empower readers to be able to interpret research in this area in a sophisticated and nuanced manner. The authors reviewed key studies in this area and noted the strengths and limitations of each. They also compared the role of MI as a risk factor for violence against other known risk factors, as well as for various forms of violence, from domestic violence, and sexual violence, to targeted school violence and mass attacks in public spaces.

In underscoring that violence typically has multiple causes, the authors proposed a novel model, "the 3-Category Violence Model," to categorize risk factors for violence into three classes. The first two categories—internal and external risk factors—are statistically correlated with violence but not necessarily causative. The third category of "violence-defining" factors is where the main focus lies. These are factors that are both statistically and causally linked to violent acts by making violence a more viable and acceptable

option. The authors illustrated using case examples how this model could be a means of understanding violence as well as a framework for intervention at the environmental, social, and individual levels. This model is consistent with Finkel's I3 theory and Decision Theory used in the Structured Professional Judgement (SPJ) approach and may be useful for TAPs to consider the multi-determinants of violence when formulating about why someone perpetrated violence in the past.

In conclusion, this book offers TAPs, especially those with limited training related to mental illness, an accessible resource for understanding the complex relationship between MI and violence. It challenges common misconceptions and provides a balanced perspective grounded in extensive research. This book equips readers with the tools to critically interpret research in this field and advocates for a more informed and nuanced view of MI and its connection to violence. This book reminds us that the vast majority of people with serious MI do not engage in violence and that MI, on its own, does not give us reason to be concerned about violence risk. Only once we have reason to be concerned about violence risk based on "violence-defining" factors, which are akin to primary warning signs of violence, should we consider if and how mental disorder may be causally related to violence risk in each given case.

Ms. Yan Lim
Threat Assessment Specialist,
Protect International

Upcoming Events

Foundational Violence Risk Assessment and Management Workshop

APATAP 2024 Conference

Case Formulation in Violence Risk Assessment

Scenario Planning in Violence Risk Assessment

[Learn more...](#)

Sequencing Parallel Investigations

More often than not, when an allegation of misconduct comes to your attention, it will trigger the need for multiple investigations. For instance, imagine a student reports that a faculty member touched her buttocks in the elevator. At the very least, this single incident will give rise for the need for a misconduct investigation, criminal investigation, and an occupational health and safety investigation.

When multiple investigations have been triggered, it is important that each investigation is carefully differentiated from one other. Some investigations examine behaviour which has already happened, whereas others investigate behaviour which might happen. Human rights, misconduct, criminal, and harassment investigations are all retrospective and look at past behaviour; whereas, occupational health and safety, mental health/wellness, and fitness for duty/return to work or study investigations are all prospective and look at what may happen in the future.

When single incidents give rise to multiple investigations, careful consideration must be given to the order and timing of the investigations at the outset. You should ask yourself a series of questions before proceeding with any investigation. The following are some important questions you should consider. First, do you conduct the investigations at the same time, or in sequence? If proceeding sequentially, is there one type of investigation that takes priority given the

circumstances or competing legal duties? Second, who will be the appraiser (lead on the investigation) and who will be the adjudicator (decision-maker with respect to the outcome of the investigation)? Will the investigators or adjudicators be the same for each investigation, or independent? Third, is there any jeopardy to the person of interest in terms of legal or procedural fairness? For example, if there are multiple investigations occurring at the same time, is there a risk of spoliation or “spoiling” of evidence for one of the investigations because of the actions taken in another investigation? Fourth, is it fair to use information provided in one investigation for another investigation? For example, are you going to interview parties for each investigation or use interview information obtained in one investigation as evidence for another investigation? To answer this, you may need to consider whether there is a dependency of decisions—does the outcome of one investigation have relevance for the outcome of another investigation? If so, is a report being shared in its entirety, or should sections be redacted?

Answering questions like these prior to proceeding with any investigation will ensure that you have been thoughtful in your approach and will help to avoid problems with perceptions of unfairness or other due process issues. Some general principles with respect to parallel investigations are also helpful to keep in mind: 1) all investigations should follow established and

readily available (i.e., to the person of interest) procedures, and should be based on the principles of natural justice even though the specifics and rules for each investigation may differ; 2) participants should always be advised of the purpose of each specific investigation and the limits to confidentiality, including how the information may be shared across investigations; and 3) it is imperative to consult with law enforcement before taking any action whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that a criminal offence occurred in the past or may occur in the future. If there is any doubt, give police the right of first refusal to avoid potential obstruction of justice or spoliation of evidence. After criminal investigations, safety (Occupational Health and Safety investigations) should be prioritized, followed by human rights, and then conduct investigations.

Remember, multiple investigations are the rule, not the exception! To overcome some of the challenges highlighted in the questions above, educate yourself on relevant law and policy, and develop procedures in consultation with key stakeholders. Careful planning is essential at the outset.

Ms. Nicole Russel
Conduct Investigation Specialist,
Protect International

Dr. Brianne Layden
Threat Assessment Specialist,
Protect International



APATAP 2024 Conference

Join us for the Asia Pacific Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (APATAP) Conference, a three-day event from 8-10 May 2024, at Sydney's Customs House. The theme of the conference for 2024 is "**Bridging Bytes and Lives: AI and the Lived Experience in Threat Assessment.**" The Conference kicks off with a masterclass, followed by a full day devoted to the conference theme, with the remaining day covering diverse topics related to threat assessment and management.

We are currently inviting abstract submissions until 5 January 2024. We would especially welcome submissions that include lived experiences and voices from diverse and intersecting communities.

Registration to the event is now open until tickets are sold out. Due to our conference location, ticket numbers are limited and may sell out fast. Use the code "earlybird24" until 31 December 2023 to save up to \$300 AUD on the full registration price. For guidelines and further details, please visit our website www.apatap.org.au.



The release of the Aid for Violence Risk Triage

Protect International is releasing the long awaited for Aid for Violence Risk Triage (AVRT) by Kelly Watt, Stephen Hart, Knut Rypdal and Hege Hoff. We began the development of a structured process for triaging violence risk more than 20 years ago, and this development work has continued and expanded in scope steadily since. The development was based on a systematic review of the scientific and professional literature on warning signs for violence risk and various decision support aids related to violence risk. The development was also based on research conducted on the AVRT in diverse settings (e.g., civil psychiatry, forensic psychiatry, law enforcement) in different countries (e.g., Canada and Norway). Finally, the development was based on training on and implementation of the AVRT in diverse settings (law enforcement, social services, civil and forensic mental health, higher education, and private and public sector workplaces) around the world (Canada, United States, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, England, Ireland, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Japan).

Manuals, worksheets, and licence agreements will be available for purchase in January 2024. If you are interested in training on the AVRT, the next open AVRT Workshop will be taking place virtually on 6 March 2024 or you are welcome to call Protect International to discuss other workshop options.